

TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL (TRP) CHAIR INSTRUCTIONS

(FOR TRP CHAIR USE)

Congratulations! You are chairing a new Technical Research Panel for the Illinois Department of Transportation's research program with the Illinois Center for Transportation (ICT). The following information is provided to assist you in chairing this TRP.

The IDOT Research Coordination Unit is here to help to equip you with the tools you need to make this research project work. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please contact Megan Swanson, Technical Research Coordinator, at DOT.BMPR.RESEARCH@illinois.gov or 217-782-3547.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A TRP CHAIR?

- Provide coordination between the TRP and the Principal Investigator(s) (PI).
- Manage PI(s) throughout term of research project.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS THE TRP CHAIR?

- Determine membership of TRP. An outline of the TRP membership is typically found in the project summary of the ICT Executive Committee booklet.
- Assist IDOT/ICT in selection of researcher. This may include reviewing RFPs.
- Hold kick off meeting including TRP members and PI(s). The initial Implementation Planning Worksheet should be discussed at this meeting and completed within two weeks of the meeting.
- Schedule TRP meetings as often as necessary – no less than one meeting every 6 months, although ideally a TRP meets at least quarterly. Your PI may assist in the scheduling and organization of the meetings, if desired. The Implementation Planning Worksheet should be reviewed at each meeting, and updated as needed.
- Arrange for ICT Project Manager to take minutes at all TRP meetings. (See **Meetings** below for additional information.)
- Distribute draft and final minutes to principal investigator(s) and TRP members.
- Keep the project on schedule through continuous communication with the principal investigator(s). Maintain routine telephone/email contact with principal investigator.
- Ensure the accomplishment of project deliverables.
- In consultation with your TRP, complete/update Implementation Planning Worksheet(s), Quarterly Report for project and semi-annual PI evaluation.
- In consultation with your TRP, review and comment on all interim and final reports within the appropriate editing timeframe.
- Promote the implementation of project findings through revisions of procedural manuals, appropriate revisions of design standards or specifications, creation of training, etc.
- Alert the BMPR Research Coordinator if any project falls behind by 2-3 months.

- Inform Research Coordinator of budget/time extension increase requests.
- Keep the BMPR Research Coordinator informed of problems and issues the project may be experiencing. Examples include, difficulty working with PI, difficulty establishing communication with PI, or additional research topics uncovered as a result of current project.

STARTING THE PROJECT

Before significant work on a project begins, the following steps must take place:

- A draft proposal or work plan must be prepared by the Principal Investigator (PI).
- Within two weeks of the project start date, hold a kick-off (face-to-face, teleconference or conference call) meeting between the principal investigator and the TRP about the draft proposal or work plan. When possible, in-person meeting is preferable, and the Kick Off Meeting Worksheet should be used in steering the meeting. *Please see Kick-Off Meeting Outline and Worksheet for more information.*
- The PI must refine and resubmit the proposal or work plan for TRP approval in response to any comments by the TRP.
- The work plan and budget must be approved by the TRP before work can begin on the project. The TRP Chair must sign off on the cover of the work plan and budget.
- Develop and submit an Implementation Plan (BMPR RC 006) to BMPR Research Coordinator.

MEETINGS

- The TRP shall hold meetings as often as necessary – ideally meetings will be held quarterly, with at least two meetings per year.
- The Chairperson shall determine the time and location for the meeting through coordination with the TRP and PI(s).
- The TRP chair (or PI) will arrange for someone from ICT to take minutes for each meeting. Email the meeting notice to ICT (ICTProjectManagement@illinois.edu) at least **2 weeks** prior to meeting to ensure that a project manager will be able to attend and take minutes. Please include the Research Unit (DOT.BMPR.RESEARCH@illinois.gov) as well. It is easiest to make a group email for your TRP, and make ICT and BMPR part of the group.
- Meetings may be held in person, via conference call or via video-conferencing. If you choose to hold a video-conference meeting, ICT will arrange the meeting for you. Please contact ICT at ICTProjectManagement@illinois.edu for additional information.

TRP MEETING MINUTES PROCESS

TRP CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The TRP chair will arrange for someone from ICT to take minutes for each meeting. See above for details.
- Review draft minutes within 2 weeks of receipt. Collect comments/changes from TRP members.

- Return to ICT staff for finalization, and posting.
- Disseminate final minutes to TRP (including PI(s)) prior to next meeting.

