

# NSA Mathematical Sciences Grants Program

## Instructions for Reviewers

Comments on the following aspects of a proposal are requested:

1. Scientific merit and originality of the proposed research
2. A summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed research
3. Qualifications of the Principal Investigator (PI) and any co-PIs for carrying out the proposed research
4. Suggestions for improving the proposal

We are using an electronic system for managing the entire grant review process. A link was provided in the e-mail that you received from us, which will take you to the proposal that you are being asked to review. The proposal available to you for review will be in PDF format. If you wish to have a paper copy sent to you then please send an e-mail request to Colin Swanson at nsagrants@ams.org. Written comments and a summary rating, based on the criteria described below, should be provided. You will be asked to choose a summary rating from a pull-down menu and it is preferred that you upload your written comments in PDF format, but the system will also accept a report in TeX, Word and plain text formats.

Please do NOT base your review on any preconceived notion about what might be of interest to NSA. Rather, treat the proposal just as if it were, for example, an NSF proposal while applying these criteria.

*EXCELLENT*: Has the potential to be in the top 10% of current research in its field; highest priority for support. This rating should be used sparingly as it is meant for the absolute top research in a specific field.

*VERY GOOD*: Would fall in the top third of research in its field, but not in the top 10%; should be supported.

*GOOD*: Would fall in the middle third of research in its field; worthy of support

*FAIR*: Would fall in the lowest third of research in its field.

*POOR*: Technically inadequate; should not be supported.

You will be asked to choose one of these ratings from a pull-down menu when you upload your report. There are no “in-between” categories (e.g., Very Good/Good) available from the pull-down menu, but you may express your view that a proposal is “in-between” by specifying that in your report.

Your reviewer request email includes a link for you to use to respond to the request for review and indicate whether you can review this proposal or not. If you have an affiliation or financial connection with the institution or person submitting this proposal that might be construed as creating a **conflict of interest** (CoI) and which makes it impossible for you to be objective, please indicate that on the web form. If you think you may have a CoI but are unsure, please write to Colin Swanson at [nsagrants@ams.org](mailto:nsagrants@ams.org). Also, if you submitted a proposal for funding to this program for this year's grant cycle, then you have an automatic **conflict of interest**. We make every effort to avoid sending reviewer requests to current PIs, so if you received this in error, write to Colin Swanson at [nsagrants@ams.org](mailto:nsagrants@ams.org).

Reviewers are identified to the NSA, but maximum effort will be exerted to safeguard their anonymity with respect to the proposal authors. Censored copies of reviews, without the name and affiliation of the reviewer or identifying remarks, will be sent to the principal investigator. However, because of the Freedom of Information Act and other laws, no absolute guarantee that reviews will not be released can be given.

As is customary, reviewers are not paid for their service. Those invited to serve as reviewers have been selected by the American Mathematical Society leadership and attempts are made to distribute these requests widely to minimize the demand on the time of the individuals.

If additional information is needed, please notify the project administrator, Colin Swanson, via e-mail at [nsagrants@ams.org](mailto:nsagrants@ams.org), or by telephone at **401-455-4096**. Reviewers should not contact the proposal investigators or the NSA.