



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture



BIOENERGY, CLIMATE,
AND ENVIRONMENT

FOOD PRODUCTION
AND SUSTAINABILITY

YOUTH, FAMILY,
AND COMMUNITY

FOOD SAFETY
AND NUTRITION

INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMS

USDA NIFA

May 2013

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
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and Agriculture

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Reviewing Grants Using PRS

PEER REVIEW SYSTEM – PRS

<https://prs.nifa.usda.gov/>

NIFA's electronic system for grant viewing

Confidential

Collaborative



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Overview

- Before you use PRS
- How to Review Proposals BEFORE the Panel in PRS
- DURING the Panel
 - Scribe Responsibilities
 - Other Reviewer Responsibilities



Before you use PRS

Things To Keep In Mind

Internet Browsers: PRS has been modified to work on multiple browsers. Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox on PCs; and Safari on Macintosh computers; have all been verified as compatible with PRS as of December 2012. If you have difficulty accessing PRS on one of these browsers, please contact the program staff member assisting with your panel.

Pop-Ups: You will need to disable your popup blocker in order to see all messages from PRS.

Adobe Reader: You'll want use 7.0 or higher. In earlier versions of Adobe, a blank page will come up when you try to access a proposal.

User ID (email): This is the email address we have for you in our database. See the email instructions we sent on accessing PRS.



Things To Keep In Mind continued

PRS times out in about an hour if there is no activity. Write your reviews and summaries in a word processing program (such as Word). Then, when they are ready, paste them into PRS. Also, save a back-up copy of your reviews until the panel is complete.

Special characters do NOT paste reliably into PRS. This includes different font styles and formatting (e.g., bullets). **BOLD, *Italics*, and Underlining, if desired, can be added to text from within PRS.**

There is no spell check in PRS.



Go to:

<https://prs.nifa.usda.gov>



NIFA Peer Review System

Click here for instructions



[Home](#) | [Confidentiality](#) | [Helpful Hints](#) | [Contact us](#)

Welcome

Welcome to the Peer Review System for National Institute of Food and Agriculture. If you are a reviewer, you may log in and submit grant application reviews and panel summaries via PRS. If you are a potential reviewer, you may update your profile to help NIFA organize future review panels.

If you do not have a login, you may use this link to [Create an account](#).

PRS has been modified to work on multiple browsers. Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox on PCs, and Safari (on Macintosh computers) have all been verified as compatible with PRS as of December 2012. If you have difficulty accessing PRS on one of these browsers, please contact the program staff member assisting with your panel.

Privacy information: The information you provide will be used by NIFA in selecting reviewers for grant applications submitted to NIFA programs. In addition, the contact information may be used to update records pertaining to active NIFA grant applications and grants. NIFA may share the information you provide with other Federal agencies but only for the purpose of assisting these other agencies in the review of grant applications submitted to them. This information will not be used for any other purpose.

An asterisk (*) indicates a required field.

Log in

* User ID :
* Password :

Submit

Forgot your password?

Click here to access your account via your [verification question](#).

User ID is your email we have in our database

You will receive an email on how to access PRS.



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How to Review Proposals BEFORE the Panel

Before you can complete a review you will
be asked to consider three things:

Confidentiality

Conflict of interest rules

Careful reading of instructions



Confidentiality guidelines

While the content of applications is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), reviewers should not disclose information contained in applications as it is the role of the Department of Agriculture, not the reviewer, to determine whether such information is releasable pursuant to the FOIA. For this reason, confidentiality must be maintained-- therefore please DO NOT copy, quote, or otherwise use material from this application. If you believe that a colleague can make a substantial contribution to the review, consult with the appropriate National Program Leader before disclosing either the contents of the application or the applicant's name. When you complete the review, please destroy the application and maintain its confidentiality. If you are unable to review, please contact the respective National Program Leader, destroy the application and maintain its confidentiality.



*If you click **DECLINE** by accident, simply call the program office to have the review reset.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information may subject you to administrative sanction, i.e., removal from review of the application and/or disqualification from involvement in future reviews.



What you see....