TRP MEETING MINUTES PROCESS (DETAIL):

- TRP Chair emails meeting request to TRP, including ICT (ICTProjectManagement@illinois.edu) and Research Coordination Unit (DOT.BMPR.RESEARCH@illinois.gov) at least 2 weeks prior to meeting.
- The ICT project manager assigned to your project will typically be the minute taker, allowing TRPs to work with the same ICT staff on a regular basis and on all aspects of your project..
- ICT will provide the draft minutes, marked with the DRAFT watermark, to the TRP chair and BMPR (typically within 2 weeks) of the meeting. ICT will also provide BMPR with PowerPoint presentation of the meeting when possible. Draft minutes and PowerPoint will be added to project file at BMPR.
- The TRP chair will review the minutes, ask the TRP to review the minutes, and provide any clarifications or changes to ICT within 2 weeks.
- ICT will incorporate any changes and finalize the minutes within one week. The DRAFT watermark will be removed, and document will include a line that states “Final Minutes – <DATE>”.
- Final minutes will be sent to the TRP chair for dissemination to TRP, to BMPR for inclusion in project file, and will be uploaded to the ICT database.

MEETING MINUTES WILL INCLUDE:

- Attendance
- Overview of presentation – includes main findings and future plans
- Summary of Discussion – includes highlights of discussion and lists major decisions
- Review and update of Implementation Planning Worksheet
- Action Items

SENSITIVE/CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:

Confidentiality and publication issues are addressed in Part 4, Section F of our contract with ICT. If you will be discussing issues of a confidential or sensitive nature in any TRP meeting, please contact the Research Coordination Unit (DOT.BMPR.RESEARCH@illinois.gov) for further direction.

REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS

AT BEGINNING AND THROUGHOUT PROJECT

- Implementation Worksheet (BMPR RC 006) – At each TRP meeting, the TRP will review and update the implementation worksheet with more concrete plans on how the finding will be implemented. This worksheet will guide the implementation of the project outcomes.

While the TRP chair, TRP members and PI will work collaboratively on this document, it is the responsibility of the TRP chair to ensure that all changes and updates are completed and returned to the ICT project manager within two weeks of each meeting.

QUARTERLY

- Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) – are required for each project, using the online Quarterly Progress Report system. The PI will be contacted by ICT at the end of each quarter (March, June, September, December) with a reminder that the Quarterly Report is due. The PI is responsible for initiating the QPR.

Once the PI has completed his/her section, the TRP chair is expected to contribute to and review this report and either approve or provide feedback to the PI. We ask that the TRP provide open and honest feedback about the PI(s), positive or negative.

TWICE ANNUALLY

- Semi Annual TRP Evaluations (BMPR RC 001) – In mid-summer and mid-winter, the PIs are contacted by ICT and asked to complete an evaluation of their work and collaboration with the TRP. This evaluation is mandatory, and is shared with IDOT and with the TRP chair. This report is used as an indicator of the success of the relationship between the TRP and PI. If any negative issues are identified by the PI, ICT and IDOT will work with the PI and TRP chair to resolve the problem.
- Semi Annual PI Evaluations (BMPR RC 002) – In mid-summer and mid-winter, the TRP chairs are contacted by IDOT and asked to complete an evaluation of their work and collaboration with the PI(s). This evaluation is mandatory, and is shared with ICT and with the PI(s). This report is used as an indicator of the success of the relationship between the TRP and PI. If any negative issues are identified by the TRP, ICT and IDOT will work with the PI and TRP chair to resolve the problem. We ask that the TRP provide open and honest feedback about the PI(s), positive or negative.

AT CLOSE OF PROJECT

- Close Out Evaluation (BMPR RC 003) – At the end of the project, the TRP will be asked to collaborate on a final evaluation of the PI(s). This evaluation will help IDOT and ICT to gauge the level of satisfaction that the TRP had with the PI(s) throughout the project and also identifies the various deliverables that were (or were not) provided to the TRP.
- Report Distribution/Order Form – At the close of the project, ICT will contact you to ask how many copies of the published report you would like. Reports are available in hard copy (paper) format, as well as in a CD format. We suggest that you order at least enough to distribute to the TRP members, and as additional copies as needed for implementation.
- Please note that projects are not considered to be complete until the final report has been published to the ICT website.

