



# Great Lakes Fishery Commission

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT FOR PEER REVIEWERS OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND TECHNICAL REPORTS

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (commission) and the Board of Technical Experts and Sea Lamprey Research Board request external reviews for full proposals submitted to the Fishery Research (FRP) and Sea Lamprey Research (SLRP) programs for funding. These peer reviews are essential to the boards' evaluation of proposals. For full program descriptions, please visit <http://www.glfsc.org/science-research.php>.

Thank you for considering providing a peer review of a research proposal submitted for funding. **Before agreeing to conduct a review, please review this conflict-of-interest statement for peer reviewers.** If you are not sure whether a conflict of interest exists, please reach out to the appropriate research program associate ([frp@glfc.org](mailto:frp@glfc.org) or [slrp@glfc.org](mailto:slrp@glfc.org)).

As a peer reviewer, you are asked to review a research proposal that will assist with commission funding decisions. The performance of your review requires that you be aware of potential conflicts of interest. Please read the examples of potentially biasing affiliations or relationships below.

The proposal must be kept in strict confidence. If, as a peer reviewer, you gain access to information not generally available to the public, you must not use that information for your benefit or make it available for the benefit of any other individual or organization without the permission of the authors. You are not to discuss a proposal or manuscript with its authors or other colleagues. Questions about the proposal are to be discussed only with the person coordinating the review of this proposal or with commission's Science Director.

The commission receives proposals and manuscripts in confidence and protects the confidentiality of their contents. For this reason, you must not quote or otherwise disclose or use material from any proposal or manuscript that you review (until it is published).

**If you cannot conduct this review due to a conflict of interest, please decline the review request in the email or contact the program associate.** Conflicts of interest are not accusations and do not imply that a reviewer's judgment is compromised.

## Potential Conflicts of Interest for Great Lakes Fishery Commission Peer Reviewers

### Competitor for funding:

1. Direct involvement with a research proposal currently competing for funding from the same commission research program.

### Relationship to applicant institution:

1. Current employment at the institution associated with the proposal or manuscript as professor, adjunct professor, visiting professor, or similar position (including multi-campus institutions).
2. Employment with the institution via consulting, an advisory arrangement, re-employment arrangement, or you are being considered for employment with the institution.
3. Employment at the same institution within the last 12 months.
4. Ownership of the institution's securities or other evidences of debt.
5. Holder of any office, governing board membership, or relevant committee chair in the institution.
6. Current enrollment as a student in the department or school of the institution that originates the proposal or manuscript.
7. Received an honorarium or award from the institution within the last 12 months.

### Relationship with an investigator, author, project director, or other person who has a personal interest in the proposal or manuscript.

1. Family or close personal relationship including marriage, civil union, or other partnership.
2. Business or professional partnership.
3. Past or present relationship as a graduate committee member or graduate student.
4. Collaboration on a project or on a book, report, or paper within the last 48 months.
5. Other relationships, such as close personal friendship, that may affect your judgment or be seen as doing so by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship.

## Confidentiality of Peer Reviews and Reviewer Identities

The commission's policy is that reviews and peer reviewer identities will not be disclosed, except that verbatim copies of reviews (without name and affiliation of the reviewer) will be sent to the principal investigator or lead author.



# Great Lakes Fishery Commission

## INSTRUCTIONS TO PEER REVIEWERS

Peer reviews consist of a guided online form; a template for these questions is provided below for your convenience. Explanations for your answers are critically important to help project leaders revise and improve their proposals. Reviews will be shared with the investigators, but your identity will not be revealed. Thank you for your assistance in the commission's research programs.

Proposals are evaluated by the research boards based on four general criteria:

**Peer review of proposals** – Every research proposal submitted to the commission is subjected to a review by scientific peers. A recommendation to the commission for funding a project will be highly dependent upon positive, favorable reviews of the proposal.

**Relationships to fishery agency and commission programs** – Research projects will have a high priority for funding if they relate directly to the [Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries](#), the [commission's Strategic Vision](#), [Fish Community Objectives](#), or the research priorities identified in State of the Lake conferences, by the [Lake Committees](#), or by the [Sea Lamprey Control Board](#). Most projects supported by the commission's Fishery and Sea Lamprey Research Programs are organized under broad research theme areas that describe topics important to fishery or sea lamprey management in the Great Lakes. These theme areas establish key research questions and hypotheses that become the focus of specific projects. Research themes for the Fishery Research Program can be found at <http://www.glfc.org/fishery-research.php>. Research themes for the Sea Lamprey Research Program can be found at <http://www.glfc.org/sea-lamprey-research.php>.

