

# Parents of Galactosemic Children, Inc

## Research Grants Program: Guidelines for Reveiwers



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## **Parents of Galactosemic Children, Inc (PGC) Research Grants Program: Guidelines for Reviewers**

The mission of the PGC Research Grants program is to help families living with galactosemia by supporting research that will help us learn more about this disease and, ultimately, help us to improve the outcome of our children.

As we are a family-based group of volunteers, and not scientific experts in the field of galactosemia, we are relying on the scientific community to help us evaluate research grant proposals based on their usefulness to the community and their scientific merit.

As a scientific consultant, you are asked to evaluate the scientific merit of grant applications. The PGC Research Committee will use the results of your evaluation together with their own evaluation process to make recommendations about funding research proposals to the PGC Board of Directors.

The PGC Research Committee welcomes your feedback concerning the review process, and sincerely appreciates your valuable role in this review process.

### **Information for Reviewers:**

If you are asked to be a reviewer of a proposal(s), you will be sent the Research Proposal Application(s) together with a "Research Proposal Scoring Rubric" by e-mail. Please use this scoring rubric to award points and to write comments about a proposal. In addition, The PGC Research Committee also welcomes any overall summary that you may wish to add to this scoring rubric. Please keep this overall summary evaluation to one page or less. You will be asked to either mail or e-mail (*preferred*) your evaluation back to our committee. **(Please note: Professionals who wish to submit a proposal in a given year will not be used as an outside reviewer during that same year. The research committee will temporarily remove applicants from the pool of potential reviewers.)**

The PGC Research Committee will provide you with a schedule for completing reviews. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to abide by our timeline, as we will have to ask another reviewer to complete the review.

Also, please let the PGC Research Committee know if you have a conflict of interest or if you feel you do not have the proper expertise to evaluate a specific proposal.

**Conflict of Interest:** Consider the following as potential conflicts: investigators are listed with whom you have a financial and/or professional relationship; the funding decision on any application would benefit you directly; you feel there may be a perception of conflict. Notify the PGC Research Committee in such cases. The PGC Research Committee will make the final determination.

**Confidentiality:** All applications are to be considered confidential. Respect for the privacy of the investigators' ideas is also vital. Misappropriation of intellectual property, including the unauthorized use of ideas or unique methods obtained from a privileged communication, such as a grant or manuscript review, is considered plagiarism and falls under the definition of scientific misconduct.

**Expectations of Reviewers and Discussants:** Each application is assigned to, at least, two, but not more than three reviewers.

**Scoring:** The Scoring Rubric will provide you with scoring ranges for eight specific categories. The highest possible total score will be 100 points.

**Scientific Misconduct:** Please let the PGC Research Committee know as soon as possible if you suspect scientific fraud or misconduct.

**Discussion of Applications:** Discussions among reviewers and the PGC Research Committee will not be routinely arranged. However, after receiving your evaluation, the PGC Research Committee may want to conference with you by phone for further follow-up questions or clarifications about your evaluation. Likewise, if you feel the need to speak to the PGC Research Committee about a specific research proposal, we will arrange for a telephone call.

Attached are two documents regarding conflict of interest. The first summarizes the PGC Research Committee's rules, and the second is a form to be filled in before completing a review in order to document that these rules have been followed.

*We sincerely appreciate your time and expertise in helping us make decisions on funding research in galactosemia. Thank you!*

**Attachment 1:** PGC Conflict Of Interest, Confidentiality And Non Disclosure Rules: Information For Reviewers of PGC Research Grant Applications

**Attachment 2:** Parents of Galactosemic Children (PGC) Research Committee Pre-Review Certification Form

## **PARENTS OF GALACTOSEMIC CHILDREN (PGC) CONFLICT OF INTEREST, CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON DISCLOSURE RULES: INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS OF PGC RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATIONS**

As reviewers themselves are most familiar with their own situations, it is their personal responsibility: (1) to alert PGC to any possible conflict of interest situation, whether real or apparent, that may impact on the review, and (2) to identify and certify on the Conflict of Interest Certification Forms associated with this information sheet, (a) any application where they have a conflict of interest, and (b) that they will not be, and have not been, involved in the review of any application where their participation constitutes a conflict of interest. Reviewers must also certify that they will maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and associated materials and that they will not disclose to another individual any matter or information related to the review proceedings. In addition, PGC may determine that a particular situation involves a conflict of interest and require that the potential reviewer not be involved in the review of the application(s) or proposal(s) in question.

**There are several bases for a conflict of interest: employment, financial benefit, personal relationships, professional relationships or other interests.** If applicable, any one condition may serve to disqualify a reviewer from participating in the review of an application or proposal. **A conflict of interest may be real or apparent.**

### **GUIDANCE AND DEFINITIONS**

A **Conflict Of Interest** in scientific peer review exists when a reviewer has an interest in a grant or cooperative agreement application or an R&D contract proposal that is likely to bias his or her evaluation of it. A reviewer who has a real conflict of interest with an application or proposal may not participate in its review.

**Real Conflict Of Interest** means a reviewer or a close relative or professional associate of the reviewer has a financial or other interest in an application or proposal that is known to the reviewer and is likely to bias the reviewer's evaluation of that application or proposal.

A reviewer shall have a real conflict of interest if he/she or a close relative or professional associate of the reviewer: (1) has received or could receive a direct financial benefit of any amount deriving from an application or proposal under review; (2) has received or could receive a financial benefit from the applicant institution, (3) has any other interest in the application or proposal that is likely to bias the reviewer's evaluation of that application or proposal.