SPECIAL ISSUES

- Equipment – Any equipment over \$5000 must be approved by the Research Coordination Unit. The PI is responsible for contacting ICT for assistance in completing the Equipment Request form. This form must be approved by the TRP chair and ICT, and submitted to IDOT for final approval prior to the purchase. Equipment purchased as a part of a research project is inventoried and tracked by ICT, and may revert to IDOT possession after the project is complete.
- Travel – All travel for conferences and professional meetings must be pre-approved by the TRP chair. A travel request form is available on the ICT website, and must be completed by the traveler and approved prior to travel (TRP chair approves PI and student travel/BMPR approves TRP chair or member travel). The approval must specifically state the travel being requested and each individual being included in the travel. Travel that was not pre-approved will not be reimbursed by IDOT.
- Surveys – Any public survey used by your PI must be reviewed and pre-approved by the TRP.
- Review of Scholarly Presentations/Reports – Per our agreement with ICT, IDOT has a 21-day review period to review all articles for scholarly or peer-refereed journals and papers to be presented at professional meetings (eg, TRB). If your PI plans to present at a meeting or submit a paper on our research to a professional journal, (s)he must provide it to you in advance for your review and approval. If you have any issues with the paper/presentation, or with a lack of adequate review time, please contact the Research Coordinator, Megan Swanson, immediately. We will work with you, ICT and the PI to address the issue.
- Communication Difficulties – If you are having a difficult time keeping contact with your PI (PI fails to return emails/calls in timely fashion), or you feel that your PI is otherwise non-responsive to the TRPs requests and suggestions, please contact the Research Coordinator, Megan Swanson, immediately. We will work with you, ICT and the PI to address the issue.

TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL (TRP) MEMBER HANDOUT

(Please share with TRP)

WHAT IS A TRP?

A Technical Review Panel (TRP) is a small group that:

- oversees a specific IDOT research project from project start to research implementation;
- provides expertise and support that allows the project to meet IDOT's needs;
- oversees the scope, schedule and budget of the project; and
- facilitates the implementation of the project.

WHO IS ON A TRP?

A TRP typically consists of a Chair and 3 to 10 members with a background, interest and specialized knowledge in the topic being studied.

The TRP chair selects the TRP membership, including:

- Representatives from IDOT Bureaus/ Offices directly affected by the research.
- Representation from the Federal Highway Administration.
- Representation from Research Coordination, Bureau of Materials and Physical Research (BMPR).
- Representation from any other agency or agencies impacted by the research or contributing funds for the research.
- Industry representatives and other stakeholders when deemed appropriate.

TRP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Review and approve work plan and budget for project.
- Attend and participate in TRP meetings.
- Advise the principal investigator(s) in the technical aspects of a project.
- Direct the investigation to ensure that it is aimed at finding implementable answers to the stated research objective or objectives.
- Evaluate the progress on a project, both at TRP meetings and through bi-annual PI evaluations.
- Review and provide comments on interim and final reports. PI is required to submit draft final report to ICT for preliminary editing prior to review by TRP. This will allow TRP to focus on reviewing technical issues addressed in the report instead of spelling, grammar and flow issues.
- Evaluate the effort, cost, and probable benefits stemming from the research findings.
- Champion and assist with the implementation of project findings into practice.

TRP MEETINGS

- The TRP shall hold meetings as it may determine are necessary - preferably every three to four months but no less than once every six months.
- Meetings may be held in person, via conference call or via video-conferencing.

Technical Review Panel Selection Checklist *(For TRP Chair Use)*

This checklist has been prepared to assist in the creation and operation of Technical Review Panels (TRPs). TRPs should be formed after a project has been approved. Please contact Megan Swanson at (217) 782-3547 or DOT.BMPR.RESEARCH@illinois if you need additional information.

CREATING THE TRP

When choosing TRP members, consider:

- The areas of expertise needed for the project.
- The areas in which the principal investigator(s) may need additional assistance.
- The implementation of expected outcomes and what personnel resources you will need to implement any favorable results.

*Please note that recommendations for TRP members or Bureaus/Agencies to be represented are shown on the approved project proposal, included in the Executive Committee Meeting booklet and available from Megan Swanson.

- Does your TRP consist of representatives (as appropriate) from each of the following?
 - Representatives from IDOT Bureaus/ Offices directly affected by the research.
 - Representation from the Federal Highway Administration (required).
 - Representation from Research Coordination, Bureau of Materials and Physical Research (BMPR) (required).
 - Representation from any other agency or agencies impacted by the research or contributing funds for the research.
 - Industry representatives.
- Does your TRP consist of three to ten members?

