

2011 Annual Merit Review Survey Questionnaire Results

The 2011 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Program and Vehicle Technologies Program Merit Review and Peer Evaluation Meeting was held May 9–13, 2011, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott and Crystal City Marriott hotels. A plenary session was held on Monday afternoon, and oral presentations were held in nine parallel sessions all day Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and a half day on Friday. There were 285 Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Program presentations—with 207 presented orally and 78 presented in poster sessions. Meeting attendance was 1,774. This report documents results from a survey questionnaire given to all participants.

For the first five questions (see Section 1 below), results are shown for all survey respondents. For the remaining survey questions, results are shown separately for the different types of meeting attendees, as follows:

- Section 2: Survey responses are from those who identified themselves as a meeting attendee (neither a project reviewer nor a presenter).
- Section 3: Survey responses are from those who identified themselves as a reviewer.
- Section 4: Survey responses are from those who identified themselves as a presenter.

Individuals who served as both a reviewer and a presenter were given the option of responding to the survey twice: once as a reviewer and once as a presenter.

1. All Respondents

1.1. What is your affiliation?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Government agency directly sponsoring the program under review	7	2.5%
National/government laboratory, private sector, or university researcher whose project is under review	77	27.5%
Non-government institution that received funding from the program(s) under review	87	31.0%
Non-government institution that does not receive funding from the program(s) under review	45	16.0%
Government agency with interest in the work	8	2.8%
National/government laboratory, private sector, or university researcher not being reviewed	29	10.3%
Other	19	6.7%
No Response	8	2.8%
Total	280	100%

“Other” Responses

- Industry consultant or government consultant
- Small business
- Industry association technical director and professional engineer
- Privately funded research and development (R&D)
- University researcher serving as a reviewer
- Retired from government
- National Research Council U.S. DRIVE Partnership review committee
- Automotive industry
- Industry trade association
- Private industry not funded by DOE
- University

- Private company
- Government institution that received funding from the program(s) under review
- Venture capital
- Japanese institution

1.2. Purpose and scope of the Annual Merit Review were well defined by the Joint Plenary Session (answer only if you attended the Joint Plenary on Monday).

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
4	1	16	74	51
3%	1%	11%	51%	35%

18 Comment(s)

- To keep the number of slides manageable, presenters could leave some details for the later sessions.
- The organizers should include plenary session presentations on the CD.
- While this is difficult given the government’s present financial situation, it would be helpful to have more discussion about funding opportunities and review the progress made toward DOE targets.
- The organizers should hold plenary speakers to the same time standard that they hold project presenters to.
- This was the nicest and best organized meeting.
- These meetings satisfy the needs of DOE leadership to hold a comprehensive review and ensure that everyone is on the same page. They are not for the benefit of the researchers, except to get continued funding.
- The Joint Plenary Session provided a good general overview; however, the final speaker was not so helpful and went over time.
- The Joint Plenary Session was very good.
- The scope was large enough to give an overview of the program, and precise enough to give valuable information.
- The presentation on basic science was less pertinent.
- Although it was meant to be lighter and more entertaining, one speaker did not hold my attention and was not necessary for the Annual Merit Review (AMR). Also, the , the Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Program Manager talked too long. Someone needs to cut off the plenary speakers when their time is up.
- One session chair (SCS) said the reviewers are supposed to be anonymous, but no one else did, and the reviewers were obvious because they sat at the computers.
- The vision and future direction were not given.
- The DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy’s Deputy Assistant Secretary for Renewable Energy was certainly clear.
- The session needs to stay on schedule.
- This was a good overview and was well presented.
- This session provided a good overview of the programs active within DOE, but it did not specifically provide direction on the purpose and scope of the review itself. Time management of the presentations was not handled well. One presentation contained too much detailed information and went well over the allotted time.
- The presentations were excellent.

1.3. The two plenary sessions after the Joint Plenary Session were helpful to understanding the direction of the Hydrogen and Fuel Cells and Vehicle Technologies Programs (answer only if you attended either the Hydrogen and Fuel Cells or Vehicle Technologies plenary sessions on Monday).

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
3	1	15	76	44
2%	1%	11%	55%	32%

11 Comment(s)

- The uncertainties associated with the direction and funding for the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Program created more questions than answers as a result of the plenary session.
- Some of the information is repeated from the previous session.
- There was a lot of overlap between the Joint and Individual Plenary Sessions, which is a waste of time.
- While this is difficult given the government’s present financial situation, it would be helpful to have more discussion about funding opportunities and review the progress made toward DOE targets.
- These were just after the first session and had a 10,000 foot (or more) view. The details were lost in the push for time.
- This was the really relevant part. It is a shame that the 2011 funding was not discussed at all.
- This was a good effort compared to last year.
- It would be helpful to hear them both. Maybe DOE could start at 1:00 PM and do them in series.
- The vision and future direction were not given.
- The session would have been even more helpful to someone who was not so well acquainted with the Program.
- These sessions were very informative. This session was well organized and well managed.

1.4. Sub-program overviews were helpful to understanding the research objectives. (Answer only if you attended one or more sub-program overviews.)

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
5	1	22	100	74
2%	0%	11%	50%	37%

14 Comment(s)

- The sub-program overviews could have been somewhat better and more complete.
- The sub-program overviews were somewhat repetitive with the plenary. They were useful for those who skipped the Monday afternoon session.
- In a general sense, yes, the sub-program overviews were helpful. What is missing is the time for researchers to mingle and talk about their thoughts and private opinions that never see light in the current review sessions. Everyone scatters after the sessions for dinner and shows up the next morning just in time for breakfast before the meeting starts.
- The sub-program overviews were excellent!
- There were many sub-program overviews that each took 1/2 hour. It would be better to listen to the research presentation and skip the overview, if the overview only talks about the highlights of the individual program research.
- The content was very similar to the information shared in one of the two plenary sub-sessions.
- The vision and future direction were not provided.

