Fiscal Year 2019
Panel Outcome Report
Human Nutrition (NP 107)

DAVID SHAPIRO ILAN
Digitally signed by DAVID SHAPIRO ILAN
Date: 2020.09.25 12:01:50 -04'00'

David Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D., Scientific Quality Review Officer
(January 2018-December 2019)

Date

MARQUEA KING
Digitally signed by MARQUEA KING
Date: 2020.09.25 12:19:46 -04'00'

Marquea D. King, Ph.D., Director/Program Coordinator

Date

Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service
United States Department of Agriculture

Panel Outcome Report FY 2019
Human Nutrition (NP 107)

This Panel Outcome Report is a summary of the Human Nutrition, National Program (107), Office of Scientific Quality Review (OSQR), Project Plan Peer Review (PPPR) process held from September 2018 – April 2019.

The project plans reviewed by these panels were applicable to the mission of the National Program (107) Human Nutrition, to improve the nutrition and health of the American people by enhancing the quality of the American diet and improving health through research.

This panel outcome report is intended to inform the Office of National Programs (ONP) and each Area of research (research scientist or SY) progress as it relates to the NP 107. Data tables display outcomes of scoring by Areas, Panels and overall program.

Selected chairs (Table 1) were in part, recommended by National Program Leaders (NPLs) from NP 107 and/or previous OSQR service; others were sought based on their nationally recognized expertise by the OSQR Director. They were examined for suitability to lead a panel review, screened for conflicts of interest (COI) and finally concurred upon by the current Scientific Quality Review Officer (SQRO), Dr. David Shapiro-Ilan.

Table 1.
Panels reviewed for the Human Nutrition, National Program (107)

Panel	Panel Chair	Panel Meeting (Re-Review)	Number of Panelists	Number of Projects
NP 107 Panel 1. Epidemiology 1	Dr. Rashmi Sinha		6	5
NP 107 Panel 2. Human Nutrition Intervention 1	Dr. Won O. Song		5	4
NP 107 Panel 3*. Human Nutrition Intervention 2	Dr. Nadine Sahyoun	1/16/2019	3	2
NP 107 Panel 4. Immunity and Animal Models	Dr. Mary Ann Lila		5	4
NP 107 Panel 5. Mechanisms for Obesity, Mineral Absorption, Cancer	Dr. Mary R. L'Abbe		5	4
NP 107 Panel 6. Nutrition and Metabolism	Dr. Elvira G. de Mejia		4	3
NP 107 Panel 7. Epidemiology 2	Dr. Jennifer L. Temple		3	2
NP 107 Panel 8. Response to Diets	Dr. Howard P. Glauert		4	3
NP 107 Panel 9. Pediatric Nutrition	Dr. Katherine L. Tucker		5	4
NP 107 Panel 10. Eating Behavior and Microbiome of Children	Dr. Alessio Fasano		4	3
NP 107 Panel 11. Epigenetics and Brain Vitamin D Control of Glucose	Dr. James M. Ntambi		5	4
NP 107 Panel 12. Animal Models - Cornea, Brain, Adipocytes, Intestine Muscle	Dr. TinChung Leung		5	4
NP 107 Panel 13*. Oxalic Acid in Plants, Mouse Genomics and Lactation, Vitamin D and Metabolism		12/4/2018	10	4

*Review conducted by no less than two (or greater) expert panel reviewers providing independent written reviews and scores without group panel deliberation. Scores reflect the average of no less than two expert reviewers and written reviews are compiled and screened by OSQR Director.

Review Process

Following panel review for each plan, OSQR Director, with SQRO concurrence, sends each Area Director a panel consensus recommendation document. This may include recommendations for revision of the plan to which researchers are required to respond in writing and, as appropriate, revise their written plans in accordance with guidelines as detailed in the OSQR Handbook (see www.ars.usda.gov/osqr).

In addition, as part of the panel deliberation, a scoring of the overall quality of the plan is judged based on the degree of revision the panel deems is required. This scoring is termed an "Action Class." Each reviewer is asked to anonymously provide an Action Class rating for each plan. OSQR assigns a *numerical equivalent* to each Action Class rating and then averages these to arrive at an overall Action Class score for the plan.

The Action Class is defined as follows:

No Revision Required. An excellent plan; no revision is required, but minor changes to the project plan may be suggested.[1]

Minor Revision Required. The project plan is feasible as written, requires only minor clarification or revision to increase quality to a higher level.

Moderate Revision Required. The project plan is basically feasible but requires changes or revision to the work on one or more objectives, perhaps involving alterations of the experimental approaches in order to increase quality to a higher level and may need some rewriting for greater clarity.

Passed Review:

For plans receiving one of the above three Action Class scores (No Revision, Minor Revision or Moderate Revision), scientists are required to respond in writing to address all panel comments in the consensus recommendation document; revise their project plan as appropriate; and submit the revised plan and responses to the OSQR through their Area Office. Both the updated plan and the recommendations' form are reviewed by the SQRO and, once they are satisfied that all review concerns have been satisfactorily addressed, the project plan is certified, the Area Office is notified, and the project plan may be implemented.

Certification:

Certification is contingent upon making a good faith effort to satisfactorily address panel comments and recommendations. A plan has not "passed" the OSQR PPPR process until the SQRO's certification is delivered to the Area.

Major Revision Required. There are significant flaws in the experimental design and/or approach or lack of clarity which hampers understanding. Significant revision is needed.

Not Feasible. The project plan, as presented, has major scientific or technical flaws. Deficiencies exist in experimental design, methods, presentation, or expertise which make it unlikely to succeed.

[1] While a No Revision action class would imply that change to the plan is not required, where the panel requests specific additions to the plan, if accepted, these should be incorporated into the updated plan.

Failed Review:

For plans receiving an Action Class score of Major Revision or Not Feasible, scientists are required to address, in writing, all panel comments in the consensus recommendation document; revise their project plan as appropriate; and submit the revised plan and responses to the OSQR through their Area Office . The plan *MUST* then must undergo a Re-Review by the initial deliberating panel, at which time a second set of consensus recommendations and second Action Class score are obtained.

