NSF I/UCRC Center
Research
Selection/L.I.F.E. Form
Use

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NSF I/UCRC Evaluators Meeting, June 5, 2014
What does L.I.F.E. stand for?

- L.I.F.E. stands for: “Level of Interest, Feedback, and Evaluation”
- The L.I.F.E. form is a key component of research selection that is conducted at the centers
- NSF I/UCRC Centers are required (not just encouraged) to use them at the semiannual IAB meetings
- IAB members are asked to fill out the form, online or hard copy, after each proposed or continued research project presentation
Recent changes to L.I.F.E.*—2012

- In 2012, the NCSU Evaluation Team created:
  - New options for outputting summary information
  - An option to allow members to sort questions, suggestions, and comments
  - Ability to link to the process/outcome questionnaire

*These changes are mentioned in the Annual Evaluators’ Memo dated July 31, 2013 and subsequent email correspondence from the NCSU Evaluation Team.
Recent changes to L.I.F.E.*—2013

เชื่อมั่นว่า L.I.F.E. ได้เปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างน้อย 2 ครั้งในปี 2013 ตามที่ทีมการวิเคราะห์ของ NCSU ได้เพิ่มเติม:

- กำหนดรหัสผ่านที่จำเป็นในการเข้าถึงการประชุมหรือรายการโครงการบนเว็บไซต์ เพื่อเพิ่มความสอดคล้อง
  - รหัสผ่านต้องถูกทำลายก่อน/ในวันที่ประชุม IAB
- ฟีเจอร์ที่ให้ PI สามารถตอบสนองไปยังคำแนะนำของ IAB ผ่านเว็บไซต์ L.I.F.E. เพื่อเพิ่มความสามารถในการสื่อสารในเวลาเรียลไทม์ และซั่มเม็นที่ L.I.F.E. รีวิว
  - กล่องต้องถูกตรวจสอบโดยผู้จัดการเพื่อเปิดใช้ฟีเจอร์นี้เมื่อมีการเพิ่มการประชุม หรือกลับไปยังฟีเจอร์การแก้ไขหลังจากนั้น
- ให้เลือกต่อคุณสมบัติที่จะพิมพ์เอกสารรูปแบบแข็งลงยังคงมีอยู่

*These changes are mentioned in the Annual Evaluators’ Memo dated July 31, 2013 and subsequent email correspondence from the NCSU Evaluation Team.
So …

✧ IAB members are required to fill out the L.I.F.E. form and indicate after each project presentation, whether they are …
- Very Interested?
- Interested with change?
- Not interested?
- Abstain?

✧ In addition to rating each project presentation, IAB members are asked to provide comments, questions, or suggestions

✧ Evaluators are asked to facilitate a discussion with IAB members based on the L.I.F.E. form summary

✧ IAB members select the projects they are willing to support
Well, that’s that …

Wait, the devil is in the details
Questions to ponder …

✧ Are we engaging IAB members with the right questions?
✧ Are we setting up the discussion most effectively?
✧ Are we putting in front of the room the best facilitator to lead these discussions?
✧ What are we hoping to achieve?
✧ Are we providing adequate instruction, guidance, examples, etc., to put in place the best mechanisms to achieve what we want to achieve?
Consider these issues …

✧ “New, proposed projects” vs. “Continuing projects”
✧ Single company projects vs. Cross-IAB collaborative projects (the Big “C”)
   ▪ Projects that meet Firm A’s objectives vs. Projects that meet both Firm A and B’s objectives vs. Projects that span sites
✧ University presenting project ideas (talent) vs. Company presenting project ideas (need), or mix of both
✧ Evaluator-facilitator vs. Center Director-facilitator vs. IAB Chair-facilitator vs. NSF-facilitator vs. non-member IAB Chair-facilitator
And these issues …

✧ Pre-meeting … Besides a project Executive Summary prior to the semiannual meeting, what else might help?
✧ During meeting … How exactly does the L.I.F.E. form connect to research selection? to a voting rubric?
✧ Post-meeting … Can the L.I.F.E. form be used as project documentation repository?
“New, proposed projects” vs. “Continuing projects”

- Should the form be the same for both?
- Imagine L.I.F.E. questions that could stir IAB members to think about how a continuing project might be shaped for the second six months that would interest their financial support?
Single company projects vs. Cross-IAB collaborative projects (the Big “C”)  

- If we want to encourage greater collaboration across IAB members, we might want to think about the “context” of the questions we ask  
  - How might the IAB member regard, “Very Interested”?  
    - personally? project meets my firm’s or unit’s research objectives? project meets the Center’s mission?  

- If projects presented are developed with Firm A’s objectives in mind, how do we expand/revise the project at the IAB meeting to also meet Firm B’s objectives? Are our processes effective? How do we make what we want happen?  
  - Maximization of single IAB member vs. Max together  
  - Maybe 1:1 model only works for IP exclusivity-sectors  

- How do we adjust the research selection process to encourage projects across sites?
University presenting project ideas (talent) vs. Company presenting project ideas (need), or mix of both

- I/UCRC projects are bridging talent with need
- University presents, IAB rates
- What about Industry presents and university rates whether or not it has the talent to conduct the research?
  - Here’s what we want (transparency), can you do it (open identification of talent)
  - Versus: Here’s what we’d like to do, do you want it?
- Put another way, are our processes set up pre/during/post-meeting to make this bridge between talent and need strong?
- Looks like NSF I/UCRC at the program level is moving in this direction with proactive exploration of potential I/UCRC topic areas and not waiting for universities to gin up the topics
Facilitator of L.I.F.E. discussion?

✧ Back then, primary facilitator evenly split

* Based on 2009 survey of Center Evaluators conducted by Meyers and McGregor of 11 evaluators, covering 27 centers.
What about now?

✧ In your center/s, who is the primary facilitator of L.I.F.E. discussions?
✧ Does it make a difference who facilitates?
  ▪ Evaluator-facilitator vs. Center Director-facilitator vs. IAB Chair-facilitator vs. NSF-facilitator vs. non-member IAB Chair-facilitator
Pre-meeting …

Besides a project Executive Summary prior to the semiannual meeting, what else might help?
During meeting ...

How exactly does the L.I.F.E. form connect to research selection? to a voting rubric?
Post-meeting …

- Can the L.I.F.E. form be used as project documentation repository?
  - Is there “[a] way to enter IAB-level data on each project at the research review meeting? The results would be printed with the individual-level LIFE feedback but marked as ‘IAB Consensus Feedback’” (2009 survey)
  - Can we make edits to review later?
Your thoughts?
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