

# Mail In Review - SBIR

## 1 Introduction

As a reviewer, you are a vital part of the Department of Energy's mission to fund innovation and research. When you are requested to participate in a SBIR review of a proposal, you will receive an email requesting your input. You will need to enter your review comments into the PAMS application.

The purpose of this document is to provide step by step instructions for users to follow to complete a SBIR mail-in review task.

## 2 Pre-Requisites

Before a user can complete a mail-in review, the following criteria must be met:

- User has received notification of review task

## 3 Mail-In Review

Use the steps in the following sections to access and complete the mail in review task.

### 3.1 Access Review Task

Use the following steps to access the mail-in review task.

#### 3.1.1 Existing Account

1. You will receive an email notification from PAMS when a review task has been assigned to you. (Figure 1)

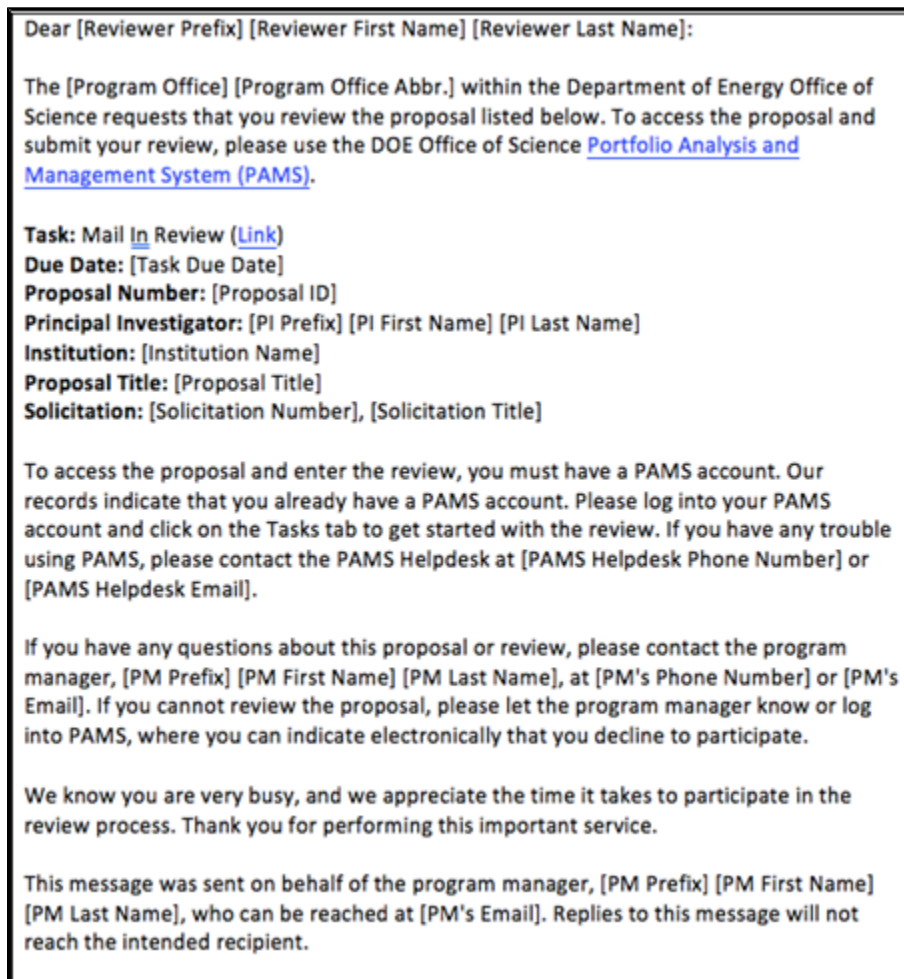


Figure 1. Existing PAMS Account – PAMS reviewer email

2. Login to your PAMS Account.

3. Navigate to the *Tasks* tab and select **Start Review** for the task you wish to begin (Figure 2). **OR** Click the **Mail In Review** link in the left navigation menu to go to the *Mail In Review– List* page and click **Start Review** for the task you wish to complete. (Figure 3)

