

**Proposal Status** | MAIN ►**Organization:** Washington University**Panel Summary #1****Proposal Number:** 1152472**Panel Summary:**

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
METHODOLOGY, MEASUREMENT, AND STATISTICS PROGRAM
ADVISORY PANEL SUMMARY
December 5-6, 2011

Proposal ID: 1152285

PI: Ward, Michael

Institution: Duke University

Title: Collaborative Research on Ensemble Methods for the Prediction of Political Outcomes

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INTELLECTUAL MERIT (INCLUDING POTENTIALLY TRANSFORMATIVE ASPECTS):

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSED RESEARCH:

Ward has an excellent track record and the junior collaborator is talented and adds an important dimension to the research. There was some support for the idea that forecasting is underutilized in political science and might lead to deeper understanding of topics in international relations.

SHORTCOMINGS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSED RESEARCH:

Ultimately the proposal was diminished because it appears the methodological developments are minor advances beyond published literature. It may be the case that there is more novelty, but the proposal is written in a way that presents far too few details to permit thorough assessment. The panel strongly recommends that the PIs approach both Raftery and Vrugt and either add them as co-PIs or provide evidence that the software development in R will build on the existing package.

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BROADER IMPACTS:

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSED RESEARCH:

Given the stature of Ward and his past success in popularizing methods among political scientists, the panel expected his effort would result in popularizing EBMA in his field. There was limited support for the suggestion that the methods would lead to improved policy and inform practical problems in IR.

SHORTCOMINGS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSED RESEARCH:

The proposal narrowly targets political science and within the discipline primarily international relations. For the MMS program, it is important to have impacts beyond a single discipline. There was a strong sense that the software development would duplicate established software that already exists in R and Matlab.

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DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Check one: ☐ Superior ☒ Adequate ☐ Inadequate

With respect to the data management plan, there are two lines that indicate that the data and software will be contributed to the Dataverse network. This is an existing repository; however, it is not as explicit about

the standards for archiving and curation as other repositories (e.g. ICPSR or CRAN). This is not necessarily a criticism, rather a call for PIs to ensure that there are metadata and digital preservation standards at the repository they intend to use.

The panel suggests that the PI consult http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/SBE_DataMgmtPlanPolicy.pdf for more information on the data management plan.

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SYNTHESIS COMMENTS:

The research team is qualified but the effort ranks low on novelty and is duplicative of existing software in R and Matlab. The dissemination plan is too narrowly focused on political science applications.

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EXPECTED LONG-TERM SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT AS DESCRIBED IN THE PROPOSAL:

4. (Integer score from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating very low and 7 indicating very high)

EXPECTED LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT AS DESCRIBED IN THE PROPOSAL:

7. (Integer score from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating very low and 7 indicating very high)

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PANEL RECOMMENDATION (CHECK ONE):

- ☐ Competitive - High (C-H)
- ☐ Competitive - Medium (C-M)
- ☐ Competitive - Low (C-L)
- ☒ Not Competitive (NC)
- ☐ Not Competitive but encouraged to Revise and Resubmit (NC)

In making this recommendation, members of the MMS Advisory Panel recognized that the MMS Program might well be unable to provide any funding because of budgetary limitations.

This panel summary was read by panelists who participated in the discussion of this proposal, and they concurred that the summary accurately reflects the panel discussion.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics Program

CONTEXT STATEMENT -- FALL 2011 ADVISORY PANEL MEETING

The Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics Advisory Panel met on December 5-6, 2011 to evaluate proposals that were submitted in response to the August 16, 2011 target date. The MMS Advisory Panel considered 87 individual proposals. However, 7 of those proposals were secondary components of collaborative research projects and did not require separate actions by the panel. Of the 80 separate projects, 65 were "regular" research and/or infrastructure proposals, 6 were CAREER proposals, and 9 were Doctoral Dissertation Improvement proposals. A total of 40 projects were jointly reviewed with one or more other NSF programs. The other 40 projects were evaluated solely by MMS.

The MMS Advisory Panel evaluated proposals using the NSF criteria of intellectual merit and broader impacts as articulated in the Grant Proposal Guide (NSF 11-1), which included an evaluation of the required Data Management Plan. The MMS Program uses a combination of independent external reviewers and an advisory panel to evaluate competing proposals. With few exceptions, proposals were evaluated using at least three written reviews; most had five or more written reviews.

All written reviews (from both external reviewers and panelists) were made available to panelists prior to the panel meeting. On the basis of written reviews and extensive discussion during the panel meeting, the MMS Advisory Panel made recommendations regarding NSF support for each proposal. The MMS Advisory Panel judged 32 projects to be of sufficiently high quality and significance to be potentially supported by the MMS Program at this time. The panel placed 9 of these projects in the Competitive - High Category, 13 in the Competitive - Medium Category, and 10 in the Competitive - Low Category. The panel declined to recommend support for 48 projects, placing 45 of these proposals in the Not Competitive Category and 3 in the Not Competitive - R&R Category. Depending on budgetary constraints and on the willingness of other

programs to participate in joint funding of meritorious proposals, the MMS program officer anticipates recommending funding for between 5 and 10 projects.

In addition to making recommendations regarding how competitive proposed activities were for MMS support, the MMS Advisory Panel assigned two numerical scores to each proposal. One score provided a consensus assessment by the panel of the potential long-term significance of the project as specified in the proposal if it was successfully carried out. The other score provided a consensus assessment of the likelihood of the project being successful as outlined in the proposal. Both scores were ranked on 7-point scales, with 7 being the most positive and 1 the least positive. The significance and likelihood scoring was conducted independently from the placement of proposals in funding recommendation categories.

Verbatim copies of all completed reviews and any relevant panel summaries are made available to principal investigators via the FastLane system. Panelists and program officers do not necessarily agree with or endorse all statements by reviewers. Some reviews may contain irrelevant comments, which are not used in making final funding decisions. MMS panel members are asked to reflect on the substance of the written reviews and to draw generalizations that extend beyond the summary ratings alone. The reviews and panel summaries contain evaluative material and constructive suggestions that may be used by the principal investigator in the conduct of future research regardless of whether a proposal was awarded or declined.

Information about formal reconsideration of declined proposals is found in Chapter IV - Non-Award Decisions and Transactions of the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG). PAPPG is available online at the NSF web site .

Declined proposals may be revised and resubmitted for consideration by MMS or another NSF program in accordance with posted target dates or deadlines. In preparing a resubmission, consider the reviews and panel summaries carefully. Please note that resubmissions are treated as new proposals; however, reviewers who evaluated the initial proposal may be asked to provide comments on the resubmission.

If you would like additional information, please contact:

Dr. Cheryl L. Eavey
Program Director, MMS
e-mail: ceavey@nsf.gov
voice: 703.292.7269

Panel Recommendation: Not Competitive

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National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22230, USA
Tel: 703-292-5111, FIRS: 800-877-8339 | TDD: 703-292-5090

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