

**FY 2013 REPORT TEMPLATE FOR
NSF COMMITTEES OF VISITORS (COVs)**

The table below should be completed by program staff.

Date of COV: September 9–10, 2013
Program/Cluster/Section: Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP)
Division: Division of Human Resource Development (HRD)
Directorate: Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR)
Number of actions reviewed: 36 Awards: 23 Declinations: 13 Other:
Total number of actions within Program/Cluster/Division during period under review: 146 Awards: 115 Declinations: 31 Other:
Manner in which reviewed actions were selected: Proposals were selected in a random manner. Proposals with numbers ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, or 9 were first chosen. Using this methodology, the sample lacked representation of the full LSAMP portfolio (i.e., Alliances, Bridges to the Doctorate, Educational Research). Hence the LSAMP program staff added proposals ending in 2 or 8 to make sure that all types of projects were represented.

COV Membership

	Name	Affiliation
COV Chair or Co-Chairs:	Dr. Evelynn Hammonds	Harvard University
	Dr. Francisco C. Rodriguez	MiraCosta Community College District
COV Members:	Dr. James Perkins	Jackson State University
	Dr. Lesia Crumpton-Young	University of Central Florida
	Dr. M. Rita Caso	Sam Houston State University

INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE PROGRAM'S PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT

Briefly discuss and provide comments for *each* relevant aspect of the program's review process and management. Comments should be based on a review of proposal actions (awards, declinations, and withdrawals) that were *completed within the past three fiscal years*. Provide comments for *each* program being reviewed and for those questions that are relevant to the program(s) under review. Quantitative information may be required for some questions. Constructive comments noting areas in need of improvement are encouraged.

I. Questions about the quality and effectiveness of the program's use of merit review process. Please answer the following questions about the effectiveness of the merit review process and provide comments or concerns in the space below the question.

QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MERIT REVIEW PROCESS	YES, NO, DATA NOT AVAILABLE, or NOT APPLICABLE
<p>1. Are the review methods (for example, panel, ad hoc, site visits) appropriate?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Panels, site visits, and reverse-site visits were appropriately used in the review of submitted proposals.</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Type of Review Module</p>	YES
<p>2. Are both merit review criteria addressed</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a) In individual reviews?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b) In panel summaries?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c) In Program Officer review analyses?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Individual reviews of Panel summaries and all Program Officers' (POs) review analyses were thorough and addressed both the intellectual merit and broader impact criteria.</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	YES

<p>3. Do the individual reviewers giving written reviews provide substantive comments to explain their assessment of the proposals?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Reviewers answered all the questions necessary and generally demonstrated appropriate understanding of the overall review process and the duties that need to be fulfilled. When explanatory comments were sparse the reviews were likely to be quite positive. The panel review summaries and analysis were excellent.</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>4. Do the panel summaries provide the rationale for the panel consensus (or reasons consensus was not reached)?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Panel summaries were thorough and provided support for the decision-making process of determining awards and declinations.</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>5. Does the documentation in the jacket provide the rationale for the award/decline decision?</p> <p>[Note: Documentation in the jacket usually includes a context statement, individual reviews, panel summary (if applicable), site visit reports (if applicable), program officer review analysis, and staff diary notes.]</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The documentation included in the jackets provided clear justification for award/decline decisions, in conjunction with panel summaries and Program Officer reviews.</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>6. Does the documentation to the PI provide the rationale for the award/decline decision?</p> <p>[Note: Documentation to PI usually includes context statement, individual reviews, panel summary (if applicable), site visit reports (if applicable), and, if not otherwise provided in the panel summary, an explanation from the program officer (written in the PO Comments field or emailed with a copy in the jacket, or telephoned with a diary note in the jacket) of the basis for a declination.]</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p>YES</p>

Principal Investigators (PIs) were provided with thorough feedback, which reflected statements contained in the panel summaries. Data Source: Jackets	
7. Additional comments on the quality and effectiveness of the program's use of merit review process: The individual reviews could be strengthened by providing panel members with a generic example of a well-written individual review to help reviewers better understand the expectations and best practices of review writing.	

II. Questions concerning the selection of reviewers. Please answer the following questions about the selection of reviewers and provide comments or concerns in the space below the question.