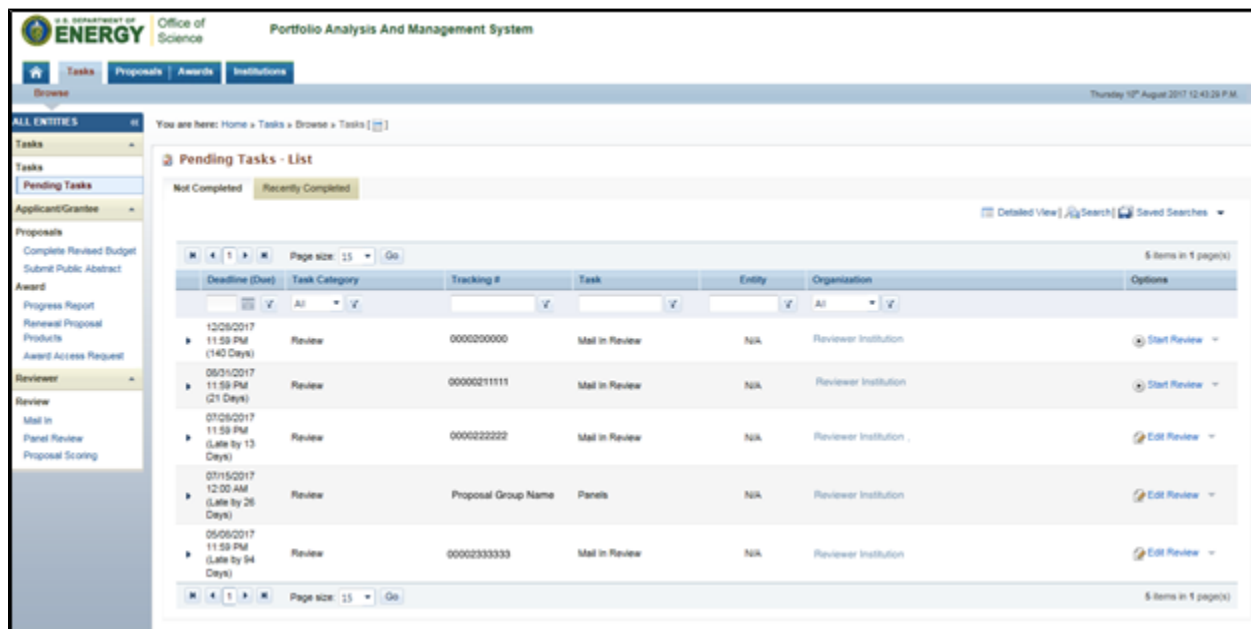


Figure 2. Pending Tasks - List Page

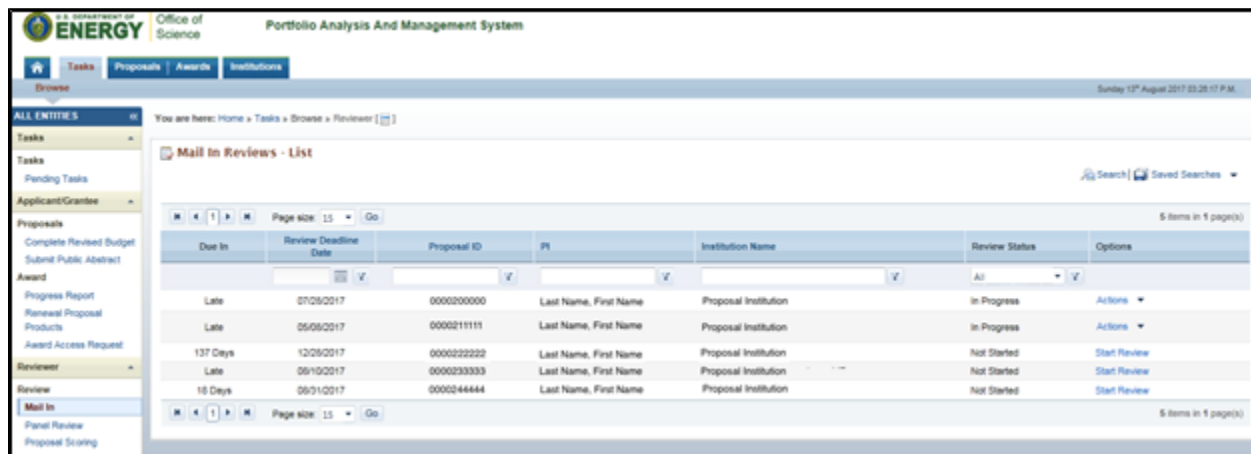


Figure 3. Mail In Reviews – List Page

### 3.1.2 No Existing Account

Use the following steps if the reviewer does not have an existing PAMS account.

1. From the email received, click the link for the PAMS URL. (Figure 4)

Dear [Reviewer Prefix] [Reviewer First Name] [Reviewer Last Name]:

The [Program Office] [Program Office Abbr.] within the Department of Energy Office of Science requests that you review the proposal listed below. To access the proposal and submit your review, please use the DOE Office of Science [Portfolio Analysis and Management System \(PAMS\)](#).

**Task:** Mail [in Review](#)  
**Due Date:** [Task Due Date]  
**Proposal Number:** [Proposal ID]  
**Principal Investigator:** [PI Prefix] [PI First Name] [PI Last Name]  
**Institution:** [Institution Name]  
**Proposal Title:** [Proposal Title]  
**Solicitation:** [Solicitation Number], [Solicitation Title]

To access the proposal and enter the review, you must have a PAMS account. Our records indicate that you do not yet have a PAMS account. Please register in PAMS using the link and registration code provided below to create your account.

**URL:** [PAMS](#)  
**Registration Code:** [Registration Code]

After logging into PAMS, click on the Tasks tab to get started with the review. If you have any trouble using PAMS, please contact the PAMS Helpdesk at [PAMS Helpdesk Phone Number] or [PAMS Helpdesk Email].

If you have any questions about this proposal or review, please contact the program manager, [PM Prefix] [PM First Name] [PM Last Name], at [PM's Phone Number] or [PM's Email]. If you cannot review the proposal, please let the program manager know or log into PAMS, where you can indicate electronically that you decline to participate.

We know you are very busy, and we appreciate the time it takes to participate in the review process. Thank you for performing this important service.

This message was sent on behalf of the program manager, [PM Prefix] [PM First Name] [PM Last Name], who can be reached at [PM's Email]. Replies to this message will not reach the intended recipient.

Figure 4. Email Request for Review – No existing account

2. Enter the registration code on the *Verify Registration Code Page* and click Verify. (Figure 5)

Figure 5. Verify Registration Code page

3. Complete the account creation process. (Step by step instructions for account creation can be found in the External User – Create Account training module).

4. After creating your account, the system will direct you to your *Pending Tasks – List* Click **Start Review** for the task you wish to begin. (Figure 6)

