

# Memorandum

**TO:** Gisele Muller-Parker, NSF COV Coordinator, OD/OIA  
**FROM:** William J. (Jim) Lewis, Assistant Director (Acting), EHR  
**DATE:** September 25, 2018  
**SUBJECT:** Diversity and Conflicts of Interest — Committee of Visitors (COV) for the TUES, STEP, WIDER, and IUUSE: EHR programs

On October 13–14, 2016, a Committee of Visitors (COV) convened at NSF in Arlington, Virginia, to review the following programs managed by the Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE):

- Transforming Undergraduate Education in STEM (TUES)
- STEM Talent Expansion Program (STEP)
- Widening Implementation & Demonstration of Evidence-Based Reforms (WIDER)
- Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUUSE: EHR)

The COV report was discussed and accepted at the EHR Advisory Committee meeting on November 30, 2016. This memo summarizes the diversity, independence, balance, and resolution of conflicts of interest of this COV.

The credibility of the COV mechanism rests, in large measure, on the selection of credible, independent experts who are able to provide balanced and impartial assessments to NSF. Before experts were invited to serve on the TUES/STEP/WIDER/IUUSE COV, the Division Director and Deputy Division Director of DUE were consulted regarding potential candidates. Program officers in DUE were also instrumental in identifying candidates.

The COV consisted of nine members (including the chair) who were selected for their expertise related to the goals and activities supported by the programs. The chair of the COV represented the EHR Advisory Committee. In view of the relatively small size of the group, the COV was reasonably balanced with respect to the types of institutions supported through the programs, underrepresented groups, and geography.

## Summary of Diversity of COV Membership

Characteristic	No. of COV Members
Member of EHR Advisory Committee	1
Organization Type	
University	6
Four-Year College	1
Two-Year College	1
College System	
K-12 School or Local Education Agency (LEA)	
Industry	
Non-Profit Research Organization/Foundation	1
Federal or State Government Agency	
Professional Society/Membership Organization	
Geographic Location	
Northeast (New England, Mid-Atlantic)	2
Midwest	1
South	4
West	2

(continued)

Gender	
Male	4
Female	5
Race	
American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	1
Black or African American	1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
White	7
Other/Unknown	
Ethnicity	
Hispanic or Latino	1
Not Hispanic or Latino	7
Unknown	1
Persons with Disabilities	0

COV members were briefed about confidentiality and conflicts of interest (COIs) during an orientation webinar before the meeting, as well as at the beginning of the meeting at NSF. Each COV member completed a Conflicts-of-Interest and Confidentiality Statement (NSF Form 1230P) and identified his or her potential conflicts before beginning work. Conflicts were managed in the COV Module in the Electronic Jacket (eJacket) application. COV members who had a COI with particular proposals or awards were not allowed to view the related records or to participate in related discussions.