- These sessions are helpful to those who did not attend the plenary. I did attend the plenary so they were of no further value to me; however, not everyone will attend the first day.
- It helps to hear DOE’s perspective on the Program’s specific research objective.
- This was an excellent overview of the Hydrogen Storage sub-program. The “snapshot” of the technical status and progress toward meeting goals was useful.
- The quality of the slides was disappointing. The slides need to communicate, which means they must be legible. Too many were impossible to read, even from the first row.
- As a reviewer, these helped place things in an appropriate perspective.
- The presentations seem to be redundant to the plenary sessions.

1.5. What was your role in the Annual Merit Review? Check the most appropriate response. If you are both a presenter and a reviewer and want to comment as both, complete the evaluation twice, once as each.

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Attendee, neither Reviewer nor Presenter	111	40%
Presenter of a project	114	41%
Peer Reviewer	48	17%
No Response	7	2%
Total	280	100%

2. Responses from “Attendee, neither Reviewer nor Presenter”

2.1. The quality, breadth, and depth of the following were sufficient to contribute to a comprehensive review:

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Presentations	2	1	10	58	34
	2%	1%	10%	55%	32%
Question and answer periods	4	4	16	51	29
	4%	4%	15%	49%	28%
Answers provided to programmatic questions	2	4	26	55	16
	2%	4%	25%	53%	16%
Answers provided to technical questions	3	4	15	65	17
	3%	4%	14%	63%	16%

14 Comment(s)

- It would be helpful if more scientific data and technology details were presented.
- These were true summaries and not sufficient to do a complete review.
- The questions and answers were highly variable in terms of the quality of questions and the number of questions. This seemed to be driven by the reviewers’ interest in the presentation.
- Most of the time, the volume was too low and many of the speakers did a very poor job in their presentations.
- Some presentations contained very good technical content while others glossed over the details.
- Some presentations were not that clear, but overall they were good.
- Adding page numbers to each slide will speed up the questions and answers.
- There were too few questions. The reviewers got exhausted. In future meetings, the reviewers should be rotated so that no one has to review so many presentations.

- It is astounding that the incredible progress that has been achieved by the Program is completely invalidated by the rhetoric and policies coming out of the highest levels of DOE.
- The presentations are short on technical results due to length. Key findings from the research should be included for novel information.
- Presentation templates should be modified for projects that do not fit the traditional R&D mold so that more valuable information may be gleaned.
- Some presentations were too long and did not leave much time for questions. Some presenters’ answers were not in-depth or did not address the questions being asked.
- The reviewers were not adequate to review the projects in the sessions attended by this reviewer. They did not seem to have the capability and experience to review the projects. Many of them did not ask any questions. Many reviewers are not experts in the areas they are reviewing. It is not clear who selects the reviewers, how they are selected, and what criteria are used in the selection. .
- At some presentations, there was insufficient time for questions from non-reviewers.

2.2. Enough time was allocated for presentations.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
2	3	7	59	32
2%	3%	7%	57%	31%

9 Comment(s)

- Some presentations “got off course,” covering items that were not part of the review. Many were well organized and clearly presented. Only a few were well focused, clearly presented, and completed their message in the allotted time.
- The time was appropriate, but there was not always enough time for questions.
- It was a bit short, especially in the case of combined project reviews.
- Many presentations ran too long and contained too many slides. Some presentations had 30 slides for a 20-minute talk, resulting in a lot of presenters rushing through the last few slides or skipping slides entirely. Organizers need to do a better job of policing presentation length. They have been doing it for years, so they should have a good idea of the maximum number of pages allowed.
- There was not enough time, but it is difficult to fit everything in as it is.
- Several presentations were condensed into a 30-minute segment, which did not permit adequate time for individual project reviews.
- The sessions moderated by the Education Lead were good because she stood up when there was one minute left, thus regulating the time nicely.
- The presentations went over time because not enough time had been allocated to get all of the facts presented.
- The session chair was too concerned with precise time constraints.

2.3. The questions asked by reviewers were sufficiently rigorous and detailed.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
3	9	16	51	24
3%	9%	16%	50%	23%

11 Comment(s)

- A number of reviewers were not even present after the first day and a half.
- For the fuel cell reviews, it was clear that only one or two reviewers were well informed on the review topics and able to ask good, insightful questions.
- It depended on whether or not the reviewer was interested in the topic.
- The reviewers’ questions depended on the presenter. Some received few or no questions; others got a lot of questions. It was not clear how well the reviewers’ expertise matched that of the presenter.
- For the most part, the questions asked by reviewers were sufficiently rigorous and detailed.
- In many cases, the questions asked by reviewers were not at all sufficiently rigorous or detailed.
- Reviewers did not ask questions for about half of the presentations.
- Overall, the questions, discussions, and responses were satisfactory.
- The reviewers in the session I attended were not adequate to review the projects. They did not have the capability and experience to review the projects. Many of them did not ask any questions. Many reviewers are not experts in those areas.
- Some of the reviewers did not seem to understand the subject well enough to be competent reviewers.
- Usually the questions asked by reviewers were sufficiently rigorous and detailed, but not always.

2.4. The frequency (once per year) of this formal review process for this Program is:

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
About right	100	35.7%
Too frequent	4	1.4%
Not frequent enough	1	<1%
No opinion	0	0
No Response	175	62.5%
Total	280	100%

4 Comment(s)

- It may be useful to divide the programmatic reviews from the technical presentations.
- Separating the raw research and fields such as hydrogen production, infrastructure, and perhaps consumer products and benefits could markedly improve the overall program.
- The interval seemed appropriate for the majority of the projects. There were a couple of instances where either the presenter did a poor job, or the project was truly off target. In those cases, waiting a full year seems too long.
- Every other year for this formal review process seems to be sufficient.

