

Guidance for LSDF Expert Reviewers on Interaction with Applicants Outside of the Review Panel Process

As a response to requests from several expert reviewers, LSDF has created this guidance about service on review panels and interactions, outside of the panel process, with applicants whose applications they have reviewed. (This guidance also extends to applicants who have become LSDF grantees.)

1. Interactions between reviewers and applicants outside of the normal panel process, if handled appropriately, have the power to strengthen applicants' grant applications and commercialization plans and thus are in the best interests of LSDF and its mission.
2. LSDF has engaged its expert reviewers due to their substantial experience and knowledge of business planning, product development, and commercialization. The role of the reviewers is to advise LSDF about the merit of grant applications and counsel applicants about the ingredients for a high-quality commercialization plan and a successful application.
3. Expert reviewers provide service to LSDF and must not accept the engagement as an opportunity to use their knowledge of a grant application or their interaction with applicants for personal gain, *e.g.*, solicitation of consulting opportunities or consideration of applications for potential investment.
4. LSDF realizes that expert reviewers may have expertise or connections to others that could add value to applicants' proposed efforts. A reviewer who wishes to provide information to or assist an applicant outside of the formal review process should indicate the particulars of his/her desire to LSDF, who will contact the applicant to determine if he/she is amenable to further interaction with the reviewer. If the applicant consents, LSDF will re-link the reviewer with the applicant for further interaction.
5. Should LSDF approve the interaction between a reviewer and an applicant outside of the formal application review process, the reviewer will be asked to recuse him/herself from further evaluation of the subject application. LSDF may also grant the reviewer a limited waiver of his/her confidentiality obligation for the purposes of the proposed interaction with the applicant.