Per the Re-Review, if the plan receives an Action Class score of a No Revision, Minor Revision or Moderate Revision, the project plan may be implemented after following the **Passed Review** section above. Plans receiving a second Major Revision, or Not Feasible score are considered failed reviews. The Action Class and Consensus Recommendations from the Re-Review are provided to the Area with NO further option for revision or review on that particular project plan as it has been submitted.

Such plans may be terminated, reassigned, or restructured at the discretion of the Area Office and ONP. For plans receiving Major Revision, it may be elected not to further revise them and to end review with the plan not receiving certification (plan fails review). For those receiving a score of Not Feasible, Area and National Program Leader (NPL) approval are needed for the plan to be revised for re-review. Otherwise the plan will be considered to have failed review. Subsequent action with regard to the research and researchers is left to Area and ONP-NPL leadership.

At the conclusion of each PPPR deliberation, the chair and panel reviewers are asked to provide general statements or recommendations on the overall process as well as the general quality of the plans which underwent review. The Chair is specifically asked to provide a Panel Chair Statement which they feel focuses on the overall conduct of the review or any broad areas with regard to the research they feel would benefit future researchers or the Agency as a whole. Copies of such statements for NP 107 are found at the end of this report.

Review Outcomes

Reviews can vary, but ultimately, depend on a combination of the panelists selected and the scientific writing capabilities of the team who wrote the project plan. The OSQR is responsible for assuring that each panel contains subject matter experts who provide knowledgeable, clear, rigorous, and fair assessments. Therefore, PPPR panels vary in their overall outcomes.

Uniquely, the ability of an ARS research team to respond to panel recommendations/comments in order to *revise and improve project plans is, perhaps, the greatest strength of the ARS PPPR process.*

ARS uses the National Program Panel Outcome Report as a measure of scientific progress and as a demonstration of overall program quality, how well researchers understand and address the needs of the expert panel reviewers. Initial review scores that are moderate or higher are recorded as such and will not be certified as having completed the PPPR until the SQRO has deemed that all reviewer concerns have been satisfactorily addressed. For lower scores/failed reviews, the panel provides a re-review score, which is considered along with the initial review score.

Table 2.
Initial and Re-review Scores for Human Nutrition, National Program (107)

Panel	No revision	Minor	Moderate	Major	Not Feasible	Re-Review
NP 107 Panel 1		3	1	1		1 Moderate
NP 107 Panel 2		1	3			
NP 107 Panel 3*			2			
NP 107 Panel 4	1	2	1			
NP 107 Panel 5		1	2	1		1 Moderate
NP 107 Panel 6		1	1	1		1 No Revision
NP 107 Panel 7			2			
NP 107 Panel 8		2	1			
NP 107 Panel 9			2	2		1 Moderate 1 Minor
NP 107 Panel 10			3			
NP 107 Panel 11	2		1	1		1 No Revision
NP 107 Panel 12		3	1			
NP 107 Panel 13*			3		1	

*Review conducted by no less than two (or greater) expert panel reviewers providing independent written reviews and scores without group panel deliberation. Scores reflect the average of no less than two expert reviewers and written reviews are compiled and screened by OSQR Director.

Table 3.
Area Scores for Human Nutrition, National Program (107)

Area	No revision	Minor	Moderate	Major	Not Feasible
MWA					
NEA	1	8	8	2 (2 Moderates)	
PA	2	5	10		1
PWA	0		2	1 (1 No Revision)	
SEA	0	0	3	3 (1 Moderate) (1 Minor) (1 No Revision)	

Table 4.
Overall Scores for Human Nutrition, National Program (107)

	No revision	Minor	Moderate	Major	Not Feasible
# Plans with each score	3	13	23	6	1

Overall Panel Characteristics:

Panel Characteristics

The OSQR PPPR relies heavily on expert panel member selection by the OSQR Director and SQRO selected Panel Chairs. ARS scientists, research leaders, and ONP are encouraged to recommend panelists they understand to be free of any COIs. While the selected/seated Panel Chair is under no obligation to use Agency recommended panelists, the SQRO must review and approve the Chair's panelist selections and may ask for substitutions or provide additional experts for consideration.

Factors and qualifications considered in PPPR panel selection (chair and panelist) such as being a qualified expert overall in the field being reviewed, research tenure, publication record, award history, geographic location, overall diversity, and availability to participate fully in the process all play an integral role in who is invited to serve an ARS/OSQR PPPR panel. Many of the reviews are composed with a balance of nationally and internationally recognized experts. Tables 5-6 display various characteristics of the panel composition; all affiliations were accurate at the time of the panel review.

Affiliations

Peer reviewers are affiliated with several types of institutions, primarily those in academia, but also special interest groups and industry. In some cases, peer reviewers have recently retired but are still active as consultants, scientific editorial board members, and members of professional societies.

Table 5.

Panelist Faculty Rank and Affiliations for Human Nutrition, National Program (107)

Panel	Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Government (Agency)	Industry & Industry Organizations
NP 107 Panel 1	1		2		2 Senior Investigators (Both with National Cancer Institute, NIH) 1 Acting Branch Chief (National Cancer Institute, NIH)
NP 107 Panel 2	2	1	1		1 Associate Director (HUCK Institutes for the Live Sciences)
NP 107 Panel 3*	2	1			
NP 107 Panel 4	1	2	2		
NP 107 Panel 5	3		1		1 Endowed Director (Moore Family Center for Whole Grain Foods, Oregon State University)
NP 107 Panel 6	3	1	1		
NP 107 Panel 7		2	1		
NP 107 Panel 8	4	0	1		
NP 107 Panel 9	3	2			
NP 107 Panel 10	4		1		
NP 107 Panel 11	2	1	2		
NP 107 Panel 12	2	1	2		
NP 107 Panel 13*	7	1	1		1 Technology Lead (Bayer Crop Science)

*Review conducted by no less than two (or greater) expert panel reviewers providing independent written reviews and scores without group panel deliberation. Scores reflect the average of no less than two expert reviewers and written reviews are compiled and screened by OSQR Director.

Research Impact and Gender

The OSQR PPPR process is lauded as a rigorous and objective ARS function striving for the highest possible scientific credibility. In general, panelists shall hold a doctoral degree unless the discipline in question is one which does not subscribe to a doctorate level education to achieve the highest recognition and qualification (e.g., engineers and modeling specialists). Panelists are also judged by their most recent professional accomplishments (e.g. awards and publications completed in the last five years). Finally, the panelists who are currently performing or leading research to address a problem similar to those being researched in the National Program under review are preferred.

