



## ANA Merit Review

### Job Description: *Panel Chairperson*

**Job Title:** Panel Chairperson

**Positions that Report to the Panel Review Chairperson:** Panel Reviewer

**Position that Panel Review Chairperson Reports to:** Panel Manager (PM)

#### **Chairperson's Role and Tasks:**

- **Lead panel discussions** to ensure objective, unbiased reviews.
- Compile reviewer comments for the Panel Summary Report (PSR) in Application Review Module (ARM).
- Set **ground rules and schedule** with the panel.
- Preparation: Review comments 4 hours before discussions to **summarize**.
- Moderate discussions for consensus on scores and comments.
- Submit draft PSR to Panel Manager (PM) for **review and edits**.
- Revise PSR based on PM's feedback until final PM approval.
- Commitment Time: **10-12 hours** per application.
- Be available for panelists and management for the duration of the panel session including **weekends** and evenings.

#### **Understanding Merit Review in Grant Applications:**

Merit review is a critical part of evaluating grant applications. It uses a peer review process to ensure an impartial and fair selection. Here's what it involves:

- **Technical Evaluation:** An in-depth assessment of the application's technical aspects against the criteria in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).
- **Review Team:** Three unbiased reviewers and one Panel Chairperson discuss, score, and comment on each application. The Panel Chairperson compiles these into a Panel Summary Review (PSR).
- **Feedback:** The PSR is vital feedback for applicants, provided by the Administration for Native Americans (ANA).
- Responsiveness and Fairness: Ensures selections align with NOFO requirements and public expectations of equity.

The Chairperson organizes reviewer comments and guides the panel discussions, prioritizing transparency and fairness, when drafting the PSR. The chairperson works with the ANA Panel Manager (PM) and Review Director (RD) to finalize the PSRs.

#### **Chairperson Requirements and Essential Functions:**

1. **Know Your NOFO:** Understand criteria for each program area assigned.
2. **Avoid Conflicts:** Report any conflict of interest immediately.
3. Preparation & Participation
  - Read all grant applications closely.
  - Set a schedule with reviewers to meet ANA deadlines.
  - Ensure timely review completion and full participation in meetings.



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#### 4. Facilitation Duties

- Maintain professionalism and respect.
- Consolidate comments before panel discussions.
- Guide fair and objective application reviews.
- Take or record notes for PSR.

#### 5. Comments and Scoring

- Ensure comments are clear, thorough, appropriate, and non-biased.
- Provide feedback on inadequate comments.
- Balance and consolidate comments for PSR.
- Revise PSR as needed until approved.

#### 6. **Confidentiality:** Keep application information private and secure.

#### 7. **Deadlines:** Ensure all panel tasks are completed on time.

#### 8. **Feedback:** Assess and recommend improvements for panel reviews.

#### 9. **Documentation:** Complete and return all required forms.

### **Review Guidelines:**

- Criteria Understanding: Reviewers must use NOFO's criteria for scoring.
- Comments: Base comments only on published criteria.
- Policy Adherence: Follow all regulations and ethical guidelines.
- Conflict of Interest: Address any real or perceived conflicts immediately.
- Electronic Input: Enter scores and comments electronically.
- Summary Report: Prepare and finalize the report with PM or RD's edits.

### **Working Relationships:**

- Panel Reviewers  
Work under chairperson's guidance on review sessions. Ensure quality comments, share information, manage schedules, and solve conflicts respectfully.
- PM (Project Manager)  
Coaches chairpersons, reviews summary reports for quality, participates in discussions, and ensures adherence to evaluation criteria. Edits and provides feedback on PSRs.
- Review Director (RD)  
The RD reviews PSR and may request revisions or give final approval.

### **Job Requirements:**

- **Native American Knowledge:** Must know about their history, culture, politics, and issues.
- **Leadership:** Can manage remotely and foster teamwork.
- **Confidentiality:** Keep information secure.
- Training: Complete ANA reviewer and chairperson online training.
- **Impartiality:** Be unbiased and respectful without conflicts of interest.
- Skills:
  - Community development, project planning, and budgeting.
  - Understand HHS, ACF, and ANA grant policies.
- Communication and Analysis: Merge comments clearly and concisely.



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- **Facilitation Skills:** Manage discussion effectively and professionally.
- **Technology Requirements:** Basic computer skills, videoconferencing, internet browsing, and learn ARM system. Must have a laptop with a camera and reliable internet plus a phone during reviews.