2.5. Logistics, facilities, and amenities were satisfactory.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
2	5	4	42	53
2%	5%	4%	40%	50%

24 Comment(s)

- The hotel services were very efficient and the location was convenient.
- There were too many service staff.
- It was very congested during breaks. The organizers should consider offsetting breaks or finding a larger venue.
- The two buildings were far apart, but acceptable. It was good exercise walking.
- This was a nice job, as usual.
- The facilities were very good. The hotel was priced consistently, but it was very expensive.
- The only issue with logistics is that there is not enough room in the break area outside of the presentation hall.
- Having the presentations separated by the two hotels made it difficult to move between sessions. The setup during 2010 was better.
- The Hydrogen Production and Delivery sub-program was split into two halves that were two days apart. This led to partial attendance for each half. It would be much better to schedule them together.
- Some confusion on locations due to presentations being held at two Marriotts. This commenter preferred the previous Marriott location that was closer to the zoo.
- The break room in Marriott Gateway was too close to the session rooms, so it was sometimes very noisy.
- The food was *delicious!*
- Putting the meetings in hotels near the Metro and an airport was excellent! It was difficult connecting to the Web. They charged for WiFi connections. In the future, give all attendees a pass code. While availability of seating was adequate, the arrangement of the chairs was too confining. It was hard to get into chairs once the ends of the rows were taken!
- The food was excellent at lunch and the poster sessions. It would have been nice to have had free internet access inside the conference rooms.
- Being located on a Metro stop helped the commute.
- The hotel should cut the lunch portions in half. They were too big.
- There was not enough time to run between Crystal City and Crystal Gateway Marriott.
- Everything was excellent.
- The meeting room temperature was somewhat cold.
- They were fine, but last year's Marriott Wardman was much more convenient. It was easier to get to, easier to walk around, and easier to find your way. It takes so long to go between the two hotels at Crystal City that it can be hard to get to different sessions on time.
- It is difficult to split time between two locations (hotels) for concurrent sessions.
- Having to bounce between the two hotels without travel time in the schedule was difficult. People ended up missing the questions and answers of one presentation in one hotel and the first few minutes of the next presentation in the other hotel because the walk took ~10 minutes from room to room.
- This was a great venue!
- The facilities and organization were excellent. Well done!

2.6. The visual quality of the presentations was adequate. I was able to see all of the presentations I attended.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
1	8	8	46	42
1%	8%	8%	44%	40%

15 Comment(s)

- In the smaller conference rooms, it would be better if the screens were raised, as seating is closer and often blocked by heads.
- This was not true in the back. All presentations should have page numbers.
- It would be better to have two screens in each hall, especially the big ones.
- The screens were too small. In some presentations, larger screens are used. It is often very difficult to read some graphs or charts past the fifth row. Another way to deal with this is to encourage presenters to use the same fonts (e.g., no less than...).
- Because of the limit on the number of slides, many presenters resorted to font sizes that could not be read.
- PowerPoints needed to be viewed from the front of the room.
- The screen in the Electrochemical Storage session should have been larger, or presenters should have used larger print.
- It was difficult to see from the back of the room, but it was fine from mid-room forward.
- With the view screen in the corner of the room, the angle of viewing when seated on the opposite side was awkward. The organizers should consider placing rows on that side at an angle for better “straight on” viewing. (This would be especially uncomfortable for the reviewers who are seated very near the front.)
- A couple of the projectors were not precisely focused. It was not possible to read some of the smallest letters on the slide.
- Viewing was mostly fine, but in the back of the room it is really impossible to read the data on the graphs.
- Fonts used by some presenters were too small to see, even when seated in the front half of the room.
- This depended on the session; some were over-crowded and the only seats left were on the periphery where the sight lines were not adequate.
- The projection screens should be higher. The information at the bottom of the screen was hidden by heads.
- The majority of the presentations were excellent; some had way too much information.

2.7. The audio quality of the presentations was adequate. I was able to hear all the presentations I attended.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
1	3	4	47	50
1%	3%	4%	45%	48%

9 Comment(s)

- Our video did not have sufficient sound quality and volume.
- The hotel personnel carrying microphones during the question and answer sessions could be more energetic and sensitive to blocking the screen prior to the completion of the presentations.
- This was well done, thanks to the technicians present in the rooms.
- Many presentations had low volume, and voices most of the time had far too much bass. This was not very well done.

- The sound quality of the audio systems was muddy. Often there were weird noises and conversations coming from elsewhere.
- Hearing was possible when sitting in the first or second row. Some of the microphones failed, even after their batteries were replaced.
- The audio visual technician in our room was very helpful.
- Some presenters spoke too fast.
- It depended on the skill of the presenter and the audiovisual person.

2.8. The meeting hotel accommodations (sleeping rooms) were satisfactory.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	0	11	35	38
0%	0%	13%	42%	45%

4 Comment(s)

- The stay at the nearby Hampton Inn was just fine.
- The hotel is very, very accommodating, but too expensive.
- There were some issues with the hotel service (referring to Marriott).
- The hotel room and meeting areas need Internet service at no cost to the participants.

2.9. The information about the Review and the hotel accommodations sent to me prior to the Review was adequate.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
2	1	2	47	50
2%	1%	2%	46%	49%

1 Comment(s)

- This was well done.

2.10. What was the most useful part of the review process?

67 Response(s)

- It was interesting to learn about the technical progress and get a good review of it. [5 respondents]
- The presentations were the most useful. [14 respondents]
- Receiving the CD of the program. [2 respondents]
- The program overviews.
- The question and answer sessions. [3 respondents]
- Getting first-hand updates on the technical programs and being able to meet and discuss with the researchers and other meeting participants. This review allows the necessary interaction with the researchers and all those involved in the industry and associated organizations. [15 respondents]
- As an attendee, the poster sessions provided a more intimate setting for discussing program achievements and getting real feedback from investigators. Although the talks were generally well prepared, speaking with the investigators was quite useful. [7 respondents]
- The batteries section was outstanding.
- Its depth.