Table 6.

Panel Additional Information Human Nutrition, National Program (107)

Panel	H-Index	Gender	Geographic Locations
NP 107 Panel 1	54	4 Females 2 Males	2 Mid West Areas 1 Plains Area 3 North East Areas
NP 107 Panel 2	32	5 Females	2 Plains Areas 2 North East Areas 1 Mid West Area
NP 107 Panel 3*	38	1 Male 2 Females	1 Plains Area 1 Mid West Area 1 North East Area
NP 107 Panel 4	25	2 Females 3 Males	3 South East Areas 1 Pacific West Area 1 North East Area
NP 107 Panel 5	26	5 Females	1 Mid West Area 1 Pacific West Area 1 Toronto, Canada 1 South East Area 1 Pacific West Area
NP 107 Panel 6	46	2 Males 2 Females	1 Plains Area 2 Mid West Areas 1 North East Area
NP 107 Panel 7	16	3 Females	2 North East Areas 1 Mid West Area
NP 107 Panel 8	49	3 Males 1 Females	1 Pacific West Area 2 Mid West Areas 1 North East Area
NP 107 Panel 9	43	4 Females 1 Male	3 North East Areas 1 South East Area 1 Plains Area
NP 107 Panel 10	47	1 Female 3 Males	2 North East Areas 2 South East Areas
NP 107 Panel 11	37	2 Females 3 Males	4 Mid West Areas 1 North East Area
NP 107 Panel 12	23	4 Females 1 Male	1 Canada 1 Mid West Area 1 South East Area 2 North East Areas
NP 107 Panel 13*	34	6 Males 4 Females	1 Canada 1 North East Area 2 Mid West Areas 1 Greece 1 Netherlands 2 Pacific West Area 1 Switzerland 1 Germany

*Review conducted by no less than two (or greater) expert panel reviewers providing independent written reviews and scores without group panel deliberation. Scores reflect the average of no less than two expert reviewers and written reviews are compiled and screened by OSQR Director.

List of Panel Chairs

NP 107 Panel 1
Rashmi Sinha, PhD

Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics
at the National Cancer Institute
Senior Investigator

Education:
MS, University of Stirling
PhD, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

NP 107 Panel 2
Won O. Song, Professor

Dept. of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Michigan State University
Professor

Education:
MS, University of Iowa
PhD, Utah State University
Post-doc, Utah State University

NP 107 Panel 3
Nadine Sahyoun, PhD

University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland
Professor

Education:
MS, University of Iowa
PhD, Tufts University

NP 107 Panel 4
Mary Ann Lila, PhD

North Carolina State University
Director, Plants for Human Health Institute, and David H. Murdock Distinguished Professor, Food Bioprocessing and Nutrition Sciences Department

Education:
MS, University of Illinois, Urbana
PhD, University of Wisconsin, Madison

NP 107 Panel 5
Mary R. L'Abbe, PhD

University of Toronto
Professor

Education:
MS, McGill University
PhD, McGill University

NP 107 Panel 6
Elvira G. de Mejia, PhD

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Professor

Education:
MS, University of California, Davis
PhD, University of California, Riverside

NP 107 Panel 7
Jennifer L. Temple, PhD

University at Buffalo
Director of Graduate Studies, Associate Professor

Education:
MS, Florida State University
PhD, University of Virginia

NP 107 Panel 8
Howard P. Glauert, PhD

University of Kentucky
Director of Graduate Studies, Professor

Education:
PhD, Michigan State University

NP 107 Panel 9
Katherine L. Tucker, PhD

University of Massachusetts Lowell
Professor

Education:
PhD, Cornell University

NP 107 Panel 10
Alessio Fasano, MD

Mass General Hospital for Children
Chief and Director

Education:
MD, University of Naples School of Medicine, Italy

NP 107 Panel 11
James Mukasa Ntambi, PhD

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Professor

Education:
MS, Makerere University
PhD, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

NP 107 Panel 12
TinChung Leung, PhD

North Carolina Central University
Associate Professor

Education:
MS, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
PhD, Wayne State University

NP 107 Panel 13
Ad Hoc Review

NP 107 Human Nutrition, National Program Panel Chair Statements

Panel Chair responsibilities include providing the OSQR with a statement that describes their overall panel experience, how the panel was conducted, and general quality of the plans reviewed, it does not lend itself to discussing details of specific research project plan reviews nor attribution to individual panelists. Panel Chairs are given a format to follow for writing their statements, however, are free to discuss what they believe is important for broader audiences.

Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics

Nutritional Epidemiology Branch

9609 Medical Center Drive, RM 6E336
MSC 9768
Bethesda MD 20892
Tel number: 240-276-7208
Fax number: 240-276-7837
sinhar@nih.gov

U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health

To the USDA National Program Review:

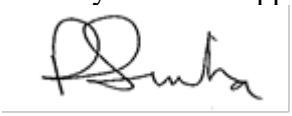
On February 14th, 2019 NP 107 Panel 1 on Epidemiology 1 reviewed 5 projects:

1. Food Composition Research for Improving Dietary Assessment and Understanding Health Outcomes
2. The Role of Dietary and Lifestyle Factors on Nutrition and Related Health Status using Large-scale Survey Data
3. Nutrition, Big Data and Healthy Aging
4. Longitudinal Analysis of Diet Quality, Health Outcomes and Mortality and Predictors of Living to Become a Centenarian
5. Nutrition, Epidemiology, and Healthy Aging

All the reviewers had provided detailed written reviews with recommendations and questions prior to the meeting and were prepared for an in-depth discussion. Two reviewers evaluated each project. In general, between 30 to 40 minutes were spent on discussion of a project examining the details of the projects, aims, strengths, and weaknesses. After going over the overall design, each objective was examined in detail with both reviewers giving their opinion. Other non-primary or -secondary reviewers could also add to the discussion. Probability of success, merit and significance were evaluated. Voting was done anonymously and then results tallied and reported back to the reviewers.

