



The Standards For excellence

An Ethics & Accountability Program for the Nonprofit Sector

PEER REVIEWER JOB DESCRIPTION STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE PROGRAM Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations

What is a Standards for Excellence Peer Reviewer?

Peer reviewers are trained individuals responsible for evaluating an organization's compliance with the Standards for Excellence.

Using a peer review process ensures that individuals with diverse opinions and expertise in the nonprofit sector will review and judge the application packages, and that the outcome will be fair.

Peer Reviewers restrict their opinions to documents, activities, policies and processes that are covered by the Standards for Excellence. This ensures that all organizations are being treated alike, and that any potential biases of Peer Reviewers are avoided.

Peer Reviewers always have the opportunity to make suggestions to the Board Standards Committee for addition, deletion or revision of existing standards.

Time Commitment

Prospective reviewers will attend a free two hour Peer Reviewer training session conducted by Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations (PANO) staff.

Peer Reviewers will not be expected to review more than two application packages per year and except under unusual circumstances.

The total time commitment for a peer review is approximately 10 to 12 hours per organization.

Qualifications

- At least five years of experience working with a nonprofit organization in a position of responsibility that involves development or execution of policy or governance of the organization
- or -
- The equivalent of the above through experience as a consultant, trainer, corporate service provider in the nonprofit field (CPA, attorney, etc.)
- Peer Reviewers are encouraged to be a PANO member in order to have access to all the Standards for Excellence educational resources



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Peer Reviewer Participation

To keep knowledge of the Standards for Excellence current and remain active as a Peer Reviewer, Peer Reviewers are required to conduct a minimum of one review every four years. Peer Reviewers who have not conducted a review for four years will become inactive. Peer Reviewers will receive a letter from PANO six months before becoming inactive asking if the Reviewer would like to conduct a review in the next few months and remain active. If an inactive Peer Reviewer would like to become active again, they will be required to attend the Peer Reviewer training and conduct a review within the first six months after the training.

Overview of Peer Review Process

Application packages from Pennsylvania nonprofit organizations are first reviewed for completeness by PANO's staff. They are then sent to three trained Peer Reviewers. Peer Review teams are chosen from a pool of available trained Peer Reviewers who have no conflict of interest with the organization under consideration.

Peer Reviewers review application packages individually, evaluating for adherence to the Standards. An application checklist is provided to guide the review process. Peer Reviewers spend an average of 4 – 6 hours reviewing applications on their own.

The team of Peer Reviewers meets within 15 days of receiving application packages, to discuss each individual's assessment of the application package. A PANO staff member attends and facilitates this meeting. Peer Reviewer meetings take approximately 3 hours.

If additional information is needed, staff contacts the organization and then shares any additional information with the Peer Review team. Follow-up review takes place via e-mail and conference calls.

The Peer Review team agrees on whether or not to recommend the organization for Standards for Excellence, and on what requirements, expectations and observations are to be recommended.

The Board Standards Committee reviews the Peer Review Team's recommendations and takes final action on whether or not the organization will receive the Seal of Excellence. If necessary, a representative of the Peer Review Team clarifies recommendations.

Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality of Interest

Members of Peer Review Teams perform their work anonymously. The organization being evaluated does not know the name of the Peer Reviewers.

To avoid conflicts and protect the confidentiality of applicants, Peer Reviewers agree to sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement, and fill out a Disclosure Form and Application.

For more information, please contact Tish Mogan at 717-236-8584 or e-mail tish@pano.org. Applications can be found at www.pano.org/Standards-For-Excellence/Certification. Go to Peer Reviewers.



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