

EPRC Grants Proposal Evaluation Guideline (Solicited)

(Version-1)

Table of Contents

- 1. Evaluation and Award Process.....3
- 2. Selection of Reviewers.....10

Evaluation and Award Process

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on responses to the information requested in the Program Solicitation. EPRC will form an Evaluation Committee to evaluate both solicited and unsolicited Proposals. The committee consists of independent experts selected from the panel of experts developed by EPRC. EPRC may co-opt technical expert(s) on the request of the Evaluation Committee. Proposals will be evaluated in two stages:

1. Stage One: Proposal Screening

EPRC and the Evaluation Committee will screen Proposals for compliance with the Screening Criteria mentioned in the **Section C** of *EPRC Grants Proposal Evaluation Guideline*. **Proposals that fail any of the screening criteria will be rejected.**

- **Clarification Interviews:** The Evaluation Committee may conduct optional in-person or telephone interviews with Proposers or send written clarification questions to Proposers during the evaluation process to clarify and/or verify information submitted in the Proposal. However, these interviews may not be used to change or add to the content of the original Proposal. Proposers will not be reimbursed for time spent answering clarifying questions.

2. Stage Two: Proposal Scoring

Proposals that pass Stage One will be submitted to the Evaluation Committee. The committee will select reviewers and send the primarily selected research proposals to them. Reviewer will review and score based on the Scoring Criteria in **Section D** of *EPRC Grants Proposal Evaluation Guideline*.

- Each proposal of a particular research focus area will generally be evaluated by either three or five reviewers and those reviewers will give individual marks based on the Scoring Criteria and the Scoring Scale for each criterion. In case of five reviewers, the maximum and minimum marks received by a proposal will not be used for calculating the average score for that proposal. The average score for that proposal will be calculated on the basis of the remaining three marks. In case of three reviewers, all the marks will be used to calculate the average score of that proposal.
- The Proposal must receive a minimum average score of **56.00 points out of 80 points** for criteria 1–4. **A total minimum average score of 70.00 points out of 100 points for criteria 1-5** is required for the proposal to be eligible for funding.

A. RANKING, NOTICE OF PROPOSED AWARD, AND AGREEMENT DEVELOPMENT

1. Ranking and Notice of Proposed Award

Successful proposals will be ranked according to their score. Proposed awards must be approved by the Council at its Governing Body meeting. The Council

will post a **Notice of Proposed Award (NOPA)** that includes: (1) the total proposed EPRC funding amount; (2) the rank order of proposals; and (3) the amount of each proposed award. The Council will post the NOPA at its website, and will E-mail it to the successful proposers. All the unsuccessful proposers will be notified by the Council through Separate E-mail.

- **The Council reserves the right to:**
 - Allocate any additional funds to passing Proposals, in rank order; and
 - Negotiate with successful Proposers to modify the project scope, schedule, and/or level of funding.
 - The Council reserves the right to modify the award documents (including the terms and conditions) prior to executing any agreement.

2 Agreements

Proposals recommended for funding will be developed into a grant agreement to be considered at the Council's Governing Body meeting. Recipients shall begin the research only after full execution of the grant agreement (i.e., approval at the Council's Governing Body Meeting and signature by the Recipient and the EPRC).

- **Sign of Agreement :** If approved at an EPRC's Governing Body meeting, the Council will send the Recipient a proposed grant agreement for acceptance and signing. The recipients will be required to sign the agreement with EPRC within 30 days upon receiving the agreement. The agreement will include the applicable terms and conditions and if applicable, will incorporate the solicitation reference.
- **Failure to Sign an Agreement:** If the proposer is unable to successfully sign an agreement within stipulated time with the Council, the award will be canceled. The council may award the next highest-ranked, eligible proposal.
- **Agreement Amendment:** The executed agreement may be amended in the implementation phase by mutual consent of the Council and the Recipient. The agreement may require amendment as a result of project review, changes in project scope, and/or availability of funding.

B. GROUNDS TO REJECT AN PROPOSAL OR CANCEL AN AWARD

The Council reserves the right to reject an Proposal and/or to cancel an award if the following circumstances are discovered at any time during any phase of the process:

- The Proposal of PI and Co-PI lacks relevant education/experience to prove competence.
- The Proposal contains false or intentionally misleading statements or references that do not support an attribute or condition contended by the Proposer.
- The Proposal is intended to erroneously and fallaciously mislead the Government in its evaluation and the attribute, condition, or capability is a requirement of the program solicitation.
- The Proposal does not literally comply or contains caveats that

conflict with the solicitation, and the variation or deviation is material.

- The Proposer has previously received funding from EPRC on the same research project.
- The Proposer fails to meet any compliance issue within sufficient time for the Council to meet its encumbrance deadline, as the Council in its sole and absolute discretion may determine.

