

Geological Survey Ireland, Reviewer Code of Conduct

The Geological Survey Ireland offers a number of funding schemes as part of our Research Programme. Once deemed eligible, applications are reviewed by a panel of reviewers with expertise in the relevant area and that can assess the potential impact and delivery of the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding call. Reviewers are identified based on expertise, experience and availability and considering diversity and balance. The purpose of having the reviewers is to gather expert evaluation from appropriate experts so that the GSI can make informed decisions on proposals for funding. Reviewers make recommendations on proposals for funding and the GSI make the informed decision.

Reviewers engaged by GSI are required to abide by this code of conduct:

Reviewer responsibilities

- Reviewers are expected to conduct their assessment in a fair, independent and equitable manner according to GSI procedures and directions and to the best of their ability.
- Reviewers are requested to carry out the work in a personal capacity and do not represent any organisation
- Reviewers must not delegate or sub-contract the performance of any activities to any third party
- Reviewers should be aware of the Equal Statutes Act 2014¹ and the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions², and avoid all, including unconscious, bias particularly bias in relation to gender, race, colour, age, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, political or religious affiliation or marital status.
- In cases where evidence of parental leave (maternity, paternity or adoptive) has been provided, the reported time should be excluded from any career assessment, as provided for in the terms and conditions of the funding call.
- Reviewer's comments may be provided to applicants in feedback. Reviewer's comments are required to comply with this Code of Conduct and are expected to be respectful and include constructive comments.

Conflict of Interest Policy

- Reviewers must be able to offer impartiality in their review. It is the responsibility of reviewer to notify the GSI Research Manager of any or any potential conflicts of interest if and when they arise.
- Reviewers agree to declare to the GSI Research Manager should they be aware of any factor which gives rise to a conflict of interest, or any matter which impairs or threatens

¹ <https://www.ihrec.ie/>

² http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/hea_review_of_gender_equality_in_irish_higher_education.pdf

to impair their impartiality with respect to any individual proposal for funding, to the funding call itself, or in another way that may affect the outcome.

- If the reviewer is unsure as to whether or not a conflict of interest arises, the reviewer shall contact the GSI Research Manager and a clarification will be given by the GSI Research Manager. If a conflict of interest arises during the course of a review, a reviewer must alert the GSI Research Manager to this and the GSI will address the issue as considered appropriate.
- A conflict of interest can occur when a reviewer has a personal or professional interest in a review he/she is conducting, or a direct personal or professional relationship with the applicant that may bias their review.
- Reviewers must also be cognisant of matters, which objectively viewed, could be seen as giving rise to a conflict of interest. It is the responsibility of reviewers to notify the GSI Research Manager in these circumstances in the same manner as above.
- It is important that any potential conflict of interest is identified as soon as possible to allow for new reviewers to be engaged where necessary.

Examples of conflicts are where reviewers (this is a non-exhaustive list of examples);

1. are named as a team member or project partner in the proposal;
2. have provided a letter of support for the proposal;
3. have a formal affiliation to any of the project/proposal partners (for Fellowships this applies to the proposed host organisation and any organisation currently hosting the applicant);
4. or their organisation would directly benefit from the work being undertaken under the project;
5. have assisted the applicant with their proposal;
6. have an existing business or professional partnership with any of the applicants or staff named in the proposal;
7. are related to any of the applicants or staff named in the proposal;
8. are a personal friend of any of the applicants or staff named in the proposal;
9. are a collaborator with any of the applicants or staff named in the proposal;
10. have been the applicant's supervisor within the last 5 years;
11. have had any involvement in the development of the proposal at any stage of its preparation, including providing comments or advice to the applicants;
12. have publicly and/or professionally disagreed (either oral or written presentations) with the views of the applicant such that the reviewer could not be expected to be impartial in reviewing the proposal.



Confidentiality

- Reviewers must agree to confidentiality prior to conducting a review.
- Reviewers are expected to provide their professional, independent evaluation of the material. This is a personal assessment and not the opinion of any third party or host institute. Reviews must not be delegated to a third party. Reviews must also not be shared or disclosed, in whole or in part, with third parties for their views or for any other reason.
- At no point should the applicant be contacted by the reviewer. In the case where reviewers are contacted by an applicant, the GSI Research Manager should be informed immediately.
- Reviewers are expected to keep all documentation in a secure environment and confidential. Information regarding the proposal, review, scores or discussions must not be disclosed to any other party.
- With regard to any personal data provided by GSI, reviewers must agree at all times to comply with the data security obligations in respect of the Data Protection Acts 1988-2003.
- Reviewers are required to respect the intellectual property of applicants and their applications, and may not appropriate and use as their own, or disclose to any third party, ideas, concepts or data contained in any proposals.
- Reviewers are responsible for keeping confidential and keeping safe any and all documentation in relation to an application and its applicant(s).
- Reviewers are expected to adhere to professional and scientific practices and codes of conduct. Information provided in the applications may not be used by the reviewer in any other context than to conduct the evaluation.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms or tools to assist with the review or review outputs of a specific research proposal requires the input of the detail of that research proposal, in full or in part. Making such input to generative AI essentially discloses content of a research proposal with no guarantees of how data from the research proposal will be stored, transmitted, viewed or ultimately used going forward. This practice is therefore in breach of the requirement to maintain confidentiality in respect of research proposals. Accordingly, peer reviewers are prohibited from using AI platforms or tools to assist with the review of research proposals.



By undertaking any evaluation for the GSI Research Programme, reviewers agree to provide a fair, unbiased, confidential, professional evaluation and are declaring that they have no conflict of interest and are obliged to be at all times in conformity with the terms of this Code of Conduct.

I declare that I have no conflict of interest in relation to the applications I have been asked to review and I agree to undertake all reviews for GSI in a fair and impartial manner. I also agree to abide by the GSI Reviewers Code of Conduct and will treat all information relating to this review as strictly confidential.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____