

Office of High Energy Physics (HEP)

Response to the Report of the High Energy Physics Advisory Panel (HEPAP) Committee of Visitors (COV) Review of HEP

Dates of COV: Oct. 9-11, 2013

Dates of COV Report: Dec 26, 2013

Dates of HEP Response: March 13, 2014

Program POC: Dr. Glen Crawford

	COV Recommendation	HEP Response
1	HEP should strive to keep the overall program management coherent, keeping in view the connections and balance among the frontiers, and minimizing the obstacles to well-motivated transfers of funds across frontier boundaries.	We agree with the principle enunciated here, and will work to develop mechanisms to maintain balance among programs and ease funding transfers across program boundaries as consistent with programmatic needs and priorities
2	Continue the comparative reviews. These should be augmented with independent mail-in reviews.	Agreed.
3	Ensure that comparative reviews evaluate a particular proposal in the context of the full program over the full three year cycle within each frontier.	It is difficult to require reviewers to evaluate the “full program” for large umbrella grants (though we currently invite them to do so). We will consider adding appropriate guidance to the FOA and the reviewer instructions to emphasize context of the full program when evaluating proposals.
4	Ensure that review committees are given appropriate charges, that there are sufficient reviewers of each proposal, and that program manager oversight of reviews is uniform.	Agreed.
5	Modify the FOAs to request that proposals which address topics in several different review panel areas include a discussion of the synergy gained from this broader scope	Done. Guidance to PIs on preparing a better common narrative in a proposal was included in the FY14 HEP Comparative Review FOA.

6	Institute mechanisms to streamline the movement of PIs moving from one frontier to another. The past record of such PIs should be considered in the reviews.	We will consider appropriate measures to ease transitions of PIs across frontiers. We note it is incumbent upon the PI to provide context and relevant past record of achievement in the proposal
7	HEP should charge the comparative review panelists to collectively discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of proposals so that the program managers can judge the relative rankings of proposals.	Done. This is currently done in all comparative review panels.
8	Ensure that program manager's comments in grant folders clearly document the reasons for the action taken.	Agreed.
9	Work to further reduce the time between proposal and proponent notification and to provide appropriate redacted review comments that will enable PIs to refine future proposals. Provide information to proponents on their comparative review score and the distribution of scores over all proposals reviewed by a panel.	We will continue to work to reduce the time between proposal deadlines and final decisions and providing redacted reviews. We will consider providing comparative review scores or other indicative measures of a proposal's relative ranking within a given panel for future comparative reviews
10	Refrain from using university startup funds as a consideration in establishing grant funding levels.	We disagree. As stewards of taxpayer funds, it is the responsibility of HEP staff to manage funding appropriated by Congress in a way that optimizes the scientific productivity of the US HEP program. Other sources of funding (such as university startup funds or other pending federal or private support) are valid programmatic and budgetary factors in determining grant funding levels.
11	Further increase in the budget fraction devoted to projects is desirable but should be subject to the recommendations of the 2014 P5 report and budget constraints.	Agreed.
12	Allocate a few dedicated pages in proposals for senior research scientists to describe their activities and critical accomplishments.	We will take this under consideration

13	Once goals, milestones and costs have been established for small scale experiments, formal HEP project oversight should be kept to a minimum.	We agree with the principle. Formal project oversight should be the minimum necessary to successfully manage and execute the project. Customization of management tools is often needed and should be tailored to the particular requirements of the project.
14	HEP should develop a coherent and stable approach to funding detector R&D which embraces the broad range of proposals for new ideas and techniques appropriate to its mission.	Agreed.
15	An additional IPA serving the theory program should be found.	Done. New Theory IPA joined HEP in January.
16	Seek to increase the HEP travel budget	HEP does not control this budget (SC does). Strong arguments will be needed to make the case that HEP has unique and compelling travel requirements
17	We urge HEP to redouble and improve its communications both with the HEP community and in the wider governmental circles	Agreed. We have a AAAS fellow (M. Cooke) on board helping with P5 and communications issues generally. We will look for other ways to improve HEP communications.
18	Undertake a separate review of the balance between the Laboratory and university research programs	We expect this issue to be taken up by HEPAP
19	Provide summary information on previous proposals, PIs, FTEs, experiments and funding allocations to reviewers.	We will consider providing appropriate summary information as needed and relevant, but we note that explaining the historical roles and responsibilities of a given HEP group is the job of the PI(s). Current and pending sources of support must be provided in the application and this information also gives some context to reviewers. <i>We reiterate that historical levels of support are not relevant to current proposals under review.</i>

20	If there are clear guidelines on COLA for overseas experiments, provide them to the reviewers.	Done. This was covered in the 2014 Energy Frontier panel instructions and we will continue this practice. We will also work with the experiments (e.g., LHC) to understand whether more uniform COLA rates can be developed between the different experiments.
21	The management of the research, operations and upgrade components of the LHC experiments should be closely coordinated.	Agreed. DOE managers of the respective programs meet regularly. One has been assigned responsibility for ensuring coordination.
22	Improve the quality of administrative support.	Agreed. We are working on this.
23	Maintain U.S. science in the lead of the Cosmic Frontier.	Agreed. The integration of the Cosmic Frontier with the other “traditional” HEP experimental areas is one of the signature successes of the US HEP program.
24	Support computation, simulation, and phenomenology that are directly needed for planning, execution, and analysis of Cosmic Frontier Stage III and Stage IV experiments	Agreed. Cosmic Frontier, Theory and Computation PMs are aware of the issues and working to develop mechanisms to appropriately review and support these efforts.
25	HEP should explicitly recognize that a thriving theory program is essential for identifying new directions and opportunities for the field, in addition to supporting the current program.	Agreed.
26	Create a new theory postdoc fellowship program. The detailed structure of the program should be determined by OHEP, but could be modeled via selection of recipients from a national competition, with three years of support to recipients working at a DOE supported university or lab group of their choice.	HEP will consider the recommendation to attract early career talent to the theory program through the support of competitively selected postdocs or through other mechanisms.
27	Evaluate the General Accelerator R&D (GARD) program to identify and prioritize components that are central to the	Agreed.

	evolving HEP mission, after delivery of the 2014 P5 report	
28	Identify goals and areas of mutual and/or complementary accelerator R&D interest jointly with other parts of the Office of Science and other agencies and stakeholders, at the foundation of the Accelerator Stewardship program.	We agree with the principles put forward here but note that Accelerator Stewardship is intended to be a coordinated SC-wide program managed by HEP, and is (as yet) a proposed new subprogram that has not received Congressional approval (as of the time of the COV review report), and therefore beyond the scope of the COV charge. We welcome the COV subcommittee's strong interest in the nascent Accelerator R&D Stewardship program and will respond to these Suggestions in an appropriate venue at a later date.
29	Establish procedures to jointly review proposals addressing Accelerator Stewardship goals, including those outside traditional boundaries, at the initiation of the program	
30	Review the progress of the Accelerator Stewardship program periodically (e.g. annually), reporting to HEP, including reviewers representing other parts of the Office of Science, and representing other governmental agency stakeholders. Consider including SciDAC accelerator activities in the periodic reviews	
31	Perform reviews that allow the establishment of well-defined goals, deliverables and multi-year budget plans for programs that have significant budgets and extend over multiple years.	Agreed. This has been done on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis in the past. We will develop a consistent methodology to review such efforts.
32	Request that the LARP leadership address the recommendations from a compilation of the 2010-2012 LARP reviews.	Agreed.
33	Monitor activities that are transitioning from R&D to full construction (e.g. LARP magnet program) so as to clearly define and track the transition steps	Agreed.