The overall process worked reasonably well. There were, however, questions I think need to be addressed for the future. The whole review process does not provide clarity on how much of a financial commitment we are talking about. Some projects had several staff members involved in the project while others had very few. Some projects were extensive while others could use pre-existing data. Another point, there were multiple aims within each project, some that were feasible and worthwhile while others were likely not to add to the scientific knowledge and should not be done. But the reviewers could only vote on the overall project. Another important issue that needs to be taken into consideration is the incentivization of reviewers to only vote for minor or moderate revisions. Having to re-review projects that need major revisions or may not be feasible is something that reviewers do not want to have to do. However, the way this review process is established pushes people to vote for minor and moderate revisions even if the project is inferior in quality.

Thank you for the opportunity for being the chair of this session.



Rashmi Sinha

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

David I. Shapro-Ilan, PhD
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

Re: PANEL CHAIR STATEMENT OF NP 107, PANEL 2

Overview

The initial contact by the ARS office, and an invitation letter from Stan Kosecki to serve as a review panel chair for the USDA ARS's National Program 107, Human Nutrition Panel 2 were received on September 14, 2018. The final panel review meeting was held on December 19th 3-6 PM. Throughout the three-month process, I was impressed by the Panel Chair meeting (10/5/18), Panel meeting (11/15/18), general communication, and organization structure that supported the review process. The instructions and staff support provided before and at those meetings were excellent. The meetings were educational to the participants and assured maintaining the standards for quality control of the review process. The technology worked very well in general.

Review Process and Panel:
The final review process held by a conference call was effective and efficient for all participants, and lasted well beyond the scheduled ending time at 5 PM. Each panel member prepared and submitted written reviews for the projects he/she was assigned to ahead of the conference call. I found the written reports being very thorough, thoughtful and respectful for the lead researchers. The structure of having primary and secondary reviewer assignment worked very well. I found the discussions at the conference call of high quality, as everyone's participation was fairly well balanced.

The final panel meeting on December 19th was strategically well attended and facilitated by the ARS staff. The panel members and I appreciated their support at the critical meeting.

In the end, we all felt that the process brought a win-win-win situation for the panel participants, national program leaders and ARS/USDA, as the panel members learned about the important national programs and the role of ARS within USDA.

DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD SCIENCE AND HUMAN NUTRITION

Michigan State University
G. Malcolm Trout
Food Science And Human Nutrition Building
469 Wilson Road
East Lansing, MI
48824-1224

517/355-8474
FAX: 517/353-8963
www.fshn.msu.edu

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.

Challenges and Suggestions

Panel Reviewers.

- Most time-consuming step for me was organizing a high quality panel, as competent researchers tend to be very busy. Listed below are challenges with suggestions to streamline the step. Importantly, the quality of review is highly dependent on the quality of the panel.
- Each National Program Leaders may provide a list of scientists' names with whom he/she had collaborated ("conflict of interest"). In addition, they may provide 5-7 scientists whom he/she considers having expertise in the related areas in the US (*if the panel members have to be scientists in the US only)* from which the potential review panel **may be** drawn.
- The list of "**Potential Reviewers**" that the ARS currently maintains need to be updated as it contains those who are retired, have changed research directions or have relocated. *I am willing to assist this updating work as needed.*

National Program Leaders' report.

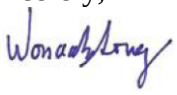
- The ARS report may contain a very succinct "**problem statement**", as that can enhance the panel's assessment of the impacts/payoff of the project
- Methodology can be assessed better if explicit **"work plans and schedule**" and **"risks and remedial plans**" are included in the reports.

Communications

- When ARS staff begins to contact **the selected** and/or **agreed panel members**, cc'ing panel chair in the communication may avoid any communication gaps and/or facilitate the process.
- It may be ideal that the **final report** prepared by the ARS staff is reviewed with panel chair to assure that the content of the report and recommendation are consistent with what was agreed by the panel.

In summary, all panel members and I learned a lot about the important ARS research projects, and the important roles of ARS within USDA. It would be useful if the panel/chair serve on a 2-3 year cycle to accelerate learning experiences and coordination while reducing the workload on major parties.

Sincerely,



Won O. Song, PhD, MPH, RD
Professor of Human Nutrition.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SCIENCE

0112 Skinner Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-7640
301.405.1014 TEL 301.314.3313 FAX

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

February 27, 2019

Dear Dr. Shapiro-Ilan,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Panel Chair for Panel 3: Human Nutrition Intervention 2 (2018) of the USDA, ARS, 107 Human Nutrition National Program. It was interesting to read the proposals of our colleagues at the Jean Mayer Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging, Boston, Massachusetts.

The panel included two highly regarded and knowledgeable scientists who carefully and thoughtfully reviewed the proposals and provided constructive comments. The reviewers were well prepared and timely in their availability. I enjoyed our interactions and the opportunity to discuss the proposals with them.

I also found the whole review process to be well organized and smoothly run, from our training by USDA staff to the final meeting. My one comment, which seems to be shared by the rest of the panel members is that the proposals were difficult to follow and this may have been due to the structure and requirements of the action plan.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Nadine Sahyoun, Ph.D., RD
Professor of Nutrition Epidemiology,
Department of Nutrition and Food Science

Plants for Human Health Institute

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
NC Research Campus
600 Laureate Way
Kannapolis, NC 28081
704.250.5400
704.250.5409 (fax)

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

Re: Panel Chair Statement/Review Close-Out for 2018 NP 107 Human Nutrition

Dear Dr. Shapiro-Ilan,

The panel meeting for NP 107 – Human Nutrition convened via WebEx/telephone at 12:30 p on 11 December 2018. In addition to program officers David Shapiro-Ilan and Marquea King, and the panel chair (Mary Ann Lila), four academic scientists were included in the meeting, and comprised the review panel. Each panelist was well versed in the general areas of human nutrition and immune health, and each has expertise in research pursuits relevant to the USDA projects under review.

The panel reviewed four individual project plans. Each panelist who was assigned primary or secondary lead on an individual proposal provided ample written evaluations in advance of the convened meeting. One of the reviewers reported an unanticipated conflict with one of the reviewed proposals, therefore, that reviewer was excused from the meeting prior to discussion of that (final) reviewed proposal.