C. STAGE ONE: PROPOSAL SCREENING

| SCREENING CRITERIA The Proposal must pass ALL criteria to progress to Stage Two | Pass/Fail |
|--|--|
| 1. The research proposal addresses one of the research groups mentioned in the Program Solicitation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 2. The Proposal of PI and Co-PI have relevant qualification/experiences in the field of work. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 3. The Proposer has written a Literature Review, a Statement of Work & Schedule and the Research Description as per the requirement of the Program solicitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 4. Project must have a provision for entrepreneurship. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 5. The Proposer has submitted a Budget and Budget Justification as per the requirement of the Program solicitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 6. The requested Funding falls within the maximum limit specified in the Program Solicitation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 7. Project must involve pilot testing/demonstration activities: The Proposal identifies one or more piloting or demonstration anywhere in Bangladesh | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 8. The Proposal includes all the necessary support letters (if relevant) as specified in the Program solicitation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 9. The proposal must provide an indication of innovation and how it will be implemented in the context of Bangladesh. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| 10. The proposal has not included a statement or otherwise indicated that it will not accept the terms and conditions as specified in the solicitation, Or That acceptance is based on modifications to the terms and conditions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |

D. STAGE TWO: PROPOSAL SCORING

Proposals that pass Stage One will be evaluated based on the Scoring Criteria and the Scoring Scale for each criterion. Each criterion has multiple sub-criteria.

- The minimum average passing score for **criteria 1–4 is 56 .00 points out of total 80**. The proposals that do not achieve the minimum average score for criteria 1-4 will not be processed further. **The total minimum average passing score is 70.00 out of 100 points for criteria 1-5**. However, EPRC requires the Proposer to score a minimum of 50% marks for each criterion from 1-5.

| <u>SCORING SCALE</u> | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--|
| % of Possible Points | Interpretation | Explanation for Percentage Points |
| 0% | Not Responsive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fails to address the criteria. • The omissions, flaws, or defects are significant and unacceptable. |
| 1-39% | Minimally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response minimally addresses the criteria. • The omissions, flaws, or defects are significant and Responsive unacceptable. • The response addresses the criteria. |
| 40-69% | Inadequate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are one or more omissions, flaws, or defects or the criteria are addressed in a limited way that results in a low degree of confidence in the proposed solution. |
| 70-79% | Adequate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response adequately addresses the criteria. • Any omissions, flaws, or defects are inconsequential and acceptable. • The response fully addresses the criteria with a good degree of confidence in the Proposer’s response or proposed solution. |
| 80-89% | Good | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no identified omissions, flaws, or defects. Any identified weaknesses are minimal, inconsequential, and acceptable. |
| 90% and above | Excellent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fully addresses the criteria with a high degree of confidence in the Proposer’s response or proposed solution. • The Proposer offers one or more enhancing features, methods, or approaches that exceed basic expectations. |

SCORING CRITERIA

| Scoring Criteria | Maximum Points |
|--|----------------|
| <p>1. <i>Technical Merit and Need</i></p> <p>a. Provides a clear and concise description of the goals, objectives, technological or scientific knowledge advancement, and innovation in the proposed project.</p> | 25 |
| <p>b. Explains how the proposed project will lead to technological advancement and breakthroughs that overcome barriers to achieving the Country's statutory energy and power goals.</p> | |
| <p>c. Explains how the proposed project will advance, supplement, and/or replace current technology and/or scientific knowledge.</p> | |
| <p>d. Justifies the need for EPRC funding, including an explanation of why the proposed work is not adequately supported by competitive or regulated markets.</p> | |
| <p>e. Describes proposed work that is technically feasible to meet the goals of the solicitation and achievable within the proposed Statement of Work and Schedule.</p> | |
| <p>f. Provides a clear and plausible measurement and verification plan that describes how benefits specified in the Proposal will be determined and measured.</p> | |
| <p>g. Describes in detail how the proposed project will not duplicate other research efforts.</p> | |
| <p>h. Provides references that are relevant to the proposed project and are current.</p> | |
| <p>2. <i>Technical Approach</i></p> <p>a. Describes the technique, approach, and methods to be used in performing the work described in the proposal. Highlights any outstanding features.</p> | 20 |
| <p>b. Describes how tasks will be executed and coordinated with various participants as well as team members.</p> | |
| <p>c. Identifies and discusses factors critical for success, in addition to risks, barriers, and limitations. Provides a plan to address them.</p> | |
| <p>d. Describes how the knowledge gained, experimental results, and lessons learned will be made available to the public and key decision-makers.</p> | |
| <p>e. Provides a complete, clear, and concise research description that describes the research goals, objectives, and technical tasks to meet the goals of the solicitation.</p> | |
| <p>f. The products described in the proposal are non-confidential, tangible items that will be delivered to the Council.</p> | |

