

State University System of Florida

Resources to help faculty secure appointments to federal boards

We would like to pass along some information to help our State University System faculty and administrators consider and apply for service on federal agency advisory boards or committees. In this increasingly competitive federal funding environment, such service may help your institution and the individual become even more successful in the grant application process.

There are over 1,000 agency committees across the government. Service on them, usually for a 4 or 5 year term appointment helps:

- the agency -- by providing the government with outside expert advice
- the university -- by having its visibility raised in these settings
- the faculty member serving – by achieving prestigious agency service which can be a career enhancer

Serving on these boards can also provide members with valuable knowledge and insight about an agency's culture and inner workings, and exposure to agency leaders and decision makers.

Since the last time we compiled all this information for you manually several years ago, the government has now centralized access to all the key information.

The Federal Interagency Databases Online makes available a list of Federal Advisory Committee Act Committees arranged by agency. This database also provides important information about the committees, including their decision makers and general information.

The link to the complete list of agencies is found at <http://fido.gov/facadatabase/AgenciesList.asp>. Click on the Public Access link at the top of the page, and then click on the year "2011" and the "Explore Data" button to get the most updated list of boards.

Or, to search for committees by individual agencies, see <http://fido.gov/facadatabase/search.asp> and click on the "Search" button.

How to use the link

The link will take you to a complete list of government agencies sponsoring committees under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, a law that specifies certain procedures for open meetings, adequate meeting notice and chartering.

From there you can select an agency of interest. For example, clicking on the Department of Health and Human Services link will provide a list of 266 committees operating under the agency. Selecting a particular committee will provide general information, members and the contact or decision maker relating to the committee.

Once a committee has been identified, normally a letter of nomination is required to the appointing official, often the Department Secretary. These letters can be sent by other faculty, deans, school presidents, association leaders, and often a local Member of Congress can provide a letter of endorsement if the faculty member is known to the Member. Often for peer review groups, the process involves a self nomination.

Other agency resources

In addition to the main committee link provided above, your faculty may also want to explore the websites of individual agencies for more information on other committees.

For example the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation and Department of Energy each have great need for faculty to serve on peer review committees reviewing grant applications. For information on the expertise required and the nomination and selection criteria and process at NIH, see: <http://cms.csr.nih.gov/PeerReviewMeetings/BestPractices/How+Scientists+Are+Selected+For+Study+Section+Service.htm>

For information on how to become an external reviewer at the National Science Foundation, see: <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/meritreview/reviewer.jsp>

For similar information for the Department of Energy, Office of Science, please visit: <http://www.science.energy.gov/about/Organization.htm>

Prepared by Cavarocchi-Ruscio-Dennis Associates for the State University System of Florida. For more information, contact Brent Jaquet at bjquet@dc-crd.com or 202 484-1100.