- Acquiring information in areas of interest.
- Receiving a good understanding of the state of energy research thrusts by the government.
- Good questions from the reviewers.
- The plenary sessions. [4 respondents]
- Meeting others.
- Talking with government program managers and listening to department objectives. [5 respondents]
- Hearing the outcome of funded programs and what winning programs included.
- Finding out what the most advanced topics supported by DOE are, which is crucial to future proposals in energy.
- Getting research feedback from reviewers and learning about other funded projects.
- Individual discussions with researchers after their presentations or during the break periods.
- From an educator’s perspective, connections made will help our school use some of the curriculum developed.
- Following the progress and the funding trail was a very useful part of the review because it showed the high degree of synergy between program management and the overall scientific and technical perspective of the program.
- The main takeaways were a sense of where the field is going, where the roadblocks are, what DOE wants, and who is getting into what fields. The opportunity to see the full spectrum of DOE-supported work in my hydrogen production.
- Coffee breaks.
- Allowing a non-reviewer to ask questions.
- The most useful part of the review process was not obvious. Putting everything together may be a good idea.
- Questions from reviewers.
- How it was structured. It was very practical to choose the most interesting session. The 20-minute presentations followed by questions from reviewers were most useful to have a whole picture of the work being done on funded projects.
- The overview of the DOE Vehicle Technologies Program goals.
- Learning about the incredible progress that has been achieved by the DOE Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Program.
- The lunch and the poster presentation, as it sparked discussion with other attendees. During the breaks, the discussions were more between people who knew each other.
- Networking and seeing the breadth of DOE projects for a better understanding of strategic approach.
- Electrochemical storage.
- The first day’s presentation held on May 9, 2011, was very helpful in regards to laying out the success and challenges of the Program during the past year. The information presented laid the foundation for the other sessions.
- Discussions that led, in some instances, to invitations for visits or collaborations in areas of common interest.
- Overall, the review meeting was excellent.

2.11. What could have been done better?

54 Response(s)

- It would have been useful to have the program area or areas on the schedule of the oral presentations listed at the top of the column with the salon number for each of the sessions.
- Not much could have been done better.
- There could have been more emphasis on science and technical discussions in the presentations.
- Breaks could have been done better.
- The hotel was too expensive and there were not enough rooms.
- To present the “big picture,” select a “disruptive change” technology or development item that has only been presented in incremental merit reviews over the past years, such as 3M’s catalyst support development and its potential to make a significant difference in fuel cell performance and durability.
- The hotel was too expensive.
- A better description of the projects in the schedule, more like a scientific abstract, would have been helpful.
- It would have been better to keep talks limited to 20 minutes.
- The visuals could have been better.

- The width of information could have been better. The R&D, infrastructure, etc., are not the only things happening. Some of the presentations, such as the carbon fiber presentations, were totally off track.
- A complete lack of consumer benefits, usable products, etc., was very obvious.
- In general, the industry presentations lacked sufficient detail to determine the real value and approach to their projects.
- There needs to be more power strip availability for laptops for non-reviewers, as well as WiFi.
- On a few presentations, the text was hard to read from the back of the room.
- It would be helpful to explain the role of reviewers in determining projects or project planning.
- Sub-presentations could have been presented in a more meaningful grouping. They were presented with no inter-relationships. It would be more fun to hear related projects together.
- This provided an excellent review of current work in the field.
- It would have been useful to have a list of registered attendees in addition to the published presenters list.
- It would have been better to have been able to see more presentations (for example, Storage and Production overlapped), but it is very complicated to arrange the schedule so that it fits within five days.
- Seating could have been arranged to allow better access to available seats. Another suggestion is to make WiFi readily available to everyone.
- It may be useful for the review to group the research presentations according to topic, so if a few researchers were working on similar topics, their presentations could be combined, or at least similarities and differences could be pointed out.
- One suggestion is to decrease the number of projects to be reviewed or increase the session time to permit time for the effective review of all projects.
- There could be more room around posters.
- Some of the reviewers' questions were not polite in front of an audience.
- There should be fewer parallel sessions.
- Like all events, even with good planning, there will still be unforeseen events. I think this year was fantastic.
- Some of the sessions had very few reviewers present.
- Poster sessions allow participants to directly contact the different research groups. Therefore, posters should be done by each project under review.
- It would be useful to see a roadmap of where BATT and ABR want to go, and to see an updated roadmap (red/yellow/green) each year.
- The thermoelectric talks were in another hotel and I could not see them due to distance on Friday. I would like to know if they could be moved to the same hotel.
- There should have been bigger plates of food at the poster sessions, especially for the type of food offered.
- One suggestion is to allow more time for people to run between Crystal City and Crystal Gateway.
- The program managers should have an open mind to some out-of-the box solutions. For example, there is a wonderful technology (see Energy Environ Sci. 2009; 2:272-82) that cannot get any money from DOE. However, a big European oil company plans to bet on it.
- The time to ask questions needs to be extended and the time for presentations needs to be reduced.
- There needs to be more control of presentation time in some of the sessions.
- The hotel could be less expensive.
- The AMR should go back to the Woodley Park location!
- The program was well organized and thought-out.
- Internet access should be free for all participants, enabling easy communication and interaction among team members and reviewers.
- Participants other than reviewers should be given more opportunities to ask questions and provide their comments.
- One suggestion is to have all presentations in the same hotel.
- The program surpassed all expectations.
- The poster presentation needs improvement.
- Speaking speed control would be beneficial.
- Better control of presentation time would allow plenty of time for questions and answers.
- Some overall, policy-level discussions should take place.
- All funds were coming from taxes people paid. Some projects were not necessary for funding.

- Not much could have been done better. This was a great conference!
- Nothing much could have been done better.
- Nothing immediately comes to mind.
- It would be beneficial to have better reviewers and critical questions on the value of the programs.
- If we can obtain presentation information five days earlier, at least, it could be more helpful to understand details for non-natives.
- Here are some minor points: (1) print name/affiliation on both sides of badge and (2) print the affiliation in a larger font size.

