Program Evaluation and Research Committee Meeting

5/1/15

Minutes

Question: Release an RFP in August for funding July 1, 2016.

Discussion: It was suggested that if we release an RFP that we should limit proposals to Type I grant proposals so that we may increase the number of grantees we can fund. The committee felt that the application announcement, review process and award process is time consuming and therefore it is best to maximize number we can fund. In addition, the committee discussed the idea of funding one or more of the last applicants that met the cut off score of 75. It is estimated that July 1, 2016 we would have enough funds to award one additional Type II or two to three type I applications. In reviewing the past grant applications the next top three scoring grants were all type II. Therefore we could feasibly fund the next top scoring Type II grant, using the highest score of those not funded to be our criteria for which application to fund. There are considerations that need to address prior to finalizing this recommendation. First, are we allowed to not announce but simply take the next highest of the last round. This needs to be verified to ensure we are following state procurement guidelines. Second, we need to verify the actual anticipated budget to ensure we can fund a type II. Finally, we need to verify when this applicant would start.

*Please note that Susie Charlifue recused herself from voting on which grant should be funded if we are to go with the next highest scoring grant as she has a conflict of interest with the applicant.*

Decision: The committee voted to fund the highest scoring grant (of the applicants that were not originally funded) from the last application cycle.

Actions Required:

1. Judy will verify that we can fund the next highest applicant from the last application cycle per state procurement guidelines.
2. Judy will verify the actual amount we fund and that this grant would begin July 1, 2016 or can we start them sooner.
3. Judy will verify amount requested. I did verify this; Makely requested a total of $370,574 including indirect over the two year period. If the amount requested is greater than the actual amount we can fund, we will ask the applicant to reduce their budget accordingly.

Discussion:

The committee began discussing possible process improvements for the research grant program. These ideas need to be explored further in future committee meetings prior to the release of a new RFP. Items for further discussion include:

1. Do we want to develop a stratification methodology to ensure we award diverse grant opportunities? This would mean that we would not only rely on highest score to fund applicants. The committee unanimously agreed that we need to maintain the minimum threshold score of 75 to be considered for funding. However, assuming an applicant meets that minimum score, some of the stratification factors to consider are as follows:
2. Budget
3. Type I vs. Type II
4. Type of Science (basic, clinical, outcomes)
5. Other priorities such as institution diversity (perhaps limiting funding per institution)
6. Do we want to build in a weighted scoring mechanism based on pre-determined priorities set by the board, e.g. research questions, geography etc.
7. When we are flush with cash, do we want to put out a special RFP to encourage new institutions or researchers to apply?

Discussion:

The committee also indicated that we must include in our RFP a statement such as “Decisions of the board are final and non-negotiable”. This may help reduce the inquiries we received this round in terms of applicants challenging their scores or funding decisions.

Action: Judy will add this to the RFP prior to next cycle.

Discussion:

The committee discussed having another committee meeting prior to Susie moving off the board which will happen June 30, 2015. Judy will work with Jeff to get this scheduled.