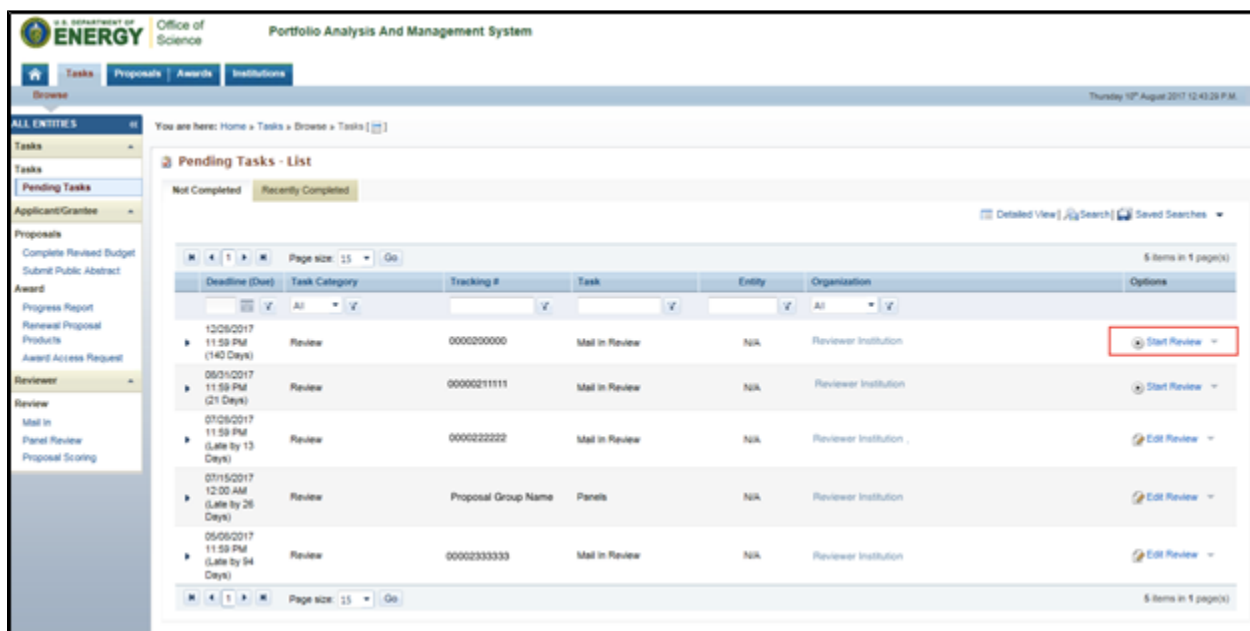


Figure 6. Pending Tasks - List page, Start Review

## 3.2 Conflict of Interest Statement

For each review assignment in PAMS, you will be required to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration Statement. You have three choices: I do not have a conflict of interest in reviewing the proposal, I have a conflict of interest in reviewing the proposal or I do not wish to review the proposal. Use the steps in the following section to complete the Conflict of Interest Declaration.

1. Once you access the review task, you will be presented with the Conflict of Interest Statement. Read the statement. (Figure 7 - 8)

The screenshot shows the 'Proposal Review - Conflict of Interest Certificate' page. The page is divided into two main sections: Solicitation Details and Proposal Details. The Proposal Details section includes fields for Proposal ID, Title, PI, Institution, and Abstract. A table at the bottom shows Collaborative Proposals.

Solicitation Details	
Title	Solicitation Title
Synopsis	Synopsis of Solicitation

Proposal Details	
Proposal ID	0000200000
Title	Proposal Title
PI	Last Name, First Name
Institution	Proposal Institution
Abstract	Proposal Abstract

Collaborative Proposals	Proposal ID	Institution	PI
No Collaborative Proposals Found			

Proposal PDF: A Link to the proposal PDF will be made available after you have read and agreed with the Conflict of Interest Certificate below.

Figure 7. Proposal Review - Conflict of Interest Certificate Page, Details

## Conflict Of Interest Certificate

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF SCIENCE CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY CERTIFICATE

#### Information on Conflict of Interest

The DOE Office of Science has a policy that individuals with a conflict of interest cannot participate in the merit review of a proposal for funding. You may not participate in the review of any proposal involving a particular matter that would have a direct and predictable effect on any person, company or organization with which you have a relationship (defined below), financial or otherwise. The interests of your spouse; your minor child; your general partner; any organization in which you serve as officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee; and any person or organization with whom you are negotiating employment, are attributed to you. Further, you may not participate in the review of any proposal involving a particular person or a particular matter that you believe would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question your impartiality.