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| g. Provides a brief description of the Statement of Work in plain, non-technical language that can be understood by the general public. | |
| h. Provides an objective, critical summary of published research literature relevant to the topic under consideration for research. | |
| i. Whether Milestones, Schedules and the Budget of the project matches with the Statement of work. | |
| j. All pilot test/demonstration sites (if relevant) are located at an independent 3 rd party site (not owned by the lead researcher) which may be a public or private industrial entity. | |
| 3. <u>Impacts and Benefits</u> | 25 |
| a. Explains how the proposed research will meet the national needs in the field of energy and power with respect to the EPRC goals of greater reliability, lower costs, and/or improved efficiency. | |
| b. Provides clear, plausible, and justifiable quantitative estimates of potential developments to enhance power and energy efficiency, productivity, reliability and sustainability , including the following (as applicable): annual electrical and thermal energy savings , peak load reduction and/or shifting, energy cost reductions, greenhouse gas emission reductions, air emission reductions | |
| c. States the timeframe, assumptions, and calculations for the estimated benefits, and explains their reasonableness. | |
| d. Clearly identify the primary beneficiary of the research outcome and also the secondary stakeholder who will be able to commercialize the solution. | |
| e. Discusses any qualitative or intangible improvement to the applicable technologies and systems for the development of energy and power, including timeframe and assumptions. | |
| f. Proposes how the impact of the research project will be realized in the context of Bangladesh, including timeframe and assumptions. | |
| g. Provides a description on how the research provides innovative solutions for efficient, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable development of Bangladesh’s energy and power infrastructure in plain, non-technical language that can be understood by the general public. | |
| 4. <u>Team Qualifications, Capabilities, and Resources</u> | 10 |
| a. Describes the organizational structure of the Proposer and the research team. Includes an organizational chart that illustrates the structure. | |
| b. Summarizes the qualifications, experience, capabilities, and credentials of the lead researcher, co-lead researcher and other lead team members. | |
| c. Explains how the various tasks will be managed and coordinated, and how the researcher’s expertise will support the effective management and coordination of all projects in the Proposal. | |
| d. Describes the facilities, infrastructure, and resources available to the team. | |

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| e. Describes the team’s history of successfully completing projects and, if applicable, commercializing and/or deploying results/products. | |
| f. Describes past collaborations with utilities, industries, or other stakeholders. | |
| g. Identifies any collaborations with utilities, industries, or other stakeholders for the proposed project; explains the nature of the collaborations and what each collaborator will contribute to the research. | |
| h. If applicable, identifies any Key Personnel and explains why the outcome of the research may be affected if any of those individuals were no longer involved in the project. | |
| i. Provides support or commitment letters (for match funding, pilot test/demonstration sites, or project partners, as applicable) that indicate a strong level of support or commitment for the research project. | |
| Total Possible Points for criteria 1–4 (Minimum Passing Score is 56.00) | 80 |
| 5. <u>Budget and Cost-Effectiveness</u> | 20 |
| a. Provides an estimated budget for each task in the budget and budget justification. | |
| b. Justifies the reasonableness of the requested EPRC funds relative to the research goals, objectives, and tasks. | |
| c. Justifies the reasonableness of costs for direct labor, other direct costs (e.g., materials and supplies, subcontractor profit), and operating expenses by task. | |
| d. Explains why the hours proposed for personnel and subcontractors are reasonable to accomplish the activities in the implementation section. | |
| e. Provides a budget that is complete, accurate, and aligns with the Statement of work. | |
| Total Possible Points for criteria 1-5 (Minimum Passing Score is 70.00) | 100 |

Selection of Reviewers

In order to ensure that only proposals of promising and high quality are selected for funding, EPRC rely on **independent experts** for the evaluation of proposals ('evaluators'). The independent evaluators for evaluating the submitted research proposals are selected from the panel of experts approved by the EPRC Governing Body. The number of reviewers for each proposal will be either 3 (Three) or 5 (Five) depending on the availability of the reviewers and the technical complexity of the proposal. These reviewers will have diverse representation. The goal is to achieve a balance among various characteristics. Important factors to consider include: type of organization and discipline. Optimally evaluators or reviewers should have:

1. Broader or more generalized knowledge of the science and engineering subfields involved in the proposals to be reviewed to evaluate the broader impacts of the proposed activity. Reviewers with broad expertise are required for proposals involving substantial size or complexity, broad disciplinary or multidisciplinary content, or significant national or international implications.
2. Special knowledge of the science and engineering subfields involved in the proposals to be reviewed to evaluate competence, intellectual merit, and utility of the proposed activity. Within reasonable limits, reviewers' fields of specialty should be complementary within a reviewer group.

Experts who have a **conflict of interests** will be excluded by EPRC. EPRC considers that a conflict of interest exists, if an expert:

- was involved in the preparation of a proposal
- benefits directly or indirectly if a proposal is accepted
- has a close family or personal relationship with any person representing a proposer
- is a director, trustee or partner or is in any way involved in the management of a proposer's organization/entity.
- is employed or contracted by one of the Proposers or any named subcontractors
- was employed by one of the Proposers in the last three years
- is involved in a contract or grant agreement, grant decision, membership of management structures (*e.g. member of management or advisory board etc.*) or research collaboration with a proposer or a fellow (or had been so in the last three years)
- is in any other situation that could cast doubt on their ability to participate in the evaluation of the proposal impartially (or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party).

Such an expert may, however, exceptionally be invited to take part in the evaluation process which should be documented, if all of the following apply:

- the expert works in a different department/laboratory/institute from where the action is to be carried out
- the bodies operate with a high degree of autonomy and
- such a role is justified by the requirement to appoint the best available experts and by the limited size of the pool of qualified experts.