The review panel was efficient, well-versed in the content of the proposals, and well-prepared for the ensuing discussion session. For each of the four reviewed project plans, an overview statement was provided by both the primary and secondary lead reviewers, then in tandem the panelists discussed Adequacy of the Project Approach, Probability of Success, and Merits and Significance of the work. In all cases, the assessments of the primary and secondary lead reviewers were in good accord, as was reflected in the written reviews. In nearly all cases, the panel agreed that adequate detail had been provided to permit a comprehensive, fair, and rigorous review. For one proposal the panel felt compelled to request additional clarification and resolution of apparent contradictions/points of confusion in the write up, however, it was recognized that space and size constraints may have accounted for the perceived discrepancies. For all of the proposals, the panel agreed that the presented ideas were sound, feasible, and well-backed by the scientific literature.

The panel agreed that the project plans each were highly likely to lead to identification of new biomarkers relevant to the human nutrition/immune health interface. In some cases the proposals called for integration of data sets from diverse arenas of science

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

e.g. the microbiome, the immunome, and the metabolome, for example. It was acknowledged that these projects were likely to provide a wealth of highly useful data and that full realization of the predictive benefits would require expert statistical and bioinformatics components to successfully integrate the data sets.. In addition, the panelists agreed that novel mechanistic data was likely to be gleaned from the project outcomes.

In summary, the NP 107 Human Nutrition panel resulted in unambiguous and detailed recommendations that will be forwarded back to the individual investigative teams. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can answer further questions concerning this well-prepared and diligent panel.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Lila, PhD
David H. Murdock Distinguished Professor
Director, Plants for Human Health Institute

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Nutritional Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Mary R. L'Abbé, CM, PhD
Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences

Medical Sciences Building, 5th Floor, Room 5368
1 King's College Circle
Toronto, ON Canada M5S 1A8
Tel: (416) 946-7545; Cell: (416) 605-1902
E-mail: mary.labbe@utoronto.ca

March 18, 2019

Re: Panel Chair Statement
USDA NP 107 Panel 5. Mechanisms for Obesity, Mineral Absorption, Cancer (2018)

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

Dear David

First, I want to commend the USDA program staff at ARS who were excellent in their organization, assembling of documents and reviews and provided me with huge assistance at the start of the process, as I was new to the role as Panel Chair. In addition, they worked diligently under tight timelines to assist myself and panel members in completing our tasks, in a short time frame, given the hiatus during the January furlough earlier this year.

Additionally I have to commend the review panel members for their efforts in this regard. Within a few days of my email asking a number of potential reviewers to participate, and informing them of the abbreviated timelines, all responded within days. I was pleasantly pleased that 4 out of 5 agreed, with one feeling he no longer had the relevant expertise (one additional potential reviewer was longer at the address provided by USDA staff, nor reachable though the email listed on his website). In terms of gender balance, I had identified 6 potential reviewers – 2 males, 3 females and one for whom I did not know their gender, as it was not discernable from their website; however in the end, the panel was composed of 4 female reviewers – not gender balanced, but not by design. All review panel members were extremely conscientious and replied promptly to my emails. I cannot speak to the timeliness of their submitted reviews as they were submitted directly to USDA staff.

From reading the reviewers' comments and my own review of each of the grants, although my review was likely not as extensive as the subject matter experts, I feel that their reviews were high quality, thorough, and demonstrated an in-depth and careful reading and understanding of the grants. Comments were balanced and appeared quite fair, and although many concrete suggestions were offered for improvement, they were in done in the context of improving the proposal. I did not detect any biases or unfair criticisms or comments that would appear to indicate there were any conflicts of interest or research biases in their reviews.

The guide for timing of our discussions was helpful, although we didn't follow it strictly – I did not cut off discussion of any particular grant if we felt we had not discussed it adequately. Even though we spent longer on the first grant, that is usual on most grant review panels I have participated on. For research proposals that had more objectives we spent more time on those grants, but I feel our timing was well spent and all grants received a through review by both reviewers, supplemented with additional useful comments from other panel members. Other panel members and myself contributed to the discussion of grants or probed issues with the reviewers that helped the panel in most cases come to nearly exactly the same scoring for a particular grant at the end of our discussions.

We encountered some difficulty in scoring one grant in particular, where a well established researcher did not provide sufficient details on samples, methodology, amount of work already done or appropriateness or validity of some of the key methods being used. After seeking clarity from ARS staff and yourself, the panel was confident in recommending that the proposal needed "major revision". I suspect there was some hesitancy to appear overly harsh regarding the proposal of an established researcher, but the quality of the proposal and lack of details were such that in the end the panel members' "blind" vote was the same by all members.

As chair there are several observations re grantsmanship that would help improve the review process. It would be helpful if researchers are asked to summarize their methods, even if using published methods and give a brief rationale, details regarding the validity or appropriateness of the methods, the state of the art, vis a vis their research objective for some of the key experimental models or key outcome measures or for new methods they are proposing. Additionally, when multiple outcomes are being examined, an indicator of primary or key outcomes should be differentiated from other or secondary outcome measures and if appropriate, which outcome was used in their power calculations. Regarding the latter, sometimes the applicant did not give any indication of the power of their study to see measurable outcome differences.

In conclusion, overall the review process went smoothly. Our review meeting time was approx. 3hr 15 min to review four grants, and I feel that all grants received a thorough, fair and good review.

Sincerely,

Mary R. L'Abbé, C.M., Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences

DEPARTMENT OF NUTRIITONAL SCIENCES, FACULTY OF MEDICINE
Medical Sciences Building, 5th Floor, Room 5368, 1 King's College Circle, Toronto, ON M5S 1A8 Canada
Tel: +1 416 978-2747 • Fax: +1 416 978-5882 • https://nutrisci.med.utoronto.ca/

ILLINOIS

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Division of Nutritional Sciences
449 Bevier Hall, MC-186
905 S. Goodwin Ave.
Urbana, IL 61801

March 7, 2019

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

RE: Overview and assessment of the review process and the panel Review Session: NP 107 Panel 6: Nutrition and Metabolism (2018).

Dear Dr. Shapiro-Ilan,

I appreciate the kind invitation to participate as chair of the Review Session: NP 107 Panel 6: Nutrition and Metabolism (2018).