Prior to participating as a merit reviewer, please disclose to the program manager whether you have any actual or perceived conflicts of interest with such duties. In addition, please disclose that you have an actual or perceived conflict of interest as soon as you become aware of it. For reviewers who are Federal employees, the conflict of interest statutes and regulations that apply in regular Government employment apply for participants in the review of an application or proposal.

Please do not disclose any information concerning the assessment and analysis or the content of proposals, either during the proceedings of the merit review or at any subsequent time, to anyone who is not authorized access to the information by the DOE Office of Science or by law or regulation, and then only to the extent that such information is required in connection with such person's official responsibilities.

Listed below are examples of potential conflicts of interest:

1. Affiliation with an applicant institution.
  - Current employment at the institution as member of the scientific staff, professor, adjunct professor, visiting professor, or similar position.
  - Current employment or are being considered for employment at the institution.
  - Any formal or informal re-employment arrangement with the institution.
  - Current membership on a visiting committee or similar body at the institution.
  - Ownership of the institution's securities or other evidences of debt.
  - Any office, governing board membership, or relevant committee chairpersonship in the institution.
  - Current enrollment as a student.
  - Received and retained an honorarium or award from the institution within the last 12 months.
2. Relationships with an investigator, project director, or other person who has a personal interest in the proposal or other application.
  - Known family or marriage relationship.
  - Business or professional partnership.
  - Employment at the same institution within the last 12 months.
  - Past or present association as thesis advisor or thesis student.
  - Past or present association as postdoctoral advisor or postdoc.
  - Collaboration on a project or on a book, article, report, or paper within the last 4 years. (If publication with more than ten authors are the norm for your scientific field, only relationships with individuals in the core group with whom you interacted on a regular basis while the research was being done are covered.)
3. Other affiliations or relationships.
  - Interests of the following persons are to be treated as if they were yours: any affiliation or relationship of your spouse, of your minor child, or a relative living in your immediate household or of anyone who is legally your partner that you are aware of and that would be covered by Items 1 or 2 above.
  - Any other relationship, such as close personal friendship, that you think might tend to affect your judgments or be seen as doing so by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship.

#### Information on Confidentiality

The DOE Office of Science receives proposals in confidence and protects the confidentiality of their contents. For this reason, you must not copy, quote from, or otherwise use or disclose to anyone, including your graduate students or postdoctoral or research associates, any material from any proposal you are asked to review. When you have completed your review, please be certain to destroy the paper copy of the proposal and/or delete any electronic correspondence or files related to the proposal.

The DOE Office of Science keeps reviews and your identity as a reviewer of specific proposals confidential to the maximum extent possible, except that we may send to Principal Investigators (PIs) the reviews of their own proposals without reviewer names and affiliations. In addition, selected proposals and peer reviews, including reviewer names and affiliations, may be shared with an outside Committee of Visitors established to assess the quality of the peer review process. Members of COVs sign confidentiality agreements before participating and are not given access to reviews of their own proposals, of proposals in which they collaborated or participated, or of proposals from their institution. Please respect the confidentiality of all PIs and of other reviewers. Do not disclose their identities, the content of discussions in a merit review panel, or other details about the merit review of proposals. Please remember that the contents of the proposal are legally proprietary information of the author and his/her institution and should not be used outside the context of proposal evaluation.

These provisions are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this agreement and are controlling.

#### Certification

The certification below must be completed by individuals prior to their participation in the merit review process.

1. I will not participate in the review of any proposal involving a particular matter that would have a direct and predictable effect on any person, company or organization with which I have a relationship, financial or otherwise. For purposes of this statement, the interests of my spouse, my minor child, my general partner, any organization in which I serve as officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee, and any person or organization with whom I am negotiating employment, are attributed to me.
2. Further I will not participate in the review of any proposal involving a particular person or a particular matter that I believe would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question my impartiality.
3. Prior to my participation as a merit reviewer, I will disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that I may have with such duties. In addition, I agree to disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as I am aware of the conflict.

- ☐ I have no Conflict of Interest in reviewing the proposal.
- ☐ I have a Conflict of Interest in reviewing the proposal.
- ☐ I do not wish to review the proposal.

#### Comments

Approximately 1 page (Max 2000 Characters): 2000 Characters left.

Note: Comments entered here will be shared with DOE SC Program Manager via email.

Cancel

Save and Continue

Figure 8. Proposal Review - Conflict of Interest Certificate, Language

2. At the bottom of the page, you are presented with three choices (Figure 8):

**-I do not have a conflict of interest in reviewing the proposal** – select this choice if you do not have any of the conflicts listed in the COI statement

**-I have a conflict of interest in reviewing the proposal** – select this choice if you do have a conflict of interest with some aspect of the proposal. Selection of this choice will close the review task for you and notify the Program Manager.

**-I do not wish to review the proposal** – select this choice if you do not have a conflict but do not wish to review the proposal. Selection of this choice will close the review task and notify the Program Manager.

3. Click the radio button for the appropriate choice.

4. You may enter comments that will be presented to the Program Manager. When finished, click **Save and Continue**.

5. If you accidentally declared a conflict of interest or declined to review, contact the Program Manager or SBIR/STTR Programs Office to have the task reopened for you. If you declared no conflict of interest, and then find that you do in fact have a conflict, contact the Program Manager to have your review task closed for you.

### 3.3 Complete your review

Use the steps in the following section to enter your review comments.

1. If you indicated no Conflict of Interest with the proposal, you will be shown reviewer instructions. Click **Continue**. (Figure 9)

Figure 9. Proposal Review - Instructions to Reviewers

2. On the *Proposal Review – Update Review* page, you will be shown the evaluation criteria for this review. You may enter your comments and scores directly on this page. DO NOT REFERENCE THE SCORE IN THE COMMENT BOX.

3. To access the full proposal, expand the Resources section of the page and click the Proposal link. You will be prompted to open the proposal PDF. (Figure 10)

Figure 10. Proposal Review - Update Review, Access Full Proposal

	<p>When a reviewer downloads a Proposal PDF, PAMS will display a "Proposal Downloaded" overlay message stating that the reviewer is obligated to keep this Proposal under strict confidence, not to share it with anyone, and to destroy any personal copies after completing the review process. PAMS will send an email when the review process ends reminding the reviewer to destroy any personal copies of the Proposal PDF.</p>
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4. Save your work frequently. In the bottom left hand corner, click **Save**.

5. You may also save your work and return at a later time by clicking **Save** and then navigating away or logging out of your session. To return to the review task, access your tasks list and click **Edit Review** to return to the review page.

6. Once you have completed all evaluation criteria and would like to submit your review, click **Save and Submit** in the bottom left hand corner. (Figure 11)

Overall Summary of the Proposal

Instructions:  
test

Summary Score: -1 - 1

More than a page (Max 20000 Characters without spaces): 20000 Characters left

Summary Comments:

Cancel Save Save and Submit

Figure 11. Proposal Review - Update Review, Save and Submit

7. You will be presented with the *Proposal Review – Review Summary*. This page will show you all evaluation criteria and your responses. Confirm your submission by clicking **Confirm** in the bottom right hand corner. You may also select the check box next to Email Myself a Copy to have a PDF copy of your review comments emailed to you. (Figure 12)

Overall Summary of the Proposal

Summary Comments: test

Back Email Myself a Copy Confirm

Figure 12. Proposal Review - Review Summary, confirm

8. You will receive a green success message indicating that your proposal review was submitted successfully. The review task will be removed from your tasks list. If you need to make changes after you submitted your review, contact the Program Manager or SBIR/STTR Programs Office to reopen the review task.