SELECTION OF REVIEWERS	YES , NO, DATA NOT AVAILABLE, or NOT APPLICABLE
1. Did the program make use of reviewers having appropriate expertise and/or qualifications? Comments: In all cases there was a diverse mix of disciplines represented on the review panels. Data Source: Jackets	YES
2. Did the program recognize and resolve conflicts of interest when appropriate? Comments: Any conflicts of interest and the manner in which they were addressed were explicitly documented in the jackets. Data Source: Jackets	YES
Additional comments on reviewer selection:	

There was an excellent balance of genders among the reviewers chosen to serve on all panels.	
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III. Questions concerning the management of the program under review. Please comment on the following:

MANAGEMENT OF THE PROGRAM UNDER REVIEW

1. Management of the program.

Comments:

LSAMP is a complex program (40 centers/alliances which include 644 total institutions/partners in which the program is implemented). Program staff has done an excellent job of gathering meaningful program data on practices/outcomes and disseminating the information nationally. Additionally the program staff has conducted program evaluations that have shown the impacts of program efforts.

Additional NSF personnel are required to support LSAMP, the Bridge to the Baccalaureate (BB), and the Bridge to the Doctorate Fellows (BD) if the program is to continue to perform well and to adapt to new challenges. The current PO has done an excellent job of managing the program given the limited personnel resources.

Additional personnel should be hired in sufficient time to ensure that the experience of the senior PO can be used to train new personnel in order to continue the success of LSAMP. A period of transition is needed to train incoming personnel and transfer the knowledge needed for continued leadership and program quality.

The LSAMP program staff has worked diligently to disseminate the activities and outcomes of its various alliances around the nation.

2. Responsiveness of the program to emerging research and education opportunities.

Comments:

The program has been responsive in providing valuable STEM activities opportunities for underrepresented minorities (i.e., international experiences, NSF’s Science and Technology Centers STCs), the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) program, research experiences, etc.) despite LSAMP’s flat funding levels over the past three years. This has been accomplished through inter-program and inter-agency leveraging of funds (i.e., Department of Energy (DOE) national laboratories).

3. Program planning and prioritization process (internal and external) that guided the development of the portfolio.

<p>Comments:</p> <p>Information presented in the LSAMP management plan, which stated the priorities for the program and yearly initiatives were consistent with funded decisions for projects in the program portfolio.</p>
<p>4. Responsiveness of program to previous COV comments and recommendations.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The 2010 COV suggested that there be “more intra-agency partnerships and collaboration...to provide additional opportunities for students.” Despite LSAMP’s flat funding levels over the past three years, the program has successfully addressed this recommendation by providing increased opportunities for student research experiences through effective collaborations with NSF STCs and EPSCoR program.</p>

IV. Questions about Portfolio. Please answer the following about the portfolio of awards made by the program under review.

RESULTING PORTFOLIO OF AWARDS	APPROPRIATE, NOT APPROPRIATE, OR DATA NOT AVAILABLE
<p>1. Does the program portfolio have an appropriate balance of awards across disciplines and sub-disciplines of the activity?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>As evidenced in the LSAMP Annual Report, there is excellent representation of major disciplines in the awards portfolio.</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. From the Report View drop-down, select the Funding Rate module to see counts of proposals and awards for programs. The Proposal Count by Type Report View will also provide a summary of proposals by program.</p>	Appropriate
<p>2. Are awards appropriate in size and duration for the scope of the projects?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>LSAMP alliance awardees are receiving approximately \$500K per year on average, which is appropriate to support the proposed activities. The BD program awards are also appropriate for providing fellowships for participating students.</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. From the Report View</p>	Appropriate

drop-down, select Average Award Size and Duration.	
<p>3. Does the program portfolio include awards for projects that are innovative or potentially transformative?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The LSAMP program is designed to build upon proven best practices. Nevertheless, certain innovations and transformative activities have propelled the program to new heights (i.e., NAPIRE/Costa Rica student-research, BB to extend the pipeline to community college students, and DOE national laboratories that provide cutting edge research experiences in a resource intensive environment).</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	Appropriate
<p>4. Does the program portfolio include inter- and multi-disciplinary projects?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>LSAMP has created and sustained inter- and multi-disciplinary programs, which collaborate with DOE national laboratories, NSF STCs and EPSCoR despite LSAMP's flat funding levels over the past three years.</p> <p>Data Source: If co-funding is a desired proxy for measuring inter- and multi-disciplinary projects, the Co-Funding from Contributing Orgs and Co-Funding Contributed to Recipient Orgs reports can be obtained using the EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. They are available as selections on the Report View drop-down.</p>	Appropriate
<p>5. Does the program portfolio have an appropriate geographical distribution of Principal Investigators?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>As of 2010-2012, there are PIs from more than 38 states representing a diverse set of institutions</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. Select Proposals by State from the Report View drop-down.</p>	Appropriate
<p>6. Does the program portfolio have an appropriate balance of awards to different types of institutions?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>LSAMP awardees represent a diverse set of institutions, which include</p>	Appropriate