The overall quality of the review process was outstanding. Extremely well organized with a training session to the chair and the reviewers; slides were provided for further review. One reviewer commented to me that it is essential to keep the gender balance in the review process, as it was done in this panel.

I believe the quality of the review regarding reviewers and their preparation for discussions was excellent; their written reports were on time and well executed, and the final oral discussions were also on time and appropriate. I would rate the overall process as outstanding.

In general, the area of research that the review encompassed was well developed and sometimes only more specifics were needed.

In general, we found novel approaches by well-respected and productive groups in the area of research.

I would like, respectfully, to comment on the general program of research our panel examined or ways in which researchers might improve or enhance their written plans:

- There was a discussion about incorrect terminology, is it a nutrient or non-nutrient phytochemical.
- Sometimes lack of specifics in the experimental design.
- Sometimes it seems to be a disconnect between *in vitro*, animal and human studies regarding the testing materials.

- Are concentrations used *in vitro* going to be translated to *in vivo* animal studies? Humans?
- Be more specific about the methods and outcomes expected.
- Use of both sexes in animal studies is highly recommended.
- More specific methodology is needed to make sure they have the know-how (or collaborators) to perform some experiments.
- More clarity and integration are needed in objectives, rationale, and outcomes; these must be clearly stated.
- Minor recommendation regarding the type of cells to be used, more specifics on the animal experiments and more molecular markers.

Respectfully,

Elvira de Mejia, Ph. D., Professor and Director of the Division of Nutritional Sciences
Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition
College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
228 ERML, MC-051, 1201 W Gregory Drive, Urbana, IL 61801, (phone: 217-244-3196).

University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
School of Public Health and Health Professions

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

March 05, 2019

Panel Chair Statement: USDA NP 107 Panel 7: Epidemiology Project Plans

It was an honor for me to serve as panel chair for the USDA NP 107 Panel 7 Epidemiology Project Plans. As a committee, we reviewed two excellent project plans that were both focused on advancing the agenda of the ARS National Program Action Plan for Human Nutrition in the areas of monitoring food consumption and nutrient intake, prevention of obesity and related diseases, and life stage nutrition and metabolism. The committee was made up of myself and two additional reviewers who have expertise in obesity prevention and treatment, nutritional epidemiology, and assessment of eating and physical activity. We all received training on the review process and were given a month to complete the review process. Below, I will describe the quality of the review process, strengths and weaknesses of the reviews, and comment on ways in which the plans and plan reviews could be improved in the future.

The review process was very organized and structured and all reviewers were given adequate training on how to review the proposals and how to present the reviews to the group. Despite all of the training, there were still some minor questions as to how the discussion should flow, how much time should be devoted to each section, and how much each reviewer is expected to say. With guidance from the USDA staff and myself, we were able to get all of the questions answered and the review flowed relatively easily from there. One question that came up that influenced the nature of the discussion was which components of the proposed objectives were given to the investigators and which did they develop themselves. This was investigated by Dr. Shapiro who came back to the group with an answer that allow us to proceed with the review. The reviews were extremely thorough and both reviewers and myself were in general agreement about the majority of the strengths and questions of both proposals. It was clear to me that the reviewers devoted a significant amount of time and attention to these proposals and came to the review with the objective of giving both proposals a comprehensive and detailed review. I hope that the investigators are able to take the comments from this review and use them to strengthen their proposals moving forward.

The initial organizational discussion and answering of reviewer questions took about 30 minutes. The USDA staff made sure that everyone on the call understood the procedures and helped to frame the discussions in order to make them productive, efficient, and useful for the investigators. I helped to move the discussion forward, but the reviewers were obviously well-prepared and thoughtful in their comments. We then reviewed the two proposals and each of these reviews took about 30 – 40 minutes a piece. Both reviews began with brief opening statements followed by a longer discussion of the adequacy of the approach, and brief comments on the likelihood of success and the merit and significance. In both cases, reviewers were very excited about some of the objectives and found that both proposals had a high likelihood of success and high merit and significance. In both cases, the reviewers were less enthusiastic about one of the three objectives. There was a good balance of strengths and questions. The feedback given for the objectives that had more questions were specific

Farber Hall Rm. 15, 3435 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14214-3000
Tel: (716) 829-3680 Ext 237 Fax: (716) 829-2072

and the reviewers in all cases felt that they were addressable. In the end, both proposals were given passing ratings, but were rated as moderate. These ratings reflect the mixture of strengths and questions identified with the approach as well as the overall consensus around the merit and significance.

While my general feeling about the review process is positive, there are certain aspects of this that I think could be improved. First, it should be made clearer to the reviewers and panel chair that the specific objectives of each proposal were provided to the investigators by the USDA and that they were not able to change those. During the orientation, we were told that the USDA provided objectives, but it was ambiguous as to the detail of those objectives. For example, both proposals outlined broad objectives, but then defined specific objectives and sub-objectives. There were questions about which level of objective was defined by the USDA and which were defined by the investigators. That could be made clear in each proposal and would help define the parameters of the review. A second aspect of the review that could be improved upon is more standardization of the proposal structure. One of the two proposals had a broad objective (Objective 1), then more defined objectives (Objective 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D) that were more specific, but sometimes discussed separately and other times grouped together. This made the discussion of the objective redundant and confusing because there were comments on the broad objective, but also comments that overlapped on the sub-objectives. In addition, in other objectives the term “sub-objective” was used. It is unclear what the difference is between “objective 1A” and “sub-objective 2A” and if the reviewers are supposed to treat those two categories of objective differently.

