Proposal Evaluations: A Brief Overview

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A Brief Overview of Proposal Evaluations

BtB Proposal Processing and Review

Proposals received by BtB are initially assessed to ensure that they meet the basic requirements.
1. All required fields are filled out
2. All Project Proposals include at least one milestone
3. If the Proposal Owner is under the age of 18, parent/guardian information is accurately filled out on the User's Dashboard

Once a proposal meets all the basic requirements, the review process begins:

Review Process

1. Proposal Submitted
    a. All proposals should be submitted using BtB's online proposal system at https://bittobyte.org/. Submitters will first have to create an account, if they haven't already done so.
2. Proposal Received
    a. Once BtB receives the proposal, a confirmation email will be sent to the submitter.
    b. Proposals received by BtB are initially assessed to ensure that they meet the basic requirements.
3. Reviewers Selected
    a. Program Officer uses the following selection criteria
        i. an appropriate range of competencies;
        ii. an appropriate balance between academic and industrial expertise and users;
        iii. a reasonable gender balance;
        iv. regular rotation of independent experts.
4. Peer Review
    a. Panel of proposal reviewers is assembled in one location. Typically they have been provided copies of the proposals in advance (perhaps electronically), so they have had a chance to familiarize themselves with the proposals. Indeed, they may have been assigned various proposals to read prior to the face-to-face meeting.
    b. The panel is given instructions on the evaluation criteria, the meaning of the different rankings, and the type of comments that will be helpful to the Program Officer and proposal submitters.

    c. A practice session is held in which reviewers read one or two proposals, discuss their evaluations, and gain skill in evaluating the proposals. This gives proposal reviewers insight into different ways of examining a proposal.

    d. Each proposal is then read by a relatively large panel--five to seven reviewers.

5. Program Officer Recommendation

    a. After all proposals have been evaluated, panel members discuss each one. The Program Officer (who has read every proposal) sits in on the discussion. Each panel member provides a revised (and/or unchanged, as the case may be) rating for each proposal based on the discussion.

        i. When there is a large number of proposals, and hence a number of panels reading proposals, a norming technique may be used between panels. This addresses the problems that arise when one panel rates proposals at a much higher or lower level than another panel.

    b. The Program Officer uses these final ratings to recommend whether the proposal should be recommended for an award or declined for funding.

        i. If the recommendation is made to decline the award, the Proposal Submitter is notified and review information is available to them.

        ii. If the recommendation is made to pass the proposal, the recommendation is sent to an Officer/Director for the final decision.

6. Business/Director Review

    a. The Officer/Director conducts a review of business, financial, and policy implications. Generally, Bit to Byte makes awards within 7 days after the Program Officer makes its recommendation. Additional processing time may be required if: the Proposal Submitter has not received prior funding, or if it involves special situations.

7. Award Finalized

    a. The award itself is comprised of an award notice, budget, proposal, applicable BtB conditions, and any other documents or requirements incorporated by reference into the agreement. Each BtB award notice specifically identifies certain conditions that are applicable to, and become part of, that award.

Evaluation Standards

All of Bit to Byte's evaluation forms were developed directly from accredited sources, including: the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF), U.S. Department of Education, Dwight D. Eisenhower State-Level Projects Rubric, and from some of the most prestigious universities in the world, such as Cornell University and Harvard University.

Proposals will be evaluated on "best value" based on the evaluation criteria as stated below. A 100-point scale will be used to create the final evaluation recommendation. When assessing points, utilize the following scale, which will then be multiplied by the weight assigned.

Points	Guidance
10	Overall excellent in all criteria with no *major* weaknesses or failings in the strict context of that criteria
9-8	Very good in all criteria or excellent in almost all, with perhaps no more than one major area requiring attention, correction, or major improvement
7-6	More than adequate response
5-4	Good/average in all criteria, or very good in some areas but weak in others with at least one or more criteria requiring attention
3-2	Inadequate response. Weak in several areas, but not necessarily absent of some merit in some areas
1-0	Totally inadequate response. Very weak in almost all areas of the criteria

0	No response given	

Event Proposal Evaluation

Factor	Weight	Proposal Section(s)	What to Include
Impact	30%	● Event Description ● Conclusion - Key Takeaways/Learning Opportunities	1. Degree or level of potential impact on Event attendees (both now and in the future) 2. Benefit to an underserved population?
Schedule, Goal & Strategy	25%	● Event Goal ● Event Schedule	1. Event goals and schedule are detailed and clearly outlined 2. Includes timeline/plan for before and after Event
Evaluation Plan/Outcomes	25%	● Event Goal	1. Include how you plan to assess the anticipated outcomes and the overall effectiveness of the Event
Significance / Importance	15%	● Conclusion - Why is it Important that Bit to Byte Funds this Proposal?	1. Potential for the proposed Event to advance knowledge and understanding of a certain subject or area 2. Potential for the proposed Event to benefit society/attendees
Budget	5%	● Budget	1. A link is included for each item
Originality & Creativity	0%	● Throughout Proposal	1. Bonus points if the proposed Event seems innovative or particularly original
Potential	0%	● Conclusion - Possible	1. Bonus points if the proposed

Challenges		Challenges	Event includes potential challenges and corresponding solutions are discussed
Total	100%		

Project Proposal Evaluation

Factor	Weight	Proposal Section(s)	What to Include
Impact	30%	● Project Description ● Conclusion - Key Takeaways/Learning Opportunities	1. Degree or level of potential impact on students/individuals (both now and in the future) 2. Benefit to an underserved population?
Evaluation Plan / Outcomes	30%	● Milestone Descriptions/ Outcomes	1. Include how you plan to assess the anticipated outcomes of each Milestone and the overall effectiveness of the Project
Plan, Steps, & Strategy	20%	● Milestone Steps/Descriptions	1. Project steps and descriptions are detailed and clearly outlined 2. Sufficient planning within each milestone step
Significance / Importance	15%	● Conclusion - Why is it Important that Bit to Byte Funds this Proposal?	1. Potential for the proposed Project to advance knowledge and understanding of a certain subject or area 2. Potential for the proposed Project to benefit society/attendees
Budget	5%	● Milestone's Budget	1. A link is included for each item 2. A budget is included for each milestone
Originality & Creativity	0%	● Throughout Proposal	1. Bonus points if the proposed Project seems innovative or

			particularly original
Potential Challenges	0%	• Conclusion - Possible Challenges	1. Bonus points if the proposed Project includes potential challenges and corresponding solutions are discussed
Total	100%		