

## Dual Anonymous TAC Process Workshop: STScI September 25<sup>th</sup>

### Summary of general discussion

Following the morning presentations, the participants divided into four groups to discuss the challenges and potential adjustments to the overall process. The participants re-grouped for a plenary session to present their conclusions, which are summarized here:

1. All observatories/missions agreed that there are no insuperable obstacles to implementing the dual anonymous process for their proposal reviews. There was general agreement that while it is likely impossible to render all proposals truly anonymous given the small scale of the astronomical community, particularly for some missions, changing the focus of the discussion to the science, not the scientist, is beneficial.
2. Resources: There were concerns about the level of resources required to support the dual anonymous process. In some cases, this centred on adapting the proposal software, but the primary concern was having access to sufficient personnel to provide levelers for each panel. These are both particular concerns for the smaller NASA missions. Adequate training for levelers is also likely to be an issue. STScI can offer some assistance at the outset, but a longer-term plan is required. One possible option would be to consider a cross-mission team of trained levelers, drawn from various NASA sites, who could be deployed to assist multiple reviews.
3. Conflict of interest: the dual anonymous process requires a mechanism for identifying personal conflicts. That might require additional work in developing appropriate databases; this might also be a resource that could be shared across NASA missions & other observatories.
4. Possible adjustments to the process:
  - a. Track record – an automated technique could be used to recover the publication record for proposal teams from databases like the ADS. One would need to identify a suitable mechanism or algorithm for applying relative weights to contributions from the PI and co-Is.
    - i. Providing well-developed data reduction pipelines is a mechanism for helping support inexperienced observers with a limited track record.
  - b. Additional factors: set grey areas for proposals close to the accept/reject boundary, and provide access to additional information for those proposals, such as student P and the type of institution.
5. Publicising the process: it might be useful to breakout sessions at an AAS meeting, and certainly include discussion of the changes in the NASA Town Hall.
6. Metrics: we need to establish appropriate metrics to track the results going forward.