

4.5 SCIENTIFIC MERIT REVIEW

Purpose

1. To establish the scientific merit review processes that will be used to ensure the research RNS supports is of the highest caliber and awarded impartially.

Definition

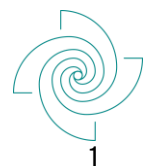
2. Scientific merit is the sound design and methodology of a research proposal, the evaluation of which is done by knowledgeable and objective experts.

Principles

3. All scientific merit review processes are based on principles of confidentiality, respect for diversity of viewpoints, fairness, and transparency.
4. Reviewers may be chosen from among subject-matter experts, potential knowledge users, project partners, and those with lived experience in the field(s) of the research proposal.
5. Reviewers will be independent, without conflict of interest with regard to the project's proponent.
6. Reviewers will adhere to published funding opportunity objectives and criteria.

Policy

7. RNS will only provide financial support to a research proposal that has been reviewed. All merit reviews must include at least one reviewer who has knowledge of the methodology and is current with the state of scientific understanding of the field.
8. If RNS is considering a project that has been previously reviewed by another funder, and the proposed research is identical, RNS will accept the merit review of that funder. The following forms of merit review may be used depending on the circumstance:
 - a. Review panels
 - b. Subject-matter experts contracted by RNS
 - c. Research oversight or review committees to provide continuous oversight to long-term projects
9. Applicants will be provided with anonymized results of their merit reviews upon request.



REVIEW AND APPROVAL HISTORY			
DATE	VERSION	ACTIVITY	NOTES
November 21, 2022	1.0	Board approval	Initial approval
September 17, 2026	1.1	Board approval	Amended