



NSF ATE Panel Review Process

1. After the proposals come in, they are sorted. The sorting process is complex. Small Scale proposals are separated from ATE Projects. ATE Projects are grouped by discipline. ATE Consortia, Center, and Research proposals are also separated from other types of proposals. Proposals in each category are further divided for panel review so that no single panel has too many proposals to handle.
2. Program Officers invite reviewers and assemble review panels of typically 4-6 individuals who will review and rate proposals. The number of reviewers and panels needed each year depends on the number of proposals and the categories or tracks in which the proposals were submitted.
3. Preparatory webinars are held with reviewers.
4. Panels are primarily made up of two-year college educators – and often include one or more industry representatives or other professionals who are discipline experts and/or understand and value technician education.
5. Proposals are commented on and rated independently by each reviewer.
Rating rubric:
 - Excellent – Minor flaws; highly recommended for Program Officers 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
6. Proposals are then reviewed by panels of reviewers meeting virtually via Zoom or in person near NSF headquarters. The process tends to run for a couple of weeks at the end of November and into December.

7. Panel Reviews attempt to provide meaningful evaluation of the proposed goals, objectives, activities and execution plans. Reviews might offer suggestions for improvement where appropriate. Panel members are encouraged but not mandated to reach consensus on their recommendation to the Program Officer.
8. Following a panel discussion about a proposal, a designated panelist prepares a panel summary for the purpose of capturing the main points of the discussion.
9. After review panels have completed their work, then Program Officers consider reviewer feedback in making recommendations regarding the proposal. Program Officers decide whether they are **likely to** recommend the proposal for funding or **will not recommend** a proposal for funding.
10. At this fork in the road:
 - A. proposals that will not be recommended for funding are declined.
 - B. Proposals that are classified as likely to be recommended for funding move forward to what is referred to as the negotiation phase of the funding process.
11. Program Officers will seek additional information regarding a proposal to further inform their funding decisions. If all goes well during this negotiation phase of the process, a proposal will be recommended for funding.
12. Once recommended for funding, a proposal then moves to the NSF Division of Grants and Agreements, referred to as DGA. This stage in the funding process looks at the proposal from a financial and management of federal funds perspective. At certain award amount thresholds, a proposal will also be subject to another level of review. This second level of review is provided by staff members in the NSF Cost Analysis and Audit Resolution office, or CAAR.
13. If review by DGA or DGA and CAAR goes well, DGA will make a grant award.
14. Grant work begins in earnest.

Total elapsed time from Step 1 to 12: (anywhere from 3-11 months)