**Importance to conservation, rehabilitation, and sustainability of fisheries** – Research projects will have a high priority for funding if they relate to a species of conservation or rehabilitation concern or if they are critical to the achievement of healthy Great Lakes ecosystems.

**Past performance** – Project leaders should have demonstrated technical expertise to complete the project or have co-investigators or appropriate partnerships with other organizations to meet all the requirements of the project. Projects must be non-duplicative with other projects. Principal and co-investigators should have had successful experience with similar projects.



# Great Lakes Fishery Commission

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL EVALUATION

2200 Commonwealth Blvd., Suite 100, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105  
Tel. (734) 662-3209 / FAX (734) 741-2010 Web: [www.glfc.org](http://www.glfc.org)

Proposal Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Please visit the online **Peer Review System** (link can be found in your peer reviewer email invitation) to complete and submit your review. **Use this template to help prepare your review but your selections and explanations must be entered into the online system.** Please contact the program associate (SLRP: [SLRP@GLFC.org](mailto:SLRP@GLFC.org), FRP: [FRP@GLFC.org](mailto:FRP@GLFC.org)) if you need assistance.

Proposals are evaluated in five general categories: Rationale; Scientific Merit; Budget, Logistics, and Qualifications; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competency; and Summary of proposal. Select the descriptor beneath each question which best describes your assessment of that element of the proposal. Following each question, provide an explanation to support your choice. These explanations help with proposal evaluation and provide important feedback to investigators. Your review will remain anonymous.

**Rationale:**

NOTE: **Relevance** of the proposed research to the Commission and its partner mandates, missions, visions, and objectives has been established by the Board of Technical Experts or Sea Lamprey Research Board at the pre-proposal stage and **should not be considered in your review.**

1. How important is the proposed research to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (**please explain**)?

Research fills a key gap and could significantly advance field; could advance knowledge across a range of disciplines.	Research <b>addresses a key uncertainty and relates to other ongoing or required efforts in field.</b>	Research <b>furtheres a line of inquiry or is a necessary next step, but will not likely provide major advances in the field.</b>	Research <b>not likely to advance field.</b>
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Comments:

2. Does this proposal adequately review the related scientific literature (**please explain**)? If not, what key publications have not been cited and reviewed (**please list**):

Literature extensively reviewed. <b>All key publications are referenced.</b>	Adequate literature review; some <b>additional literature could improve proposal.</b>	Literature review limited; <b>some key publications missing.</b>	<b>Inadequate</b> literature review; background knowledge <b>weak.</b>
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Comments:

3. Does the proposal demonstrate awareness of similar work being conducted elsewhere (**please explain**)? Please describe any related projects not addressed in the proposal and include, if possible, names and organizations involved.

<p>Related and ongoing research <b>explicitly referenced and proposed research integrated.</b></p>	<p><b>Acknowledges related and ongoing research, but does not explicitly link proposed research to these efforts.</b></p>	<p><b>Acknowledges related and ongoing research, but does not explicitly link proposed research to these efforts.</b></p>	<p><b>No demonstrated knowledge of related or ongoing research.</b></p>
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Comments:

**Scientific merit:**

1. Are the research objectives clear and focused? Are objectives presented correctly as statements related to scientific understanding based on interpretation of information or data analyses (rather than methodological steps such as collect data, conduct experiments, analyze data, write report)? Do the objectives identify a pattern, process, or relationship among variables to be examined? Can the objectives be used to evaluate project progress? Do objectives reflect the research questions to be answered, the hypotheses to be tested, or the processes to be examined (**please explain**)?

<p>Research objectives <b>are clearly stated, focused and correctly expressed</b> as statements related to scientific understanding based on interpretation of data analyses rather than expressions of methodological</p>	<p>Research objectives <b>are understandable and correctly expressed</b> as statements related to scientific understanding based on interpretation of data analyses rather than expressions of methodological</p>	<p>Research objectives <b>are understandable, but may lack focus and/or clarity or may not directly relate to scientific understanding.</b></p>	<p>Research objectives <b>lack clarity and focus and must be linked to scientific understanding rather than methodological steps.</b></p>
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Comments:

2. Will the proposed methods accomplish the objectives? Is the experimental design correct (e.g., sample size, sampling frequency, spatial/temporal distribution of sample collection)? What modifications should be incorporated (**please explain**)?

