



Instructions for Recommended Reviewer Grid

General Guidelines

- Do **not** contact anyone named on this list regarding their potential participation in this evaluation process.
- Do **not** alter the format of this spreadsheet in any way as the Excel document will not upload into our database properly if there are missing columns or blank rows between names. Altering the spreadsheet will result in delays.
- All individuals listed must have active academic appointments and may not hold emerita/emeritus appointments at their current/primary institution.
- Include only the Academic Title (e.g., Professor of Surgery), excluding administrative titles (e.g., Department Head, Division Chief, Program Director) due to character limits.
- Be mindful of the number of individuals from any single institution who are listed as comparands, external evaluators, and/or external ad hoc members (we prefer using only one individual per institution).
- Include individuals who represent a range of opinions within the field. Rarely, ad hoc committees may request the solicitation of additional letters if a critical subset of leaders in the field was not included.
- List a maximum of 3 individuals in the "Faculty not to use" column. Provide a brief comment explaining the rationale for exclusion; we will keep this information confidential. Please note that we may not be able to honor requests to exclude individuals if they are submitted in the latter stages of the evaluation process.
- The Dean's office will review this list, consult with one or more leaders in the field, and add or remove names based on additional recommendations.

Professorial Candidates

Everyone listed should be a full Professor or equivalent (e.g., NIH Senior Investigator) and a thought leader in their field. Providing more than the minimum number of individuals is helpful in reducing the number of rounds of review.

- **Comparands:** At least 5 names
- **External letter writers:** At least 14 names, including 2-4 international faculty
- **Internal letter writers:** At least 8 names
- **Ad hoc committee members:** At least 5 external names and at least 4 internal names

Professor of Clinical X Candidates

Up to half of the letters may be from faculty members who hold a Professor of Clinical X appointment or an academic title with analogous standards. The remainder of the nominees should be full Professors or equivalent (e.g., Senior Investigator at the NIH) and leaders in their field.

- **Comparands:** At least 5 names
- **External letter writers:** At least 14 names, including 2-4 international faculty
- **Internal letter writers:** At least 8 names

Definitions

Impartial (“arms’ length”) evaluator: An individual outside of Harvard without a close personal or professional relationship that could compromise objectivity in assessing the candidate’s work. For example:

An evaluator is NOT considered impartial if:

- They or the candidate were a major author on a shared publication
- Were co-middle authors with the candidate on a publication within the past 10 years
- Collaborated with the candidate on grants, projects, or other efforts within the last 10 years
- Had direct, regular interactions with the candidate on committees, boards, or working groups
- Trained together with the candidate in the same program, department, or lab
- Are current or former colleagues in the same unit
- Had a sustained mentoring relationship with the candidate (as mentor or mentee)

An evaluator may be considered impartial if:

- They had professional interactions with the candidate at conferences or courses without ongoing collaboration or mentorship
- They hosted/invited the candidate for a speaking engagement without other close interactions

Comparand: External letter writers are asked to compare the candidate with 3-4 individuals outside of the Harvard system who are thought leaders in their field. The comparands should be full professors and ideally at similar career stages and engaged in similar activities, along with a similar distribution of effort in clinical/teaching/research domains, as the candidate. The objective of the comparand exercise is not to demonstrate that the candidate exceeds the qualifications of all the comparands, but to gauge a candidate’s current impact and better understand their future trajectory.

External letter writers: External is defined as outside of any Harvard school. At least 50% of evaluators in relevant fields should be impartial, emphasizing institutions within the United States; 2-4 international names are also recommended; minimize duplication of institutions.

Internal letter writers: Internal is defined as an individual appointed at any Harvard school. Should represent multiple institutions (e.g., HMS quad, HSDM, HMS affiliates). At least 50% should be impartial, as defined above. The candidate and letter writer may be from the same HMS-wide department as long as they do not have the same appointing department head (including secondary departments). Avoid Part-Time, Professor in Residence, Professor of the Practice, or Emeritus faculty.

Ad hoc committee members: Must meet the definition of impartial and should represent a variety of institutions. Internal members may NOT be from the same HMS-wide department(s) or institution. International members are not recommended due to scheduling challenges, leading to possible delays.

Updated February 2026

Managed by the Office for Faculty Affairs

Harvard Medical School | Gordon Hall, Suite 206 | 25 Shattuck Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02115