



CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICIES FOR THE TECHNICAL EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

FEBRUARY 2006

The Northeast Consortium applies the following **conflict of interest policy** to its Representatives, staff, Advisory Committee and other reviewers so that it can ensure that the technical evaluation process is as fair and objective as possible.

NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP	RESPONSE TO POTENTIAL CONFLICT
<p>Direct Project Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Co-)Principal investigator. • Project participant – paid or unpaid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eligible to review the project.
<p>Professional Relationship - Direct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current supervisor of a (Co-)PI or project participant. • Currently collaborating on a book, article, report or paper. • Current consulting or advisory arrangement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May obtain, mail-review, and provide written comments on the project. • Should not participate in a panel review that the Northeast Consortium convenes.
<p>Professional Relationship - Indirect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past academic advisor or a student of a (Co-)PI or project participant. • Co-PI on a completed project within the last 3 years. • Co-author on a book, article, report or paper within the last 3 years. • Consulting or advisory arrangement within the last 3 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May obtain, mail-review, provide written comments, and participate in a panel review that the Northeast Consortium convenes. • If extent of a past professional relationship is relatively significant (e.g., strong potential for future collaboration within 1 year), then it may be appropriate to disclose this fact.
<p>Institutional Affiliation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current employee of same institution as a (Co-)PI or project participant. • Employment at same institution within last 12 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May obtain, mail-review, provide written comments, and participate in a panel review that the Northeast Consortium convenes. • If degree of institutional affiliation is relatively close (e.g., same academic department, governmental unit, fishermen association, etc.), then it may be appropriate to disclose this fact.
<p>Personal and Other Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known family or marriage relationship with a (Co-)PI or project participant. • Close personal friendship or other relationship that may tend to affect your judgments or are seen as doing so by a reasonable person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This situation would likely make an individual ineligible to review a project, in part or completely. Please consult with the Northeast Consortium's Director.

The Northeast Consortium applies the following **confidentiality policy** to its Representatives, staff, Advisory Committee and other reviewers, so that it can protect the ideas and approaches of the project and the identities and comments of reviewers.

RESPONSIBILITY OF:	RESPONSIBILITY TO:
Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final report of a project is considered a public document. Following a technical review, investigators may revise the final report. Reviewers should refrain from sharing or discussing draft documents with others not participating in the review until after the review is complete and any revisions to the final report are made. • Reviewers should not use or disclose unpublished information, arguments, or interpretations contained in documents under consideration, except with the consent of the author. • Reviewers should consider all panel review discussions and proceedings to be confidential. • Return or destroy all material used in the evaluation process.
Northeast Consortium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of all technical evaluation reports written by panelists are kept in accordance with federal record keeping requirements in a locked, secure location. • Technical evaluation reports are not broadly distributed or posted on the internet by the Northeast Consortium. These reports are, however, available upon request to representatives of end-user communities and organizations. This includes the National Marine Fisheries Service; New England Fishery Management Council; Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission; commercial fishing industry organizations and individuals; Coastal Zone Management program; Office of State Planning; and/or other appropriate local, state, or federal agencies or programs. The Northeast Consortium staff member may prepare a summary of an evaluation report targeted for an aforementioned end-user. • The names of panelists are only disclosed if it is essential to ensuring the credibility of the technical review, unless the reviewer chooses complete anonymity (see below).

I, _____, certify that, with the exception of the conditions discussed below, am free of conflicts and can serve as an eligible reviewer. I have read, agree, and will comply with the confidentiality responsibilities pursuant to the February 2006 Northeast Consortium Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy.

The Northeast Consortium encourages reviewers to disclose their name on the evaluation report that they submit. I ___ agree to disclose my name / ___ wish to remain anonymous.

Signature

Date

Nature of Potential Conflict: Please describe below the nature of any direct project involvement, professional relationship, institutional affiliation, personal, or other relationship that may reflect a conflict of interest.