In sum, I believe that this review process was professional, thorough, and constructive. The reviewers had the necessary expertise in the content areas to judge the merit of the proposals and came to the review prepared. They clearly devoted significant time and attention to their evaluations and were committed to having a detailed and thoughtful discussion of each proposal. I hope that the investigators are able to take the feedback provided here and use it to improve the rigor, the quality, and the significance of their research programs.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Temple, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
Community Health and Health Behavior

College of Medicine
Department of Pharmacology & Nutritional Sciences
Howard P. Glauert, PhD, Professor
MS-371 Chandler Medical Center
Lexington, KY 40536
Phone: 859-257-7789 | Fax: 859-257-3646
Email: hglauert@uky.edu

May 10, 2019

Marquea D. King, Ph.D.
Office Director & Program Coordinator
U.S. Department of Agriculture, ARS
Office of Scientific Quality Review
5601 Sunnyside Avenue
Bldg. 2, Room 1127; Mail Stop 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705-5142

Dear Dr. King,

This letter is in regards to USDA NP 107 Panel 8: Response to Diets. This was an excellent review panel. The panel had discussions that reflected sound and credible scientific peer review, and which contained ideas, creative thinking, and alternative approaches to improve the quality of research that may not have been considered by Agency scientists and staff. All of the reviewers on the panel were well-prepared for the discussion. All of the reviewers understood the review criteria and their roles as peer reviewers. The scoring and critique writing procedures worked reasonably well. There was an issue with peer reviewer selection. I inadvertently nominated and then chose a reviewer who was later found to be a collaborator on one project, and the ARS did not exclude this reviewer when I nominated him. This reviewer was found to have a conflict of interest about one week before the review panel meeting.

I had one suggestion to improve the peer review process. When the project summary is presented to the review panel chair, all co-investigators and collaborators should be listed, so that there is no possibility of choosing someone who has a conflict of interest. Only the name of the Principal Investigator and the Specific Aims of the project were presented to me before I chose potential reviewers.

Overall, this was an effective peer review panel, and I enjoyed participating.

Sincerely yours,

Howard P. Glauert

Howard P. Glauert, Ph.D.
Professor

seeblue

University of Massachusetts Lowell
UMASS

Katherine L. Tucker, PhD
Department of Biomedical and Nutritional Sciences

3 Solomont Way, Suite 4
Lowell, MA 01854
Phone: 978-934-4066
E-mail: katherine_tucker@uml.edu

May 26, 2019

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

Dear Dr. Shapiro-Ilan,

It was my pleasure to chair the review of USDA NP 107 Panel 9: Pediatric Nutrition (2018). With the exception of a delay due to the temporary closure of the U.S. Government, this review went smoothly. The delay did make obtaining reviewers more difficult, as some who had agreed were no longer available. However, assistance from the ARS, and specifically Linda Daly-Lucas, was very helpful throughout the process, including providing information on the process, phone orientation, lists of potential reviewers, approval of selected reviewers, and regular communication throughout the process.

Final reviewers included experts from Boston University Medical Center, Brown University Medical School, University of Kansas Medical Center, and the University of Georgia. All of these reviewers are highly experienced in the appropriate fields of research related to the specific plans under review in pediatric nutrition. Each of the reviewers did an excellent job in reviewing the science. Although not all programs were fully approved during the first round, due to concerns about lack of clarity and some methodological issues in a few of them, all were considered meritorious and important work in this field. There was general consensus across the panelists and agreement from this chair on the decisions made.

The participation of USDA ARS staff during the meeting, particularly Dr. Marquea King, was very helpful. That she was there to clarify questions of process was critical and the fact that she took notes in real time to expand feedback to the USDA Scientists made it easier for the panel and the chair. One concern expressed by some reviewers was that the project descriptions did not always include sufficient detail to fully understand how the work would be carried out, and we discussed whether more specific recommendations could be made to the Scientists so that communication of their proposed work might be improved for the review process. Some details reviewers are used to seeing in, for example, NIH applications, such as sample size calculations and details on methodologies were not always there.

Overall, the procedures associated with this review were well organized and with the timing exception, I believe the review process went smoothly with highly qualified reviewers doing an excellent job of considering the strengths and limitations of the plans we reviewed. Hopefully this feedback has been helpful to the Scientists and to the USDA/ARS.

Sincerely,

Katherine Tucker

Katherine L Tucker, PhD
Professor of Nutritional Epidemiology
Director, UMass Lowell Center for Population Health
Editor-in-Chief, Advances in Nutrition, an International Review Journal

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL
MassGeneral Hospital for Children
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

Alessio Fasano, MD
W. Allan Walker Chair of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition
Professor of Pediatrics Harvard Medical School
Professor of Nutrition, T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Chief, Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition
Vice Chief, Basic, Translational and Clinical Research
MassGeneral Hospital *for* Children
Director, Center for Celiac Research and
Mucosal Immunology and Biology Research Center

Administrative Office: 175 Cambridge Street, CPZS 574, Boston, MA 02114
Outpatient Clinic: 55 Fruit Street, Yawkey-6B 6800, Boston, MA 02114
Research Office: 114 16th Street (114-3503), Charlestown, MA 02129-4404
Email: afasano@mgh.harvard.edu

Boston, July 5th, 2019

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

Dear Dr. Shapiro;

This is my statement as Panel Chair of the USDA National Panel (NP)107 Panel 10. The overall objective of NP107 *Human Nutrition*, is to improve the nutrition and health of the American people by enhancing the quality of the American diet and improving health through research. Panel 10 was specifically focused on Eating behavior and Microbiome in Children. The submitted project plans that were evaluated by the review panel were all responsive to this primary focus and were judged by the reviewers mainly on their technical and scientific merits. Furthermore, the reviewers were charged with the task to assess the feasibility of the proposed project plans, considering the approach, the facilities, and the personnel. For those projects in which shortfalls were identified in any of the aforementioned domains, reviewers made recommendations to improve the feasibility of the proposed project plan. During the review process and the specific discussion, the panel adhered to the guidelines of the review process. The pre-meeting conference calls and the material shared with the chair and reviewers were extremely helpful in guiding the process and be responsive to the tasks assigned.

Specific to the submitted applications, it was noted that they all shared a strong rationale of the proposed studies, good outline of the proposed plan to respond to this specific panel's focus, and clear timeline and milestones to explain the rationale of the scientific plan. As concern the reviewers of this specific panel, they provided strong and constructive comments to the applicants, good discussion during the panel review, testimonial of their qualifications in specific areas of research pertinent to this call. The reviewers' written assessments were extremely useful in identifying components of the

proposals in need of improvement and in providing constructive feedbacks on how to address these shortfalls. During the discussion, there were additional comments made as a result of primary and secondary reviewers' direct interaction that further improved the quality of the review process, leading to additional recommendations for enhancement of the project plans.