Click here for instructions

NIFA Peer Review System

My Menu

Your Assigned Reviews

Pest Management Alternatives		Review Instructions
Grant applications for your review:		
[Redacted]	Application #: 2012-[Redacted]	Create/modify your review Review state: Submitted Read all reviews
Project director: [Redacted]	Institution: University of Florida	Review submitted: 04/01/2013
[Redacted]	Application #: 2012-[Redacted]	Create/modify your review Review state: Saved, Not Submitted
Project director: [Redacted]	Institution: Michigan State University	Panel start: 03/22/2013
[Redacted]	Application #: 2012-[Redacted]	Create/modify your review Review state: New

Click here to read proposal

You can read all other reviews after you have submitted yours.

Click here to write your review

Be sure to scroll down to see if you have more than one group of applications to review.



When you click on Create/modify your review:

The screenshot shows the NIFA review creation interface. At the top, there is a header bar with the USDA logo and the text "United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture". Below the header, there is a navigation bar with the text "INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV".

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Grant Application #:** 2012- [redacted]
- Institution:** The Ohio State University
- Project Director:** [redacted]

Below the grant information, there are two links: [Review Instructions](#) and [Conflict of Interest](#).

The **Review:** section contains a large text area for entering the review. A green callout box points to this area with the text "Paste your review in this box." The text area has a toolbar with icons for bold (B), italic (I), underline (U), list, link, and insert.

Below the text area, there is a label "Maximum length 10,000 words".

The **Score:** section contains five radio button options:

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

A green callout box points to these options with the text "Indicate your score here." Below the score options, there are two buttons: "Save For Later" and "Continue". A green callout box points to the "Continue" button with the text "If you click CONTINUE, you will see another button to COMPLETE SUBMISSION."



You're almost done with your REVIEWS! Two last choices....

Save: Click **Save for Later** at the bottom to review and write more at another time.

Submit: Click **Continue** and **Complete Submission** if you are finished. Once you click these two buttons you will not be able to edit your review. You will, however, be able to read reviews from the other panelists assigned to this proposal. This is the collaborative aspect of the program.

Remember: Your review is not complete (and we at NIFA can't see it) until you click "Continue" AND "Complete Submission." "Save" just saves your work for later.



During the Panel

Responsibilities for Panel Summaries

- Note: summaries are not initiated until the panel meeting.
- The Scribe is responsible for drafting the panel summary and incorporating comments.
- The other reviewers assigned to each proposal are responsible for reviewing and providing comments on the panel summary.



Summary Menu

USDA United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NIFA Peer Review System

Home | **Summaries** | Status | Questionnaire | Change password | Confidentiality | Helpful Hints | Contact us | Log out

Panel Summary Menu

Click here for Summaries

Proposal Title:	[REDACTED]		
Grant Application :	2012- [REDACTED]	Institution:	The Curators of the University of Missouri
Project Director:	[REDACTED]	Panel Summary State :	Released for Comments
Panel Scribe :	Schmoldt NIFA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Panelists :	Leslie Ann Gilbert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Ley

Reviewer is working on summary and it is locked.

Proposal Title:	[REDACTED]		
Grant Application :	2012- [REDACTED]	Institution:	Washington State University
Project Director:	[REDACTED]	Panel Summary State :	New
Panel Scribe :	Schmoldt NIFA	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Panelists :	Elizabeth Ley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Laurie Fortis <input type="checkbox"/>

SCRIBE - Click here to start the summary.

Proposal Title:	[REDACTED]		
Grant Application :	2012- [REDACTED]	Institution:	Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University
Project Director:	[REDACTED]	Panel Summary State :	Released for Comments
Panel Scribe :	Leslie Ann Gilbert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Panelists :	Erin Berg	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Ley <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

A blank check-box means that the reviewer has NOT reviewed the summary yet.



Scribe responsibilities:

Complete each tab of the panel summary form.

(Note: The program summary form may differ from the example shown. Please review the instructions provided for your specific panel.)

- **Positive Aspects:** summarize the panel discussion of the strengths of the proposal.
- **Negative Aspects:** summarize the panel discussion of the weaknesses of the proposal.
- **Synthesis Comments:** explain/justify the final ranking of the proposal, but **DO NOT** include the ranking in the text.



