

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

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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

✧ In 2013, the NCSU Evaluation Team added:

- A required password to access meetings or project lists on the site in order to enhance confidentiality
 - Password now needs to be shared with your center prior to/at the IAB meeting
- A feature that allows PIs to respond to IAB comments via the L.I.F.E. site directly to enhance real time communication and streamline the L.I.F.E. review
 - Box must be checked off by Administrator to turn on this option when meeting is added, or go back into Edit function after

✧ The option to print out hard copies still remains

*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”)

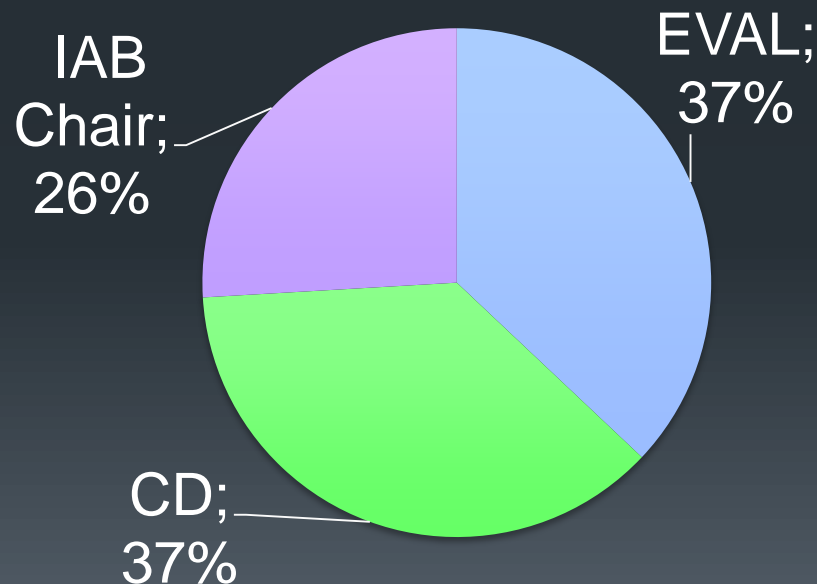
- ✧ If we want to encourage greater collaboration across IAB members, we might want to think about the “context” of the questions we ask
 - How might the IAB member regard, “Very Interested”?
 - personally? project meets my firm’s or unit’s research objectives?
 - project meets the Center’s mission?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