

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

Dates of COV: October 13-15, 2010

Date of COV Report: November 18, 2010

Date of Response: December 17, 2010

Program Point of Contact: Dr. Glen Crawford

	COV Recommendation	HEP Response
1	Charge HEPAP to convene an expert panel, as called for in the P5 report, to formulate a strategic plan for strengthening and expanding the stewardship role of OHEP in accelerator science and technology.	HEP plans to submit a charge on this topic to HEPAP in 2011.
2	Increase the fraction of the total OHEP budget devoted to projects.	The HEP strategic plan calls for increased investment in projects. HEP will work to implement this plan.
3	Recruit and hire additional OHEP staff.	HEP will fill allocated Federal positions and will seek approval for additional positions needed to carry out office responsibilities.
4	Use comparative review panels on a regular basis.	<p>HEP will implement an appropriate comparative review process of university grants in the Physics Research programs (with the Theory and Non Accelerator Physics programs as top priorities).</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> This recommendation appeared in the evaluations of the Theory and Non Accelerator Physics subprograms. HEP already uses comparative reviews regularly for laboratory research programs and targeted solicitations (such as Early Career Research Program, etc.) and will extend this to parts of the university research programs. Evaluations of Facilities and Operations, Projects, and Accelerator Science and Technology areas did not identify this as an issue. We note that comparative reviews are not possible or appropriate for some activities; and in others the processes in place were found to be working well.</p>

5	Develop standard procedures to ensure that feedback to proposers is routinely provided in a timely way and with as much information as possible, including reviews, for both declined and accepted proposals.	HEP will streamline its procedures and show improvement in providing feedback to PIs on submitted proposals in a timely manner.
6	Involve program managers in guiding database development.	SC is developing a database on grant statistics and participants for all SC programs. HEP will provide input in its development to ensure that it will be useful for HEP in the management of its program.
7	Implement an adequate data base of potential reviewers to support the efforts of the program monitors. The monitors should be consulted to provide input to the process.	SC is in the process of developing a new electronic portfolio management system for program managers. HEP will work with SC to ensure that system addresses these needs.
8	Work with the Office of Science to address the disparity of funding for Early Career Awards between university and national laboratory proposals, taking into account differences in underlying costs.	The difference in funding between laboratory and university Early Career Research Program awardees is meant to address differences in dedicated researcher and staff time. As we gain experience with the program, we will work with SC to incorporate lessons learned from past program cycles.
9	Rebalance program manager travel, possibly reducing the number of non-renewal year site visits, to ensure the availability of time and funding for travel to reviews, conferences and other program activities.	HEP will examine last year's travel usage and utilize findings for planning travel in coming years.
10	Establish templates for reviewers to follow which are designed for ready interpretation.	As noted in the COV report, review templates are already in use in some HEP subprograms. HEP will expand their usage across the program.
11	Develop ways to mitigate the delays in funding due to the requirement that MIEs must appear in the budget request.	HEP will look into the limitations imposed by DOE budgeting and project management practices and identify options for initiating MIEs in a more timely way while still being in compliance with DOE policies and practices.
12	Ensure that all substantial subfields represented in a theory task proposal are evaluated by qualified reviewers.	HEP will work to ensure that that all substantial subfields represented in theory proposals are reviewed by knowledgeable reviewers.
13	Ensure that proposal declinations are communicated no later than eight months after the proposal deadline. (See	HEP will set up a calendar and track progress to ensure that decisions are made and communicated within 8 months.

	also Recommendation 5.)	
14	Open the eligibility requirements of the theory home institution program so all advanced HEP graduate students have equal opportunity to participate.	HEP disagrees with this recommendation. SC has a graduate student fellowship program that is open to all. The theory home institute program was set up, as the name implies, to address the specific needs of DOE HEP's theory grants.
15	Expand the theory home institution graduate student fellowship program to support more students per year.	Expansion of the home institution graduate student fellowship program will depend upon its merit and performance in the context of other priorities in the theory program. HEP thanks the COV for this input that will be used in making future programmatic decisions.
16	Encourage grant applications from OJI and ECA awardees at the end of their OJI/ECA funding period and maintain an even-handed treatment of applications, regardless whether their university theory group is traditionally NSF or DOE-funded.	HEP will continue to encourage grant applications from all eligible PIs. As with all grant proposals received by HEP, new proposals from past OJI/Early Career Research Program winners will be peer reviewed and decisions will be based upon merit, promise and feasibility of the proposed work.
17	Define a transparent method and approval process to facilitate modest funding changes between funding streams in response to evolving circumstances.	Procedures will be updated and communicated to the field.
18	Develop and articulate a more formal methodology and timeline to define short term and long term operational metrics for OHEP facilities and a method for adjustment for yearly changes.	HEP will articulate a methodology and timeline for defining operation metrics and these will be communicated to the field.
19	Incorporate into the facility review process the assessment of recommendation responses from previous reviews.	The HEP review procedures memo has been updated to reflect this recommendation. The implementation will be demonstrated in future review reports.
20	Standardize the facility review process to always include a closeout presentation in a form which is immediately useful for the host laboratory or program.	The HEP review procedures memo has been updated to reflect the recommendation. The implementation will be demonstrated in future review closeouts.
21	Ensure that the OHEP triennial program reviews of laboratory programs include reviewers who are well aligned with laboratory missions, roles, and	HEP will work to include reviewers in the triennial reviews of the laboratory program who are familiar with and knowledgeable of the mission, roles and methodologies of laboratories, while at the same time

	<p>methodologies. Inclusion of university reviewers is valuable, but the committee should not be dominated by them.</p>	<p>avoiding conflicts of interest.</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> The HEP triennial program reviews are intended to assess physics research activities at the U.S. national laboratories. All laboratories that participate in a HEP program area are reviewed together. As such, HEP aims to obtain a balanced assessment of laboratory physics research performance using standard DOE review criteria. HEP recognizes that national laboratories are mission-oriented organizations and we strive to include reviewers that understand the mission and role of a laboratory. Because of obvious conflict of interest issues, we can't include reviewers from other U.S. HEP labs in these review panels. However, we make every effort to include university scientists with laboratory experience, non-U.S. or non-HEP laboratory scientists, and world renowned subject-matter experts. In addition, during the first executive session with the reviewers, HEP is careful to instruct and remind the panel of the different roles and responsibilities of laboratory staff.</p>
22	<p>Develop more projects to readiness (CD-0, etc.) in order to be able to respond expeditiously to program opportunities.</p>	<p>HEP has developed and obtained CD-0 for projects once it is clear that funding to implement the project has been identified and a clear scientific need has been articulated and reviewed.</p>