Home | Summaries | Status | Questionnaire | Change password | Confidentiality | Helpful Hints | Contact us | Log out

Panel Summary Menu

Panel Summary for [Redacted]

Grant Application : 2012-[Redacted] Institution: The Curators of the University of Missouri Status: Released for Comments
Project Director: [Redacted] Panel Scribe : Schmoltdt NIFA View : Reviews
Panel Summary: Original Panel Summary Updated Panel Summary

Positive Aspects of the Proposal
Rich text editor with toolbar (B, I, U, link, unlink, list, list, insert) and content 'this is a test'
Negative Aspects of the Proposal
Synthesis Comments

Click here to open text boxes to type negative comments and synthesis

Back Save For Later Submit



Please refer to the screen shot on the preceding page:

Scribe Responsibilities *continued.*

- To refer back to reviews, click **[View: Reviews.](#)**
- To save the panel summary and work on it later, click **Save for Later.**
- To submit the panel summary and make it available to other reviewers, click **Submit.** (After the other reviewers have seen and commented on the panel summary, the scribe will then incorporate any comments before the final submission.)



Panel Summary Menu



Grant Application :

[2012-](#) [redacted]

Institution:

Board of Regents, Univ of Nebraska, Univ of Nebraska-Lincoln

Status:

Working

Project Director:

[redacted]

Panel Scribe :

Elizabeth Ley

View :

[Reviews](#)

Panel Summary:

Positive Aspects of the Proposal:

Negative Aspects of the Proposal:

Synthesis Comments:

Click here to edit summary

Click here to make summary available to other reviewers

Go back and edit

Complete Submission



Other Assigned Reviewers:

- To access panel summary, click on Panel Summary State **Released for Comments**.
- To lock panel summary from other assigned reviewers while adding comments, click **Lock-to Comment**. You must **Lock-to-Comment** even if you don't want to change anything about the draft summary.
- You are ready to review and edit the summary:
No changes: insert last name and indicate agreement.
Comments: insert last name and enter comments.
- To save comments, but still block other reviewers from commenting; click **Save for Later**.



Individual Summary Screen



Panel Summary Menu



Grant Application : [2012](#) [Redacted]

Institution: The Curators of the University of Missouri

Status: **Released for Comments**

Project Director: [Redacted]

Panel Scribe : Schmoltd NIFA

View : [Reviews](#)

Panel Summary [Redacted]

[Original Panel Summary](#)

[Updated Panel Summary](#)

Positive Aspects of the Proposal:

this is a test

Negative Aspects of the Proposal:

this is a test

Synthesis Comments:

this is a test

Click **Lock-to-Comment** before starting to input your text.

Back

Lock-to-Comment



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Other Assigned Reviewers *continued.*

- To submit comments, click **Submit**. The Panel Summary State will change to **Released for Comments** or **Compile** and will become available to other reviewers or the scribe.



Panel Summary Menu

Panel Summary for Integration Of Mustard Residue For Suppression Of Dollar Spot, Large Crabgrass And Nematodes In Creeping Bentgrass Turf , NIFA

Grant Application : [2012-4](#) Institution: The Curators of the University of Missouri Status: Released for Comments
Project Director: [Redacted] Panel Scribe : Schmoltdt NIFA View : [Reviews](#)
Panel Summary: [Original Panel Summary](#) [Updated Panel Summary](#)

Positive Aspects of the Proposal

B I U [Clipboard] [Print] [Refresh]

this is a test

Negative Aspects of the Proposal

Synthesis Comments

[Back](#) [Save For Later](#) [Submit](#)





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Scribe:

- To edit and incorporate reviewers comments, click on the Panel Summary State **Compile**.
- Delete all references to reviewer's names.
- To display the original panel summary, click **View Original Summary**.
- To save summary once editing is completed, click **Submit**.



Scribe *continued.*

- To edit text, if necessary, click **Go Back and Edit.**
- To submit the completed panel summary, click **Complete Submission.** The Panel Summary State will change to **Submitted** and will no longer be available for further edits unless returned by NPL or Panel Manager.



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Note: More detailed instructions on panel summaries will be provided during the panel.



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If you need assistance:

- Contact the program staff assigned to your panel, or
- Use the “contact us” option at the top of the screen in the PRS system to report technical difficulties.