



## LSDF Grant Review Process

The Life Sciences Discovery Fund is charged with the three-fold mission of enhancing life sciences competitiveness, improving health and fostering economic development in Washington State. LSDF addresses this charge by soliciting the best new ideas from Washington's life sciences researchers and investing public monies in the most outstanding programs and projects.

LSDF administers competitive granting processes and awards grants after rigorous external review and evaluation. Expert reviewers study the proposals, weigh their strengths and weaknesses, and deliberate collectively to rate their potential to achieve the Fund's goals. Summaries of the reviews and funding recommendations are submitted to LSDF's board of trustees, who rely on this information to make the grant award decisions.

**Expertise.** Reviewers selected to evaluate LSDF research proposals are carefully chosen for their specialized knowledge. They are experts in the same disciplines represented within the research proposals, and they bring informed experience to the process. They work in groups to ensure that multiple perspectives are presented. The give and take within the group during the evaluation process greatly enhances its depth and quality.

**Objectivity.** Expert reviewers in LSDF grant competitions are screened to ensure that they can contribute an impartial opinion. Reviewers must disclose any ties they have to LSDF grant applicants and sign conflict of interest statements, certifying that their consideration of LSDF proposals is not biased by any personal or professional interests. A strict process of recusal is employed if any conflict of interest is discovered during the review.

**Confidentiality.** Grant proposals often contain the most imaginative and innovative thinking of researchers, and it is precisely that level of thinking that LSDF hopes to foster in making awards. Proposals may contain intellectual property or other information of proprietary or economic value. Consistent with the practice of federal and private granting programs, and with the provisions of Washington's public records law, LSDF affords its grant applicants a high level of confidentiality during the submission, evaluation, and selection process.

Proprietary information is kept confidential throughout LSDF grant competitions. Reviewers sign confidentiality agreements protecting both the content of proposals and the review process. When award selections are announced and LSDF funds committed, grantees are identified, descriptions of their proposals are published, and periodic summaries of their research progress are released. Proprietary information from unfunded applications is not made public.

**Excellence.** LSDF grant competitions have been designed to promote excellence and maximize the benefit to the citizens of Washington State. Expert evaluations, applied in an objective manner, lead to funding of the highest quality projects and programs. LSDF's grant competitions are consistent with the granting practices typically used by public and private sponsors of research. They are conducted in the public interest, striving to ensure that public dollars are being invested in life sciences research with the greatest potential for public good.

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