To summarize, as chair of this panel, I found the review process fair, constructive, and in line with the USDA guidelines and expectation to achieve the overall goal of guiding applicants in their research endeavor to be responsive to NP107 Panel 10 focus. Based on my personal experience and the feedbacks received from the colleagues that reviewed the assigned applications, it is my opinion that the review process is well conceived and, therefore, it is in no needs for additional improvements.

Sincerely,

Alessio Fasano, M.D.

THE UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN MADISON
Biochemistry Department
Founded 1883

March 26, 2019

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

NP 107, Panel 11: Epigenetics and Brain Vitamin D Control of Glucose (2018)

Dear Dr. Shapiro-Ilan:

It was a pleasure to serve the USDA and participate in a small way as chair panel to the continued success of ARS program through peer review. I found it to be extremely informative and educational. I had an excellent panel of four outstanding reviewers who are all experts in basic science research described in the project plans that were reviewed. It was agreed that the quality of the overall review process was excellent and it appeared that the grants got reviewed critically from multiple different angles. The review process was very well facilitated by OSQR from the very beginning and throughot the panel discussions. The summary of all the review comments compiled by the OSQR prior to the meeting was extremely useful. The discussions thus were very orderly and precise and my job as chair much easier.

The reviewers clearly came prepared for the discussions of the four project plan. They clearly stated their opinions and for the individual projects they offered clear guidance and recommendations. Generally, very strong project plans with clear scientific goals that addressed the goals and mission of USDA were reviewed. Cutting-edge technologies driving the experimental plans and in most cases the methodologies and resources were already in place. The investigators have had a lot of experience and success in their research careers with each bringing new perspectives to the individual research programs. They have excellent track records and tools to complete the proposed studies.

In some objectives of the project plans descriptive research was presented but overall in each case strong preliminary data were presented. It was not clear in very few specific objectives how the proposed studies would provide more than incremental expansion of current knowledge in the areas of research. However, the project plans will undoubtly generate important novel and

433 Babcock Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1544 USA
Telephone: (608) 262-3040
Fax: (608) 262-3453
http://www.biochem.wisc.edu

THE UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN MADISON
Biochemistry Department
Founded 1883

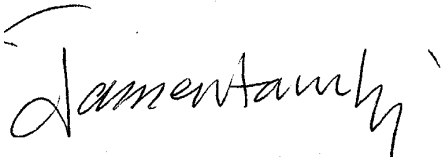
significant mechanistic findings. It was also noted that the majority of the project plans were unique using novel technologies developed in the PIs laboratories and as such not easily duplicated.

I don't have any specific recommendations for change of the review process itself and could remain as is. I would definitely participate again. I have only a few suggestions:

It would be helpful to include on the proposal itself that the objectives were given to the investigators. Maybe call them "assigned directives" so the reviewer knows in advance that the PI is working within a mandated framework. There is that categorization 4 and 5 representing USDA ARS themes but it wasn't clear to the reviewers until today that the objectives themselves are fixed. The second is that the size of the resources and personnel available to the PI would be handy for the reviewer to have up front and clearly articulated, that way feasibility can be fairly assessed. Last it would be good to mandate a paragraph where the contact PI can synthesize concepts and themes across the objectives. This would allow the reviewer to have a clear picture of how the team can work together and the potential for gains greater than the sum of the parts.

Again thanks for giving me the opportunity to be a panel chair and to make the panel chair statement.

Sincerely,



James M. Ntambi PhD
Professor of Biochemistry
Steenbock Professor of Nutritional Sciences
Adjuct Professor of Biological Chemistry, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

433 Babcock Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1544 USA

Telephone: (608) 262-3040
Fax: (608) 262-3453
http://www.biochem.wisc.edu

Human Nutrition Research Program
Julius L. Chambers Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute

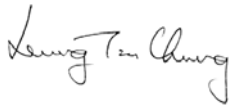
June 19, 2019

David I. Shapiro-Ilan, Ph.D.
Scientific Quality Review Officer
Office of Scientific Quality Review
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, MS 5142
Beltsville, MD 20705

RE: Panel Chair Statement for NP 107 Panel 12

Dear Dr. Shapiro-Ilan,
This is a summary of the panel chair statement for NP107 Panel 12: Animal Models - Cornea, Brain, Adipocytes, Intestine Muscle (2018). We have successfully reviewed a total of 4 grants related to neural-obesity crosstalk, adipose tissue biology, perinatal nutrition and postnatal dietary factors. During this process, we have recruited several external academic experts who are in the related fields of these research areas. Thanks to the USDA Office of Scientific Quality Review, all of the members of this review panel have very informative briefing and instructional training to guide us through this grant review process. After the critical review of these 4 grant proposals, we came together in an online meeting to discuss the major issues or concerns we have on the proposals. Our panel reviewers gave thorough criticism and written recommendation for each of the grant proposals and the online meeting discussion was very helpful to finalize the comments and suggestions. We came to a very similar conclusion on the evaluation for each of these proposals and finalized into the panel recommendations form. We are very pleased with the quality of all 4 proposed plans and concluded that each of the teams has various areas of expertise and research experiences, which will ensure that the proposed objectives can be completed successfully. In conclusion, this review panel is very pleased about the overall quality of this review process.

Sincerely yours,



TinChung Leung, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biological & Biomedical Sciences
Julius L. Chambers Biomedical Biotechnology Research Institute
North Carolina Central University

Office of Scientific Quality Review

The Office of Scientific Quality Review manages and implements the ARS project plan peer review (PPPR) functions for all intramural research projects including administering the peer review policies, processes and procedures. OSQR centrally coordinates and conducts the PPPR for project plans within the Office of National Programs during a 5-year cycle.

The OSQR staff is responsible for:

- setting the schedule of Project Plan Peer Review sessions
- Panel organization and composition (number of panels and the scientific disciplines needed)
- Distribution of project plans
- Reviewer instruction and panel orientation
- The distribution of review results to Areas, ONP, and other interested parties
- Notification to panelists of the Agency response to review recommendations
- *Ad hoc* or re-review of project plans
- Final certification of each Area project plan

Contact

Send all questions or comments about this Report to:

Marquea D. King, PhD, Director
USDA, ARS, OSQR
5601 Sunnyside Avenue
Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5142
osqr@ars.usda.gov
301-504-3282 (voice); 301-504-1251 (fax)