

**Directorate for Biological Sciences
Office of the Assistant Director**

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 18, 2019
TO: Gisele T. Muller-Parker, Staff Associate, Office of Integrative Activities
FROM: Joanne Tornow, Assistant Director, Directorate for Biological Sciences
SUBJECT: Report and Diversity Memo of the 2018 Committee of Visitors for the Division of
Molecular and Cellular Biosciences

This memo reports on the diversity, independence, balance, and resolution of conflicts of the Committee of Visitors (CoV) for the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB) held June 11-13, 2018 at NSF to review the Division's work during FY2014 - FY2017. The credibility of the CoV mechanism rests, in large measure, on the selection of independent experts who can provide balanced and impartial assessments to NSF. Prior to issuing letters of invitation to serve on the MCB CoV, the MCB Division Director and Deputy Division Director were consulted regarding potential CoV candidates and the slate of invitees was approved by BIO/OAD. Program Officers in MCB also were instrumental in identifying and selecting membership of the CoV.

The CoV represented a broad segment of the disciplines consistent with the scope of activities for which MCB has oversight responsibilities. The committee was composed of fifteen members, including one representative of the BIO Advisory Committee. Six members are female, and three are from underrepresented minorities in the fields of molecular and cellular biosciences. Members currently work in thirteen different states (AL, AR, AK, CA, DE, IL, MD, NC, NY, OH, PA, TN, WA), including four EPSCoR States. Twelve members are from academic institutions, including two Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions. Two members are from government (DOE and NIH/NIGMS) and one is from a national laboratory (LBNL). Four of the members had not submitted a proposal to the Division in the previous five years. Seven of the members had not served on a review panel for the Division in the previous five years, but eleven of the fifteen had prior NSF review experience. Two members had prior MCB CoV experience, one returning from serving as the co-Chair of the 2014 CoV and another who had served on that same CoV. One member had prior experience as an MCB rotator, but did not serve during the period under review.

Committee members were advised about confidentiality and conflicts of interest both prior to arriving at NSF and on the first day of meeting. All CoV members were required to complete the NSF Conflict of Interest form and submit a list of potential conflicts prior to receiving access to CoV materials. All identified conflicts were managed in the Electronic Jacket CoV module and individual CoV members were unable to see conflicted proposals and were absent from any discussion of conflicted proposals.