

Limited Submission Review Instructions & Scoring Matrix

NSF Research Traineeship (NRT) Program

Principal Investigator(s):

BACKGROUND & INSTRUCTIONS

A “limited submission” refers to a grant program that places a limitation on the number of proposal applications a single eligible entity can submit each cycle. The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) has a process in place to allow for an internal competition among interested PIs to determine which application(s) will move forward. Once a limited submission opportunity is identified, an internal call for pre-proposals is sent out to potential PIs. Those interested in being considered for full submission are required to submit a pre-proposal by a specified date. If more applications are received than the institution is allowed to submit to the sponsor, the applications are moved forward to a peer review process in order to make final selection(s).

That peer review process is what you are taking part in now. While we do want you to be aware that the proposals you review here are *not* finalized and will be expanded before they are submitted to the sponsor, we ask that you be as critical in your review as you would be if these applications were moving forward to a sponsor now. We are especially interested in your feedback on weaknesses of the applications and where improvements can be made either before they move forward through submission to this program or others.

If you are reviewing more than one application for this same program, we ask that you use the applications as a reference for one another in your scoring, knowing that the pool will be ranked based on scores received to determine which move(s) forward to the sponsor.

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SCORING

Selection of applications to be submitted to the **NSF Research Traineeship (NRT) Program** will be based on a 5-point scoring scale for criteria given below. Scores for each criteria will then be weighted based on program specifications.

No. of applications allowed per institution this cycle: **2**

- Ratings should be given in whole numbers (not decimals).
- Reviewers should consider not only the relative number of strengths and weaknesses, but also the importance of these strengths and weaknesses to the criteria or to the overall impact when determining a score.
 - For example, a major strength may outweigh many minor and correctable weaknesses

Minor weakness: easily addressable weakness, does not substantially lessen impact

Moderate weakness: lessens impact

Major weakness: Severely limits impact

SCORING RUBRIC

Score	Description
1	Poor – No evidence or information provided
2	Fair – Minimal evidence; limited potential; vague; weak concepts; limited likelihood of success; limited in innovative thinking; lacks sufficient information
3	Good – Some evidence; partially developed concepts; some potential for effectiveness and success; some inconsistencies; needs work; some innovation present; requires additional information/clarification
4	Very Good – Convincing concepts with enough examples of evidence to indicate a good chance for success; clear and complete; innovative
5	Excellent – Excellent concepts; exceptional evidence; well-thought out with an extremely high likelihood of success; exemplary; highly innovative

Borrowed from State of Ohio's Straight A Fund Application Scoring & Evaluation Process, Criteria & Rubrics.

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SCORED REVIEW CRITERIA

Reviewers should consider each of the review criteria below and give a separate score for each. Note – additional solicitation specific review criteria have been incorporated into the primary six standard NSF review criteria below.

Below, please summarize the factors that informed your individual criteria scores.

1. Potential for Advancing Knowledge

Potential of the proposed activity to advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit). Alignment to one of the [NSF Research Big Ideas \(link here\)](#) six (6) priority areas: Harnessing the Data Revolution (HDR), The Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier (HTF), Navigating the New Arctic (NNA), Windows on the Universe: The Era of Multi-Messenger Astrophysics (WOU), The Quantum Leap: Leading the Next Quantum Revolution (QL), and Understanding the Rules of Life: Predicting Phenotype (ROL).

Strengths: Click here to enter text.

Weaknesses: Click here to enter text.

2. Potential for Advancing Societal Outcomes

Potential for the proposed activity to benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts). Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project.

Strengths: Click here to enter text.

Weaknesses: Click here to enter text.

3. Incorporation of Transformative Concepts

The proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts.

Strengths: Click here to enter text.



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Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

4. Project Planning

The plan for carrying out the proposed activities is well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale. The plan incorporates a mechanism to assess success.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

5. Qualifications of PI, Team or Organization

The quality and capabilities of the team to successfully complete the project. The technical and commercial strengths and the appropriateness of the proposed partnership(s) and its role in supporting and enabling the objectives of the proposal. The commitment of the proposed partners in reaching the stated goals of the proposal.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

6. Resources

The PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) has access to adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

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ADDITIONAL SOLICITATION SPECIFIC REVIEW CRITERIA

7. Integration of Research and Education

The proposal addresses training needs that are not currently available at the institution(s) and/or in disciplines, and there are clear and compelling connections between the training elements and the interdisciplinary research theme.

Strengths: Click here to enter text.

Weaknesses: Click here to enter text.

8. Interdisciplinarity

Degree of interdisciplinarity and the potential for high impact synergies among the disciplines.

Strengths: Click here to enter text.

Weaknesses: Click here to enter text.

9. Professional Development

The breadth and quality of the plan to provide NRT trainees with professional development training for a range of research and research-related career pathways, both within and outside academia.

Strengths: Click here to enter text.

Weaknesses: Click here to enter text.

10. Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities

Quality of the recruiting and mentoring plans to broaden participation.

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Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

11. Evaluation

The evaluation plan includes outcomes, performance measures, benchmarks, and an evaluation timetable, as well as a description of how formative evaluation will improve practice.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO APPLICANT

Reviewers may provide guidance to the applicant or recommend against submission without fundamental revision.

Additional Comments to Applicants (Optional)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

EVALUTATION SCORES

Criteria	Your Score
1. Potential for Advancing Knowledge	
2. Potential for Advancing Societal Outcomes	
3. Incorporation of Transformative Concepts	
4. Project Planning	

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5. Qualifications of PI, Team or Organization	
6. Resources	
7. Integration of Research and Education	
8. Interdisciplinarity	
9. Professional Development	
10. Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities	
11. Evaluation	
TOTAL SCORE	