2.12. Overall, how satisfied are you with the review process?

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
1	1	7	50	45
1%	1%	7%	48%	43%

5 Comment(s)

- From a non-governmental observer’s perspective, this process could be applied to more programs and private sector programs. The basic peer-review approach is sound (although it probably could be more rigorous, as it probably is in the private sector).
- The review provided an opportunity to meet many people. This provided very good networking.
- The United States will lose the race in renewable energy, if the DOE is “running in the wrong directions.”
- The review process is good, but DOE has to better evaluate the value and rewards from the funding. All of the research was paid by taxes, and the projects should pay back to the public. Many of the projects seemed to focus on just producing a report.

2.13. Would you recommend this review process to others, and should it be applied to other DOE programs?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes	97	34.6%
No	5	1.7%
No Response	178	63.5%
Total	280	100%

6 Comment(s)

- This was a very useful and effective event.
- It is important that all attendees are able to get in contact with the research groups.
- The poster sessions work best for that purpose.
- I would recommend this review process if more focus is brought to bear. I wonder how each talk fits in with the overall Program goals.
- This public process is highly valuable, not only for DOE to check the progress of the funded projects, but also for the entire community in order to understand the evolution of research and the state-of-the-art of the topics covered.
- Most of the DOE funds seem to go to government research laboratories and to co-work with universities. Some of the funds go to other countries’ national laboratories and universities, even though the funds are coming from people’s taxes. All project results are open to all countries and all companies who are our competitors. Industries in the United States are finding it difficult to compete with their competitors in other nations because we have to pay higher taxes for DOE, and we do not have funds for the projects from DOE.

2.14. Please provide comments and recommendations on the overall review process.

29 Response(s)

- This was well done and very well organized.
- This was an excellent job!
- This review met my expectations.
- The poster presentations need more space between presenters (or wider aisles). It would be helpful if a “minimum” type size is used (required) so that the charts can be read easily.
- It is not possible to comment because I am not privy to the reviewers’ comments.
- Energy advancement will require development and integration across a “thousand” different pathways. Hence, it is important to promote awareness across different research areas and facilitate networking among the researchers.
- Overall, this was very well done.
- It was my first time attending since I was a PhD student in 1999. It would be helpful to provide travel allowance to graduate students and post-docs.
- The reviewer process seems quite rigorous.
- It was a great show. I went there to learn and the amount of information was great.
- This represents a very excellent program and process. After many years, this review is the best in the world!
- This was very good.
- I enjoyed it. It was a very pleasant, nonthreatening atmosphere.
- Most academic researchers are blind to the real world. They are sensitive to their interests so that they reject any revolutionary ideas that may hurt their interests. This is why sometimes developing countries can have advantages.
- This provided a very good review of the programs. The Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Program and Vehicle Technologies Program can be separated.
- This was very good.
- Overall, this was a very useful and interesting event.
- One suggestion is to present the facts on fuel cell and hydrogen programs to Congress and the White House. More than \$12 billion of industry and government funding has been invested. With a modest investment and embracing fuel cells and hydrogen as the critical components of the clean energy portfolio that they are, we could sustain our lead and not have to spend billions of dollars to recapture our lead later.
- This was very informational and useful.
- It was well organized.
- This was excellent!
- The reviewers asked interesting questions about the presentations.
- Unfortunately, there seems to be a lot of “same-old, same-old” taking place without a lot of substantial progress. There should be a way of highlighting what DOE thinks is the most significant progress rather than just a total review.
- Competitor companies in other countries can get all of the project results without paying for anything. DOE-funded projects make it difficult for U.S. companies to compete with competitor companies in other countries, and also make U.S. government research laboratories our competitors. I would appreciate if DOE considered U.S. industries.
- The review is very good for both technical and programmatic areas.
- The review process was fine. There was sufficient technical depth to get a feel for each program, but insufficient depth to really understand the problems and challenges for each program. Maybe those challenges come out in another fashion, but it would be difficult to spot a program that is failing.
- As a first-time attendee, overall it was a stimulating environment mentally and challenging for a group on the path to self-establishment. The process ran like a well oiled machine.
- Overall, the AMR was excellent.
- The review meeting provides a wonderful opportunity to meet people with similar research interests and to pursue possible collaborations.

3. Responses from Reviewers

3.1. Information about the program(s)/project(s) under review was provided sufficiently prior to the review session.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
1	5	0	15	21
2%	12%	0%	36%	50%

14 Comment(s)

- I did not receive the presentation packages until I arrived the day of the review.
- I got a CD of the talks, which was very helpful.
- Yes, the information and registration were seamless. The program was sent in a timely fashion to allow for scheduling room reservations and length of stay.
- I was notified late (two working days prior) that I would be needed as a reviewer. I did not have a chance to review projects prior to the review.
- I was a poster reviewer and having the presentations ahead of time was very useful for familiarizing myself with the project in order to efficiently review five projects in the two-hour session.
- I got my review assignments just three days before the event.
- Access to both the 2011 and previous (2010) presentations was helpful.
- A good number of the presentations for my reviews were the 2010 version. Obviously, presenters did not get their assignments done on time.
- It was good to be able to see presentation materials prior to the review session through PeerNet. Please continue it.
- Last year's and this year's presentations, plus a few reviewer slides, were provided. Without a full background in the area, any review would be inadequate. However, because the presentation could not reveal any commercial secrets, not much more could be done.
- I did not receive any information about the projects under review until I was at the meeting.
- There is a lot of information in the presentations. The review process would benefit from a greater opportunity to look at the slides.
- Information (including presentations) was provided well in advance, permitting reviewers to do a pre-read and prepare their questions.

3.2. Review instructions were provided in a timely manner.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	4	1	11	27
0%	9%	2%	26%	63%

8 Comment(s)

- The software used for the review training webinar was blocked by my laboratory's firewall.
- I sat through the webinar but did not find it to be especially helpful.
- Yes, the training sessions were useful. The staff was knowledgeable and helped me with a password problem.
- I was notified late (two working days prior) that I would be needed as a reviewer. I did not have a chance to review the projects prior to the review.
- I got my review assignments just three days before the event.