<p>Majority Institutions, HBCUs, HSIs, NASIs, Community Colleges, and others partners (i.e., museums and centers).</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. Select Proposals by Institution Type from the Report View drop-down. Also, the Obligations by Institution Type will provide information on the funding to institutions by type.</p>	
<p>7. Does the program portfolio have an appropriate balance of awards to new investigators?</p> <p>NOTE: A new investigator is an investigator who has not been a PI on a previously funded NSF grant.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Although the committee recognizes the importance of promoting new investigators; favoring PIs whose experience with complex, cooperative enterprises is limited may not help continue the success of the program.</p> <p>The complexity of the LSAMP program requires strong departmental and administrative leadership. New investigators may not have the experience to successfully fulfill the leadership needs of the program.</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. Select Funding Rate from the Report View drop-down. After this report is run, use the Category Filter button to select New PI for the PI Status filter or New Involvement (PIs & coPIs) = Yes.</p>	<p>Appropriate</p>
<p>8. Does the program portfolio include projects that integrate research and education?</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The LSAMP alliances as well as the BD programs involve many activities that demonstrate the integration of research and education such as undergraduate international research experiences and graduate internships at national laboratories.</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	<p>Appropriate</p>
<p>9. Does the program portfolio have appropriate participation of underrepresented groups¹?</p>	<p>Appropriate</p>

¹ NSF does not have the legal authority to require principal investigators or reviewers to provide demographic data. Since provision of such data is voluntary, the demographic data available are incomplete. This may make it difficult to answer this question for small programs. However, experience suggests that even with the limited data available, COVs are able to provide a meaningful response to this question for most programs.

<p>Comments:</p> <p>As evidenced by the LSAMP partnership summary, there are institutions representative of students from HBCUs, HSIs, Community Colleges, and NASIs that ensure the participation of the underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Data Source: EIS/Committee of Visitors Module. Select Funding Rate from the Report View drop-down. After this report is run, use the Category Filter button to select Women Involvement = Yes or Minority Involvement = Yes to apply the appropriate filters.</p>	
<p>10. Is the program relevant to national priorities, agency mission, relevant fields and other constituent needs? Include citations of relevant external reports.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>This program is critical to the national priority of developing a national STEM workforce. In addition, this program clearly responds to the report entitled, <i>Rising Above the Gathering Storm</i>, which highlights the national priority to broaden participation and diversity within STEM.</p> <p>Data Source: Jackets</p>	Appropriate
<p>11. Additional comments on the quality of the projects or the balance of the portfolio:</p> <p>The LSAMP portfolio also includes the participation of museums, professional organizations such as the Organizations for Tropical Studies.</p>	Appropriate

OTHER TOPICS

1. Please comment on any program areas in need of improvement or gaps (if any) within program areas.

We would recommend a compilation report to represent the outcomes of students' research (i.e., publications, presentations, and other intellectual outcomes).

2. Please provide comments as appropriate on the program's performance in meeting program-specific goals and objectives that are not covered by the above questions.

With the reduction of LSAMP POs, the number of site visits has decreased. Site visits are required to support innovation and also to provide feedback and monitor the progress of alliances that may not be fulfilling their stated program outcomes. The inclusion of additional staff members would provide assistance with the coordination and continuity of LSAMP

3. Please identify agency-wide issues that should be addressed by NSF to help improve the program's performance.

The LSAMP program alliances are critical to the development of a national STEM workforce and NSF's strategic priorities. Also, these alliances are vital to the advancement of underrepresented students and STEM disciplines. This rich resource of intellectual capital should be made readily available to all of the various research directorates at NSF. To ensure that all research directorates at NSF can effectively and efficiently benefit from the LSAMP program, perhaps this program should be housed in the Office of the Director at NSF.

The quality and quantity of data gathered from LSAMP alliances is a rich resource that can be mined to answer additional research questions relating to broadening participation within STEM.

4. Please provide comments on any other issues the COV feels are relevant.

Additional program directors/staff should be considered to sustain program operations and provide continuity in leadership.

5. NSF would appreciate your comments on how to improve the COV review process, format and report template.

To assist a sitting COV in reviewing responses to previous COV recommendations, documentation does need to be provided by the level within the agency that was empowered to respond to those recommendations. The current COV understands that the power to address a previous COV recommendation may NOT reside with the program that was under review. Under those conditions, the offices which were empowered to act upon the previous COV recommendation should provide specific documentation to the sitting COV to explain the conditions and/or the process that led to a decision to address the previous COV recommendations or to refrain from acting upon those recommendations.

SIGNATURE BLOCK:

For the 2013 LSAMP COV
Dr. James Perkins
Panel Chair