NSF ATE Panel Review Process

1. **Proposal submitted** and assigned to the ATE program for review if it meets NSF requirements. Please note changes to the Merit Review criteria for proposals submitted after January 1, 2013. A proposal may be returned without review if it does not meet proposal preparation requirements. For 2013…

   251 proposals received ($200M requested; $64M available); anticipated award breakdown:
   - 51-61 new awards
   - 4-6 Centers (new and/or renewal)
   - 12-20 Small Grants for those new to ATE
   - 35 projects

2. **Program Officer assigned** to proposal; panel review process begins.

3. **Review panel members identified, selected and grouped** by proposal type/discipline; 3-6 reviewers per panel; 10-12 proposals per panel with each reviewed in advance and on site by all panel members.

4. **Preparatory webinars** held with reviewers.

5. **External Peer Review panels and Program Officers convene** to evaluate proposals and make recommendations for funding to the cognizant Program Officer (overall rating and 1-2 page review by each panel member).

   Rating rubric:
   - Excellent—minor flaws; highly recommended for PO support and funding
   - Very Good—1-2 fixable concerns; fund if possible and when fixed
   - Good—good concept but multiple concern areas; slim likelihood of funding
   - Fair—good concept but poor execution with many concerns; likely to not be funded
   - Poor—poor concept and execution with too many concerns; likely to not be funded

   Panel Reviews attempt to provide meaningful evaluation of the proposed goals, objectives, activities and execution plans and offer suggestions for improvement where appropriate. Panel members are encouraged but not mandated to reach consensus on their recommendation to the PO.

6. After the panel recommendations are reviewed, **Program Officers may seek additional information** regarding a proposal to further inform their funding decisions. The PO may submit additional questions to the proposers, conduct a site visit, engage in negotiations, or meet with proposers directly.

7. **Program Officer makes funding recommendations** to the cognizant Division Director (the process can take up to six months).

8. **Division Director reviews and acts**: (a) the organization is notified if funding is declined and review information is available in the FastLane System; or, (b) a recommendation to fund is submitted to a Grants & Agreements Officer, Division of Grants and Agreements (DGA).

9. **Verbatim copies of confidential reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer**. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

10. **Business Review occurs.** The Grants and Agreements Officer In the Division of Grants and Agreements (DGA) conducts a review of business, financial, and policy implications, with most awards made within 30 days. More time may be required for organizations that have not received prior funding.

11. **Award finalized**, including the award notice, budget, proposal, applicable NSF conditions, and any other documents or requirements incorporated by reference into the agreement. Each award notice specifically identifies conditions that are applicable to, and become part of that award.

12. **Grant work begins in earnest.**

Total elapsed time from Step2-12: (approximately 10-12 months)