Reviewer Guidelines in Anonymous Reviews

Site Contents

The HST peer review process will move to a double-anonymous review process, in which authors' identities are concealed from both review panel members and TAC members. Provided here are guidelines to assist reviewers in insuring a fairer proposal evaluation process. See the Recommendations of the Working Group on Anonymizing Proposal Reviews site for information in the working group that compiled these guidelines, and the FAQ on Anonymizing Proposal Reviews for more general information on this change. A similar page gives Proposer Guidelines in Anonymous Reviews for help in preparing proposals.

The primary objective of these reviews is to select the best science and not the best science teams. The TAC panels and chairs rank proposals in order of scientific merit, and recommend the resources that should be allocated to each. The experience of the team with HST or otherwise is not a consideration. **Do not spend time attempting to identify the team or the principal investigator**. All accepted proposals are assigned a Program Coordinator who works with the PI to finalize the Phase II submission for feasible observations. MAST provides "science ready" data for most uses, and there is help /documentation for further data processing.

In some respects, the reviewer conflicts with a given proposal are a bit simpler. If the reviewers do not know who the proposers are, how can they be conflicted? However, there will still be checks within our system for reviewer conflicts, largely institutional or collaborative, and those with identified conflicts will be excused from the review of the proposal. As always, reviewers can (and should) identify issues not identified by our system, personal conflicts or possible competing proposals.

A reviewer's preliminary grading should be centered on the scientific merit of the proposal. This includes technical issues in the design of the study, as described in the technical justification and elsewhere.

The discussion should focus on the scientific merit of the proposal. Chairs need to be attentive; refocus or terminate discussion when it moves to PI or team.

Proposals that are not compliant with the anonymizing guidelines should be flagged as non-compliant, much in the same way proposals that exceed the page limits are flagged. **Non-compliance may affect the outcome of the proposal. Proposals may be downgraded or rejected**.

Panels should provide written feedback in the comments to proposers if they have not anonymized themselves sufficiently.