Technical Review Panel Kick-Off Meeting Outline

(Please share with TRP and PI)

This is an outline of the topics that need to be discussed at your technical review panel (TRP) kick off meeting. Please feel free to add additional notes and sub-topics for each of the following items as well as any additional topics that need to be discussed. Please note that work cannot begin until the work plan and budget are approved by the TRP.

Work Plan Discussion

- Does the work outlined in the work plan accomplish the objective of the project?
- Do the goals of this work plan meet the needs of IDOT?
- Are there any additional items that should be included in order to meet IDOT's needs?
- Are there any items that should be deleted?
- Does the work plan include interim deliverables (reports, study results, training modules, etc.)? Please identify, provide requirements and estimated date of delivery. *(Using these benchmarks will help your project to run more smoothly and stay on track.)*
- Does the work plan include adequate time for creation of final report/deliverable? *(ICT guidelines state that a 6 month period should be included in each project for report writing, TRP review and editing. Please note that the project is considered complete only when it has been published to the ICT website.)*
- Does the work plan include a visual schedule of the work?

Budget

- Does the budget appear to be reasonable and is it within the amount approved by the ICT Executive Committee?
- Are any equipment costs included in the budget?
- Equipment over \$5000 must be approved by the Research Coordination Unit prior to purchase.
- Are travel costs included in the budget?
- Please specify cost estimates for any out of state, conference or non-TRP meeting travel.
- Include any anticipated travel for TRP chair/members.

Implementation Planning Worksheet (BMPR RC 006 – Please complete form)

- What outcomes may result from the research? For each outcome:
 - What steps need to be taken to implement the results (if favorable)?
 - What barriers may arise in implementing the results?

- Who needs to be involved in the implementation process?
- How can IDOT measure the success of the implementation of this result?

Reports and Evaluations –

- Please review these reporting and evaluation requirements with the TRP and PI during the kick-off meeting.

At Each Meeting

Implementation Planning Worksheet (BMPR RC 006) – At each meeting, the TRP will review (and update as needed) the Implementation Planning Worksheet with current plans on how the finding will be implemented. This worksheet will guide the implementation of the project outcomes.

Quarterly

Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs – Online at ICT website) – are required for each project, using the online Quarterly Progress Report system. The PI will be contacted by ICT at the end of each quarter (March, June, September, December) with a reminder that the Quarterly Report is due. The PI is responsible for initiating the QPR. Once the PI has completed his/her section, the TRP chair is expected to contribute to and review this report and either approve or provide feedback to the PI. Quarterly Reports are published on the Research Coordination website, shared with IDOT management and with FHWA.

Twice Annually

Semi Annual TRP Evaluations (ICT Form – PI Completes) – In mid-summer and mid-winter, the PIs are contacted by ICT and asked to complete an evaluation of their work and collaboration with the TRP. This evaluation is mandatory, and is shared with IDOT and with the TRP chair. This report is used as an indicator of the success of the relationship between the TRP and PI. If any negative issues are identified by the PI, ICT and IDOT will work with the PI and TRP chair to resolve the problem.

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6 Months from Close of Project

Implementation Planning Worksheet (BMPR RC 006) – 6 months from the close of the project, the TRP will update the Implementation Planning Worksheet with concrete plans on how the finding will be implemented. This worksheet will guide the implementation of the project outcomes.

At Close of Project

Close Out Evaluation (BMPR RC 003) – At the end of the project, the TRP will be asked to collaborate on a final evaluation of the PI(s). This evaluation will help IDOT and ICT to gauge the level of satisfaction that the TRP had with the PI(s) throughout the project and also identifies the various deliverables that were (or were not) provided to the TRP.

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Agenda

TRP Meeting #(X)

R27-XXX – (NAME OF PROJECT)

(Date)
(Time)
(Location)

** This is an example from a kick off meeting.

- 1) Introduction and Attendees (5-10 min.) (Resp. Person)
- 2) IDOT/ICT Administrative details (5-10 min.) (Resp. Person)
- 3) Project kick-off discussion (10-15 min.) (Resp. Person)
- 4) Presentation by researcher
- 5) Discussion of work plan and next steps (Group Discussion)
- 6) Complete Implementation Planning Worksheet (IPW)

** This is an example from a regular progress meeting.

- 1) Introduction and Attendees (5-10 min.) (Resp. Person)
- 2) Review of Minutes (5-10 min.) (Resp. Person)
- 3) Presentation by researcher
- 4) Discussion and next steps (Group Discussion)
- 5) Review/Update of Implementation Planning Worksheet (IPW)
- 6) Review of Action Items (Group Discussion)