<p>Experimental or investigative methods proposed to achieve the objectives <b>are appropriate.</b></p>	<p>Experimental or investigative methods <b>sufficient</b> to achieve the objectives, <b>but alternative procedures may be more appropriate.</b></p>	<p>Experimental or investigative methods could benefit from <b>updated/alternative procedures.</b> An <b>inappropriate method</b> may be present, but is not considered a “fatal flaw.” Methods <b>incompletely documented.</b></p>	<p>Experimental or investigative methods <b>flawed and not appropriate</b> to achieve objectives. Experimental methods <b>inadequately detailed.</b></p>
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Comments:

3. Are the proposed analyses or statistical tests appropriate and sufficient to achieve the objectives? What other types of analyses should be considered (**please explain**)?

<p>Analytical methods are up to date and <b>appropriate</b> to achieve objectives. No additional or alternative analyses required.</p>	<p>Analytical methods are <b>appropriate</b> to achieve objectives; <b>however, additional and/or alternative approaches</b> could improve the power of the study.</p>	<p>Analytical methods <b>could partially achieve objectives;</b> however, <b>additional and/or alternative approaches</b> could improve the power of the study.</p>	<p>Analytical methods <b>flawed and/or inappropriate.</b> Statistical methods <b>inadequately detailed.</b></p>
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Comments:

4. Is the proposed research feasible? What is the probability that the objectives will be achieved (**please explain**)?

Attainment of objectives is <b>feasible</b> .	Attainment of objectives is <b>likely</b> feasible; may be ambitious or some uncertainties exist.	Attainment of objectives <b>may be feasible</b> with revised sampling and/or analytical design.	Attainment of objectives is <b>not feasible</b> as proposed.
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Comments:

**Budget, logistics, and qualifications:**

1. Is the budget appropriate for the research proposed (**please explain**)?

Budget <b>appropriate and cost efficient</b> .	Budget <b>appropriate</b> , but some uncertainties exist.	Budget <b>differs from expected</b> ; some line items deficient in detail; unanticipated costs; or missing costs.	The budget is <b>inappropriate</b> or lacking sufficient <b>details</b> ; <b>budget not linked to methods</b> .
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Comments:

2. Are the proposed research personnel (e.g., students, technicians, postdocs) and equipment (e.g., lab facilities) appropriate to achieve the objectives? Are test subjects or specimens available or can they easily be collected? Is the schedule for completion reasonable? What is the probability that the objectives will be achieved in the time frame proposed (**please explain**)?

<p>Resources (personnel and equipment) <b>appropriate and available</b>. The proposed objectives are <b>appropriately scheduled</b> and are <b>very likely</b> to be achieved within the time frame proposed.</p>	<p>Resources (personnel and equipment) <b>acceptable</b>; however, additional personnel may be required; samples or equipment may not be available. Proposed objectives are <b>appropriately scheduled</b> and are likely to be achieved within the time frame proposed; some <b>minor resolvable issues</b> in program delivery</p>	<p>Resources (personnel and equipment) <b>may not be adequate</b> to achieve project objectives. <b>Questionable</b> whether the schedule to complete the proposed objectives is feasible.</p>	<p>Resources (personnel and equipment) to achieve project objectives <b>inadequate or unavailable</b>. Objectives <b>not likely to be achieved</b> within the proposed time frame.</p>
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Comments:

3. To what degree are the investigators technically qualified (i.e., education, training, experience) to conduct the proposed research? Are there other technical skillsets that could complement the team? If so, what types of technical skills are missing and what are your recommendations for dealing with this deficiency (**please explain**)?

Expertise, relevant organizations, or investigators **appropriate** to achieve objectives. Research team **highly qualified** with required experience in relevant fields.

Research team could be strengthened by **additional expertise** in particular field.

Additional expertise, relevant organizations, or investigators **required**. Research team **minimally capable** of achieving objectives.

Additional expertise, relevant organizations, or investigators **required**. Research team **does not** have adequate training or experience to achieve research objectives.

Comments:

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competency (DEIC):

Attention to principles of DEIC should be embedded throughout the proposal where relevant and appropriate (see: <http://www.glf.org/pubs/pdfs/research/DEIC-research-programs.pdf>). Please provide your evaluation of how well DEIC elements were incorporated into the research proposal and DEIC statement.

1. To what extent were the elements of diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency considered in the research proposal? **(please explain)**

DEIC was clearly considered in all aspects of the research proposal, including the research process and research team.	Some elements of DEIC were considered in the research proposal but some areas could be strengthened.	The investigators did not demonstrate how DEIC was considered in the research proposal.	Prefer not to answer. I lack the context or training to evaluate this aspect of the proposal.
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Comments:

