**Guidelines for Giving Applicants Feedback**

April 2020

Both PIs and applicant institutions are always trying to make sure that they are as responsive as possible given the information available. Providing application feedback to applicants and institutions can help improve proposals over time, creating a culture of more competitive and more responsive applications. This can be done both individually (proposal by proposal) and more generally (by communicating overall characteristics and general statistics about the application pool).

Best practices for specific feedback:

* How well has the application addressed each of your review criteria?
* How well has the application addressed the scientific area of interest?
* How well has the application communicated alignment with the sponsor interests as described in the request for proposals?
* Was the application denied? Why?
* If written feedback is not possible, consider verbal debriefs with either the institutional official or the faculty member and the institutional official. This can be done in bulk or individually.

Best practices for general feedback are most easily communicated on a sponsor web page:

* What are the most common scientific mistakes in the application pool?
* What are the most common administrative mistakes in the application pool?
* What percentage of applications were funded (low success rates are expected from prestigious or large awards)?

Sample Feedback Form Items:

* Proposal Title:
* PI:
* Applicant Institution:
* Review Criterion #1: (repeated for each review criterion)
  + Strengths:
  + Concerns:
* Overall Strengths of Proposal:
* Overall Concerns with Proposal: