

## THE WATER RESEARCH FOUNDATION PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Water Research Foundation (WRF) appoints a volunteer Project Advisory Committee (PAC) for most of its research projects. PACs consist of several volunteers with knowledge and expertise in the project subject area. PACs are an important resource to WRF as they provide technical oversight and peer review throughout the duration of the project. WRF Research Program Managers (RPM) work with PAC and the research team to ensure the project is scientifically valid and beneficial to the water community.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Research Program Managers rely on the PAC's input to help ensure that the project remains on course, fulfills the project objectives, and provides results that are beneficial to the water community.

The Project Advisory Committee represents the best interests of WRF and its subscribers. The PAC serves as an advisor to the Research Program Manager, actively contributing their experiences and knowledge. The RPM facilitates the PAC and research team deliberations; adhering to the original project scope while keeping in mind the needs of the utility community. The RPM facilitates any needed changes in the scope or direction of the project that are outlined by the PAC.

**Most of your time as a PAC member will be concentrated during certain times during the project: proposal review (1-4 hours/proposal); interim deliverable review (1-4 hours) two/three times per year; participation in conference calls (1-2 hours each); attendance at a PAC meeting (1-2 days); and review of the draft products (time dependent on products - approximately 6-12 hours). Meeting the deadline for review comments is critical as the researcher needs to consider your comments as the research progresses; your comments on interim deliverables and participation in project activities is vital to the success of the project.**

The primary functions and responsibilities of PAC members are listed below:

### **Orientation**

1. Review and become familiar with the policies, processes, roles and responsibilities associated with PAC involvement, including the documents listed in the WRF PAC Required Reading List. Complete and return the various requested forms.
2. It is important that WRF have a current copy of your resume or CV on file.

### **Request for Proposals (RFP) Review (Solicited projects only)**

1. Review and, if necessary, suggest minor modifications to the draft RFP prior to release by the Foundation.

## **Proposal Evaluation**

1. Research Priority Program (and other solicited RFPs from other WRF research programs)
  - Evaluate all the proposals submitted in response to the RFP and rank proposals for award based on specific rating criteria. The RPM will use the PAC's recommendation for final proposal selection.
  - In rare instances where none of the proposals are adequately responsive, the PAC may recommend not to make a selection. The RPM will use the PAC's recommendation and consider the RFP for revision and re-solicitation in the future. The PAC may make suggestions to enhance the proposed research provided the project objectives, scope and WRF funding level are not changed. Suggested changes need to account for level of effort relative to the project budget.
2. Tailored Collaboration Proposals
  - Tailored Collaboration proposals are selected for funding by the Foundation's Tailored Collaboration Review Committee. A PAC is appointed after the proposal has been funded. While the project objectives, scope and WRF funding level cannot be changed, the PAC can raise questions or recommend refinements regarding the proposed research.

## **Project Review**

- Monitor performance of the research team by reviewing interim deliverables and providing input and feedback to the RPM. Review comments are to be made considering the context of the project proposal and scope of work. Payment is made to the researcher upon WRF's acceptance of written progress reports and final project report as specified in the contract.
- Review Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP) for USEPA co-funding projects and recommend whether these are appropriate to assure data quality for the project.
- Prepare for and participate in conference calls and attend PAC meetings when scheduled. For most projects, there is one PAC meeting and a few conference calls
- When opportunities arise to enhance the project, contributions such as providing industry contacts, samples, or analytical work may be offered to the researcher by the PAC through the RPM.
- Review and make recommendations on requests for a no-cost extension of the deliverable schedule.
- Thoroughly review and comment on the draft products and all revisions, along with any other project deliverables such as tools, data, communication pieces, etc.

## **CODE OF ETHICS, CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

PAC members are required to adhere to relevant provisions of WRF's Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Please review the COI carefully and complete and return the various associated forms.

For Solicited (RFP) projects, your PAC membership is kept confidential until the contractor is selected.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Communication between the PAC, WRF, and the research team is critical to the success of the project. A WRF RPM, supported by a project coordinator, serves as the primary communication link between the PAC and the researcher.

- WRF RPM receives interim deliverables from the researcher and transmits them to the PAC with a **requested due date for comments**.
- PAC members communicate their comments and questions via phone, letter, and e-mail to the WRF RPM, with support from a project coordinator, who then relays the information to the researcher.
- Conference calls may occasionally be scheduled to discuss important issues.
- Generally, at least one PAC meeting will be held at some point during the project. (Customary travel expenses for PAC meetings are reimbursed by WRF).
- WRF also encourages interim communications between the RPM and all PAC members during the project.