Grant review process for 2015 (Letters of Intent):

Letters of intent were reviewed by three committee members each. Each LOI was evaluated according the alignment with the mission and goals of Duke AHEAD including:

* strength of professional development plan for educators
* interprofessional collaboration
* depth of collaboration (interdepartmental, interprofessional, vertical across learners)
* rigor of assessment plan (outcomes)
* broader impacts (collateral benefits beyond study/project participants)
* potential sustainability of project
* potential for scholarship
* organization and quality of proposal
* dissemination plan

In addition:

* the LOI must present a compelling idea worthy of Duke AHEAD support
* there should be potential for future funding from other sources

As a practical matter, one should not expect a LOI to address to satisfaction each of these evaluative criteria. However, a successful LOI should NOT be in flagrant violation of any one criterion (e.g., absence of interprofessional collaboration would be grounds for passing on a LOI). With these criteria in mind, the task is to make a simple binary judgment: “proceed to full proposal” or “non-competitive.” In the report back to the subcommittee, each reviewer should prepare a brief statement (one sentence or phrase will do) highlighting the principal strength(s) of a LOI that you believe should “proceed to full proposal” or the principal short-coming relative to the evaluative criteria that moved your “non-competitive” judgment. These statements will be compiled and a form letter with individualized feedback will be sent to submitters.

Based on reviewer’s scores we set 2/3 of the LOIs to full proposal.

Grant review process for 2015 (Full proposals):

         Convene ONE meeting of the Research Group for the purpose of discussing proposal reviews, identifying those projects that are worthy of Duke AHEAD funding, and prioritizing the 3 proposals at the $10,000 level of the 4 proposals at the $5,000 level. This single meeting will be a late afternoon/early evening with dinner provided, as it will likely take 2.5 hours to complete this work.

         Implement a categorical system of evaluating the proposals (rather than a numerical rating system), with the following instructions for evaluating the proposals:

o   Proposals will be evaluated in terms of the “**Intellectual Merit**” and their “**Alignment with the mission of Duke AHEAD.**”

o   For **Intellectual Merit**, reviewers will consider:

  compelling idea that addresses an issue of strategic importance

  overall quality and organization of proposal

  potential sustainability of project

  potential for scholarship

  dissemination plan

  rigor of assessment plan for outcomes

o   For **Alignment with the mission of Duke AHEAD**, reviewers will consider:

  strength and depth of interprofessional collaboration

  strength of professional development plan for educators/researchers

  broader impacts (collateral benefits beyond study/project participants)

o   For both “**Intellectual Merit**” and “**Alignment with the mission of Duke AHEAD**”, reviewers will provide a written statement of outstanding strengths and weaknesses (thus, two pairs of such +/- statements for each review).

o   For both “**Intellectual Merit**” and “**Alignment with the mission of Duke AHEAD**”, reviewers will provide a summative categorical label:

  excellent

  very good

  good

  non-competitive

o   Each of the proposals will be ***read*** by all members of the Research group.

o   Each proposal will be ***reviewed*** by 3 members of the Research Group (in addition to the review of the Director), with written statements provided by each reviewer in advance of the called meeting.

o   For each proposal, one will serve as “primary reviewer”; one will serve as “secondary reviewer”; and one will serve as “scribe” (for reasons that are explained below). Each of these three individuals will read and submit reviews as detailed in the bullets above.

o   During the meeting, each proposal will be discussed by the reviewers:

  the primary reviewer will have **2-3 minutes** to summarize the outstanding strengths and weakness of the proposal and explain the reason for the categorical labels applied to the proposal’s intellectual merit and mission alignment

  the secondary reviewer will have **1-2 minutes** to add new insights or perspectives on the quality of the proposal’s intellectual merit and mission alignment.

  the scribe will take written minutes of the discussion of the panel (hence the term “scribe”), including the major points made orally by the primary and secondary reviewers; the scribe may also add any new insight or perspective

  the proposal will then be open for discussion and questions by any member of the Research Group for **2-3 minutes**, and overall consensus will be achieved regarding the categorical labels assigned to each proposal for intellectual merit and mission alignment

o   After discussing each proposal as just outlined, the moderator will lead consensus assignment of those 3 proposals that are worth of Duke AHEAD support at the $10,000 level and those 4 that are worthy of support at the $5,000 level (presumably, those proposals where review indicates consensus labels of “excellent” or “very good” for intellectual merit and mission alignment).

o   After the meeting, the scribe for each proposal will complete a template summarizing in writing the deliberations of the Research Group; that template and the three reviews (submitted in advance of the meeting) will be returned to the project team (Note: this is much more robust process for delivering substantive feedback than what happened last year.)

         Final decisions regarding funding will be made by the Duke AHEAD Director, leaning heavily on the counsel and accountability provided by this process outlined here.