

**NIH Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Rules:
Information for Reviewers of NIH Grant Applications and R&D Contract Proposals**

Confidentiality in NIH peer review *prohibits* a peer reviewer from, among other actions:

- Sharing applications, proposals, or meeting materials with anyone who has not been officially designated to participate in the peer review process*, including but not limited to colleagues, lab members, fellows, students, applicants, offerors or employees of an offeror.
- Granting anyone who has not been officially designated to participate in the peer review process* access to any NIH secure computer system or advisory committee meeting using his or her password or credentials, or through shared communication.
- Disclosing, in any manner, information about the committee deliberations, discussions, evaluations, or documents to anyone who has not been officially designated to participate in the peer review process*, including but not limited to a colleague, lab member, fellow, student, applicant, offeror or employee of an offeror.
- Disclosing, in any manner, information about the committee deliberations, discussions, or evaluations related to an application to another member who has a declared conflict of interest with that application.
- Using information contained in an application or proposal for his/her personal benefit or making such information available for the personal benefit of any other individual or organization.
- Participating in NIH peer review without signing a confidentiality certification.

If the NIH determines that a situation involves a *bona fide* breach of confidentiality in the peer review process, the NIH may take remedial steps, such as:

- notifying the peer reviewer in question and/or his or her institutional Research Integrity Officer or other similar, senior, institutional official.
- terminating the reviewer's term, if he or she is a standing member of an NIH chartered committee.
- referring the matter to the NIH Office of Management Assessment and possibly to the Office of the Inspector General in the Department of Health and Human Services.

Certification

I certify that I have read the "NIH Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Rules and Information for Reviewers" above. Under penalty of perjury (18 USC 1001), I certify that I fully understand the confidential nature of the reviewer recruitment and NIH peer review process and agree:

- (1) to destroy, delete, or return all materials related to applications or proposals, associated materials made available to reviewers, information and materials related to the recruitment process and reviews, reviewers' evaluations, and discussions during review meetings;
- (2) not to grant anyone who has not been officially designated to participate in the peer review process* access to any NIH secure computer system or advisory committee meeting
- (3) not to disclose or discuss the applications or proposals, associated materials made available to reviewers, information and materials related to the recruitment process and reviews, reviewers' evaluations, and discussions during review meetings with any other individual except as authorized by the Scientific Review Officer (SRO) or other designated NIH official;

- (4) not to disclose information about the committee deliberations, discussions, or evaluations related to an application to another member who has a declared conflict of interest with that application;
- (5) not to use information contained in an application or proposal for my personal benefit or make such information available for the personal benefit of any other individual or organization;
- (6) not to disclose procurement information prior to the award of a contract; and
- (7) to refer all inquiries concerning the recruitment or review to the SRO or other designated NIH official.

**An individual who has been designated by the SRO to participate in a particular study section meeting.*

Signature: _____ Date: _____