Regardless of the level of financial involvement or other interest, if the reviewer feels unable to provide objective advice, he/she must recuse him/herself from the review of the application or proposal at issue. The peer review system relies on the professionalism of each reviewer to identify any real or apparent conflicts of interest that are likely to bias the reviewer's evaluation of an application or proposal.

**Employment:** A reviewer who is a salaried employee, whether full-time or part-time, of the applicant institution, offeror, or principal investigator, or is negotiating for employment, shall be considered to have a real conflict of interest with regard to an application/proposal from that organization or principal investigator. PGC may determine there is no real conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest where the components of a large or multi-component organization are sufficiently independent to constitute, in effect, separate organizations, provided that the reviewer has no responsibilities at the institution that would significantly affect the other component.

**Financial Benefit:** See definition of Real Conflict of Interest above.

**Personal Relationships (Relatives):** A close relative means a parent, spouse, sibling, son or daughter or domestic partner. A conflict of interest exists if a close relative of a reviewer submits an application or proposal, or receives or could receive financial benefits from or provides financial benefits to an applicant or offeror. In such case, it will be treated as the reviewer's financial benefit.

**Professional Associates:** Professional associate means any colleague, scientific mentor, or student with whom the peer reviewer is currently conducting research or other significant professional activities or with whom the member has conducted such activities within three years of the date of the review.

**Standing Review Group Membership:** When a scientific review group meets regularly, a relationship among the individual members exists; therefore, the group as a whole may not be objective about evaluating the work of one of its members. In such a case, a member's application or proposal will be reviewed by another qualified review group to insure that a competent and objective review is obtained.

**Longstanding Disagreements:** A conflict of interest may exist where a potential reviewer has had longstanding scientific or personal differences with an applicant.

**Multi-Site Or Multi-Component Project:** An individual serving as either the principal investigator or key personnel on one component of a multi-site or multi-component project has a conflict of interest with all of the applications or proposals from all investigators or key personnel associated with the project. The individual should be considered a professional associate when evaluating applications or proposals submitted by the other participants in the project.

**Request For Applications (RFA) Or Request For Proposals (RFP):** Persons serving as the principal investigator or key personnel on an application submitted in response to an RFA or on a proposal in response to an RFP are generally considered to have a conflict of interest with all of the applications or proposals submitted in response to the RFA or RFP. However, if no other reviewer is available with the expertise necessary to ensure a competent and fair review, a waiver may be granted that will permit an individual to review only those applications or proposals with which he/she has no conflict of interest that is likely to affect the integrity of the advice to be provided by the reviewer.

**Appearance Of A Conflict Of Interest** means that a reviewer or close relative or professional associate of the reviewer has a financial or other interest in an application or proposal that is known to the reviewer and would cause a reasonable person to question the reviewer's impartiality if he or she were to participate in the review. PGC will evaluate the appearance of a conflict of interest and determine whether or not the interest would likely bias the reviewer's evaluation of the application or proposal.

**Waivers** If no other reviewer is available with the expertise necessary to ensure a competent review, a waiver may be granted by PGC to allow participation in the review.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE OF MATERIALS AND PROCEEDINGS**

The applications and proposals and associated materials made available to reviewers, as well as the discussions that take place during review meetings are strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to or discussed with any one who has not been officially designated to participate in the review process.

## **CERTIFICATION**

All reviewers must certify that they have read these instructions on "PGC Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-Disclosure Rules and Information for Reviewers." The reviewer must certify that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has disclosed all conflicts of interest that he/she may have with the research applications and he/she fully understands the confidential nature of the review process and agrees: (1) to destroy or return all materials related to it; (2) not to disclose or discuss the materials associated with the review, their evaluation, or the review meeting with any other individual except as authorized by PGC (3) not to disclose procurement information prior to the award of a contract; and (4) to refer all inquiries concerning the review to PGC's Research Committee.

**Parents of Galactosemic Children (PGC) Research Committee  
PRE-REVIEW CERTIFICATION FORM  
REGARDING CONFLICT OF INTEREST, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND NON-DISCLOSURE FOR  
REVIEWERS OF RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Name [Last, First]: (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

Date(s) of review:

**Check only one** (and provide any comments or explanations on reverse side):

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the attached "PGC Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-Disclosure Rules and Information for Reviewers" and have examined the list of applications/proposals to be reviewed, and hereby certify that, based on the information provided to me, **I do not have a conflict of interest in any of them.**

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the attached "PGC Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-Disclosure Rules and Information for Reviewers" and examined the list of applications to be reviewed and hereby certify that, based on the information provided, **I have a conflict of interest in the specific applications listed below** and hereby recuse myself from their review.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Certification**

I certify that I have read the attached "PGC Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-Disclosure Rules and Information for Reviewers." I certify that to the best of my knowledge I have disclosed all conflicts of interest that I may have with the applications and I fully understand the confidential nature of the review process and agree: (1) to destroy or return all materials related to it; (2) not to disclose or discuss the materials associated with the review, my evaluation, or the review meeting with any other individual except as authorized by PGC; (3) not to disclose procurement information prior to the award of a contract; and (4) to refer all inquiries concerning the review to PGC's Research Committee. I also certify that I have not, nor will not, submit a PGC Research Grant Application within this Research Grant evaluation cycle.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this signed form to:**

Parents of Galactosemic Children, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2401  
Mandeville, LA 70470-2401  
**Attn:** Research Grants Program: COI Form