- The Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) staff was very helpful. The ORISE review training webinar was useful.
- I obtained the instructions from the questions on the review forms after arriving at the meeting.
- Again, there was plenty of time to review instructions. They were clear and to the point. The instructional session for reviewers was somewhat helpful, although if one had previously been a reviewer, these sessions were probably not necessary.

3.3. The information provided in the presentations was adequate for a meaningful review of the projects.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	4	6	26	7
0%	9%	14%	60%	16%

20 Comment(s)

- One of the projects did not follow the designated format, which made the review more challenging.
- The slides were good, but insufficient time was allowed for discussion and questions. In many cases there was not time to address important questions.
- All of the presenters should be encouraged to include supplemental slides with more details, particularly if they are presenting on behalf of a large, multitask/multi-investigator activity.
- There was a desire to dump everything in 20 minutes, which made for very crowded slides and a rushed presentation. For the projects winding up in 2011, there was a desire to present the whole project, often presenting last year’s review as well. This made everything more crowded and longer than it should have been.
- This varied case by case.
- Most of the presentations were very detailed. A few lacked specific information about the progress to date (in both cases they were delayed and were just beginning).
- The reviewers do not have a chance. In only 20 minutes of presentation time with five major items to cover, you can hide even fairly large flaws in a program. Likewise, really good programs cannot possibly hit everything they accomplished in that time. But on the other hand, if they were given 40 minutes to present, it would take two weeks and no one can give that much time. It’s a problem.
- Reviewers are asked to give an opinion on the budget. It would be good to have more quantitative information on the work that was done.
- Very few presenters actually discussed technical hurdles or obstacles and risk mitigation strategies. Without that information, it is difficult to fully assess the relevance and impact of the future work.
- The best projects and presenters provided meaningful materials for review. Projects with technical or other challenges were less complete, which was typically reflected in lower ratings.
- I reviewed PD-007, PD-008, PD-009, PD-011, and PD-086. Nearly all of these presentations were too secretive about membrane compositions. Because a fundamentally important technical issue is membrane durability and cost, hiding the composition is a serious restriction to conducting a meaningful review. Even worse, PD-009 would not even identify two of its important collaborators! This is unacceptable for programs funded with public money.
- For some programs, the time was adequate to cover progress; however, 20 minutes was inadequate for programs with a broader set of objectives.
- I generally agree. The time is very short, especially for the major programs, but it is hard to see how you could increase it much, given the number of reviews to be done.
- Some presentations were more than 20 minutes and did not have enough question-and-answer time. The presenters should finish their presentations in the allotted time.
- The information was sometimes not very “deep” and often seemed overly optimistic; they were more of a “sales pitch” than a technical review. Often, the presenters indicated that the information they were presenting was not up-to-date because the presentations had to be submitted so far in advance.
- Management should see if the lead time for submission can be reduced so the information presented is up to date.

- It depended on whether the presenter was from a company or a nonprofit institution. One project I reviewed was from a company and was not informative. I could deduce part of what was happening and could make an evaluation. I do not know how good it was.
- Evaluating projects in this format is new to me and it has taken a bit of adjustment to be comfortable with it. The difficulty arises because a lot of data and linking logic is omitted in favor of presenting conclusions that align with stated goals. For this reason, the assessments have an uncomfortably wide band of uncertainty.
- If anything, there was too much information.
- Most of the presentations were well organized and followed the outline used by reviewers to critique the presentations. There were a few PowerPoint presentations that were difficult to understand and required clarification from the speakers.

3.4. The evaluation criteria upon which the review was organized (see below) were clearly defined.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Relevance	0	2	5	17	20
	0%	5%	11%	39%	45%
Approach	0	0	1	22	21
	0%	0%	2%	50%	48%
Accomplishments & Progress	0	1	2	18	23
	0%	2%	5%	41%	52%
Collaboration & Coordination	0	1	3	24	16
	0%	2%	7%	55%	36%
Proposed Future Work	0	2	3	22	17
	0%	5%	7%	50%	39%

8 Comment(s)

- Important questions were asked; but after someone asked one, he was done. We need more discussion time.
- In research, it is seen as unnecessarily harsh to judge progress against objectives, which reviewers do not consider with the weighting provided. For national laboratory projects, this is irrelevant, as these projects will continue to be funded regardless of the reviews. This makes non-national laboratory PIs a little bitter.
- It would be good to have the definitions of high performance and low performance in the review form.
- For projects that are ongoing, comments about “Relevance” are not needed (that should have been answered in year one). Also, for projects that are ending, a description of “Proposed Future Work” is not applicable.
- “Relevance” seems pro-forma. If the work was not that, then the project would not have been funded. So, that concept, “focused on current issues,” probably needs to be rethought.
- DOE did not include “Resource” in its list and did not give it any weight in the evaluation. Therefore, it is unclear why it is included in the reviewer’s questionnaire. It is very often difficult to gauge from the limited financial information provided.
- The question of “Relevance” was difficult to answer directly, as the objectives of the photochemical and photobiological solar-to-hydrogen programs are not themselves well constrained in the *Multi-Year Research, Development, and Demonstration Plan*. Perhaps this ambiguity is valuable in itself while the biological hydrogen production work is seeking its own direction. If so, the researchers should have developed a relevance argument. For proposed directions, not all presentations included clear statements of future directions.
- The one criterion that is not particularly helpful is the question on resources. Unless the presenter clearly states that there are insufficient resources to finish the program, it is difficult for the reviewer to assess the adequacy of the program resources. Consideration should be given to eliminating this from the review form.

3.5. The evaluation criteria were adequately addressed in the presentations.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Relevance	1	1	6	24	12
	2%	2%	14%	55%	27%
Approach	0	0	6	25	13
	0%	0%	14%	57%	30%
Accomplishments & Progress	0	1	7	23	13
	0%	2%	16%	52%	30%
Collaboration & Coordination	0	2	9	25	8
	0%	5%	20%	57%	18%
Proposed Future Work	0	1	9	24	10
	0%	2%	20%	55%	23%

10 Comment(s)

- For the most part, the speakers stuck to what was required.
- Sometimes it was difficult to determine what this year's progress was and what the progress was over the life of the project.
- The availability of all the slides was essential. I went back over the slides at least twice during the rating process for each of the presenters.
- Future Research: there is a tendency to want to keep going with a project even when it is clear that it will not come close to its objectives. The project managers should encourage the PIs to radically rescope or wrap up the project.
- This varied case by case.
- The relevance to DOE's petroleum reduction goal was not clear in any of the presentations; discussions with the PI drew out the relevance. Collaborations were mentioned, but not described in detail in any of the presentations; discussions with the PI drew out the level of collaboration.
- Future work statements were often too general. They did not explicitly address the outstanding technical hurdles and challenges.
- Most of the presentations could have done a much better job on presenting technical accomplishments and conveying relevance to the goals (targets). Because I was reviewing membrane programs, universal technical issues include flux, lifetime, cost, and impact of impurities in coal gas. None of the five presentations I reviewed discussed technology transfer.
- Future plans tended to be very general. They should be more specific and include an assessment of the resources that will be required to execute.
- Having reviewed 12 presentations, it is somewhat difficult to provide a single response to each of these questions. Generally, the presentations were set up to address each of the points listed, but there was clearly some disparity in the effectiveness of the presentations.

3.6. The right criteria and weightings were used to evaluate the project(s)/program(s).

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Relevance	1	2	7	19	13
	2%	7%	16%	44%	30%
Approach	0	0	8	21	14
	0%	0%	19%	49%	33%
Accomplishments & Progress	0	0	6	22	15
	0%	0%	14%	51%	35%
Collaboration & Coordination	0	1	8	21	13
	0%	2%	19%	49%	30%
Proposed Future Work	0	0	9	21	13
	0%	0%	21%	49%	30%

10 Comment(s)

- Relevance is assumed to be a given. Someone would not get funding from DOE to perform work that is not relevant to DOE.
- As much as is practical, the weighting is fine. Programs could use more innovation, which is easier said than done.
- Each presentation represents the thoughts and opinion of the PI. Not all projects were in the same state of maturity. Everyone has the same opportunity in presentation.
- All of the projects chosen for funding should be relevant to the DOE objectives. Those that are congressionally directed are not, but DOE cannot do anything about them.
- I think collaboration is over-emphasized. I am not at all sure that a program conducted well, but alone, is in any way less valuable.
- The main concern should be on technical accomplishments. The technology transfer and collaboration is a valuable thought. However, with industrial players, technology transfer is frequently not in their best interest. (They want to stop that from happening, getting patents, etc.) Too often “collaboration” ends up describing a vendor relationship.
- “Relevance” and “Future Research” can be politically charged and subjective.
- This process should be a model for major government programs.
- Relevance, while important, is a foregone conclusion. If the work was not relevant to DOE’s mission, it would not have been funded by DOE. It might be better to drop the question or to ask reviewers to rate how relevant (e.g., on a 1–5 or 1–10 scale) the project is or how much the project contributes to achieving DOE’s objective of petroleum displacement. Future plans should be more specific and include an assessment of the resources that will be required to execute these plans.
- The weightings represent DOE judgments of importance. I do not know enough to comment.

3.7. During the Annual Merit Review, reviewers had adequate access to the Principal Investigators.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	3	5	21	14
0%	7%	12%	49%	33%

11 Comment(s)

- Some sessions were managed better than others. The moderators of some sessions did not adequately control runaway researchers, and often there were only a few minutes for questions.

- The official reviewers had access to the PIs, but the general audience often does not. To fill this lack, there could be a “question card” for the speaker to get later and to send back to the DOE manager and questioner or that could be posted online.
- The PIs were there, the question is how easy it is to find them during the breaks. It is usually impossible to break in the crowd and wedge in a question.
- Some presenters arrived just before their presentations and left just after their presentations, avoiding contact with reviewers.
- It is very hard to find people in such a large gathering. There is not a lot that can be done about this, however.
- If the PI was not available at the poster, a fellow knowledgeable project researcher was responsible for manning the poster to answer questions.
- It is always nice to have more discussion with the presenters, but I do not think it warrants changing the current program.
- The event featured good discussions and networking—this was a major reason for me to be there.
- Some PIs left from the meeting after their presentation. The PI should stay at the meeting to have informal communications with reviewers at the meeting venue (break time).
- Reviewers did have access to the presenters; however, in very many cases, the presenters were not the PI. In the future, there should be arrangements made so PIs can at least be connected by phone during their presentations and the allotted question-and-answer period. In the presentations where multiple projects were presented, time for each presentation and questions and answers was sometimes inadequate.
- Reviewers were always given the chance to ask questions first at the end of the verbal presentation. Availability after the presentations was a mixed bag. Some presenters were highly visible and available to answer more questions about their presentations.

3.8. Information on the location and timing of the projects was adequate and easy to find.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	0	2	17	24
0%	0%	5%	40%	56%

7 Comment(s)

- This was a well organized review.
- The organization was excellent (I assume this question refers to the program schedule).
- This was very well organized.
- Most of the PIs did a good job addressing the basic project overview, cost, and timing.
- Because the review was held in two venues, it was tough to make it from one talk to the next if one was “crossing over.”
- The segregation was good, with the exception of Hydrogen Education at Crystal City with Fuel Cell at Crystal Gateway. But, I understand that it is about room size.
- Early versions of the program listing often showed multiple projects in a single time slot. The final program only showed a single project. Some slides presented reflected just the one project, and other times included multiple projects. This caused confusion for presenters and reviewers. Where there are multiples, ratings may vary greatly between the projects, which make “multiple choice” ratings difficult.

3.9. The number of projects I was expected to review was:

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Too many	4	1.4%
Too few	4	1.4%
About right	34	12.1%
No Responses	238	85%
Total	280	100%

10 Comment(s)

- As a second-year reviewer, I felt a bit pressed having to review 12 presentations. (I was originally assigned 15 presentations, but had to excuse myself from three due to potential conflict of interest. Fifteen is absolutely excessive). I would recommend a maximum of 10 presentations per reviewer. I do recognize, however, that there is apparently a shortage of reviewers, so a limit of 10 may not be achievable.
- I would prefer to review all of the projects in a panel, as I have to be in the entire panel to review the ones that I am assigned anyway. It would be easy for me to review them all, and this would help to provide consistency in the results. Everyone should review all of the projects in the panels he/she reviews.
- I was only scheduled for two reviews. I could have completed more if they were assigned.
- This year, the reviews from multiple sub-programs were centrally managed and there was no overlap. Much has improved from last year, where I was to be in three places at the same time.
- I was only assigned two projects and felt that I could have done more.
- These were a little on the heavy side, but very doable.
- I say “about right” only because I had to disqualify myself from a number of my assigned reviews because of conflicts of interest (former students, current collaborations). Otherwise, it would have been too many to perform adequate reviews.
- A couple fewer would be nice.
- It is hard to do a whole day’s meeting with every project included.
- I had a reasonable workload. However, I would have been willing to take on a few more if I could have nominated myself as a reviewer for certain projects.

3.10. Altogether, the preparatory materials, presentations, and the question and answer period provided sufficient depth for a meaningful review.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	5	4	23	11
0%	12%	9%	53%	26%

11 Comment(s)

- Some sessions were better than others with time management.
- There is enough variation in the review process, the reviewers, and the presentation for the system to work well.
- More one-on-one interaction with the presenters would be better.
- More detail is needed for a meaningful review of the technical aspects of the projects.
- There should be coffee and snacks in each room for the reviewers and the past four presenters so that any additional questions can be easily addressed.
- Presentations would need to be longer in order for them to be well reviewed, but that would stretch the AMR to be multiple weeks long.
- Twenty minutes is not an adequate amount of time to thoroughly review one year’s accomplishments. The PDF files provided do not contain slide transitions. While a PowerPoint presentation has layers of material entering the slide, only the top image is visible in the PDF. Everything below it is obscured. Presenters should be directed

to not layer images. Also, I did not see a single video clip that worked, although several presenters attempted. This should be fixed in future reviews.

- I had to work hard to make enough sense of the materials to write a meaningful review. I would need much more information to really evaluate the project.
- I still feel uneasy that the aggregate information had too many gaps to reveal with certainty whether or not the projects were likely to generate the necessary progress.
- The material in the presentations (for some presentations) began to overwhelm some reviewers, and the question-and-answer sessions were sometimes meaningful.
- I think the presentations and format do a fairly good job in helping the reviewers assess the presentation. The difficulty arises when a reviewer is asked to critique a session in which he has limited or no technical background. This does not happen often, but has occurred in a few cases.

3.11. Please provide additional comments.

14 Response(s)

- Overall, this was a busy but efficient and informative meeting.
- I am bothered when I see reviewers who are also presenters in the same session. I understand the need to have people knowledgeable within the field, but I have trouble believing it is possible to be completely objective when reviewing projects that are directly competing with the reviewer's own project.
- All of the reviewers have a good idea of what it takes on the part of the investigator, as well as how the work fits into the grand scheme of things.
- Keep up the good work!
- It remains a problem for university researchers to obtain the travel funds needed to attend this meeting. Nonetheless, I find it informative and very valuable to attend and serve as a reviewer.
- The presentations and the interactions with the investigators are very informative. I always learn something significant at the AMR.
- There is a problem during the awards program at lunch in a combined AMR because a lot of the crowd has little interest in the "other" programs' awards, and it seems that they have no respectfulness and just chatter away, making it hard to hear. Solution: Hold one awards ceremony, alternate programs, and while one is speaking have the other taking photos.
- The review was well organized and coordinated. The PeerNet process seems to work well.
- The DOE needs viewgraph instructional materials. Too frequently the graphics were difficult to comprehend. Some of the presenters also need to work on public speaking; this can be taught. If not, the presentation could be assigned to someone who has those skills. Like usual, scheduling conflicts precluded attending all of the interesting talks.
- I have been participating for several years as a reviewer, and I am surprised to consistently see a lack of awareness on the part of the presenters of the depth of similar research funded by DOE. This needs to be improved; money is being wasted.
- The 2011 AMR was well organized and informative. There were some good ideas and results presented at the meeting. It is good to see that DOE has been supporting both the basic and applied research projects on batteries and fuel cells and hydrogen storage systems.
- The preparatory material was not made available in a timely fashion.
- The PeerNet system worked well. The training session was helpful. Lower cost accommodations would help increase participation. It is not obvious whether these reviews and ratings matter. I would like to know if anything happens to projects that receive low ratings.
- Overall, I believe the AMR is very well organized and professionally implemented. This is a massive effort to evaluate hundreds of projects, but the systems put in place and the agenda for the week are very effective in ensuring a meaningful review process.

4. Responses from Presenters

4.1. The request to provide a presentation for the Annual Merit Review was provided sufficiently prior to the deadline for submission.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
2	11	8	46	36
2%	11%	8%	45%	35%

28 Comment(s)

- The request for the presentation was too far in advance. Much progress was made in the two months from when the initial presentation was sent in; this timeframe should be reduced.
- I like the format of this meeting and the requests for information are well in advance of the meeting.
- The issue of having outdated slides at the time of the meeting because of submission deadlines should be explicitly addressed.
- Great organization of the meeting.
- The presentations are out-of-date by the time they are presented. Updates to the presentations should be allowed.
- The notification was provided in sufficient time, but due to the deadline for the Funding Opportunity Announcement released earlier this year, it would have been helpful to have a few extra days to submit the presentation. This is not typically an issue, but should be worth considering if the situation arises again in the future.
- The deadline to submit a presentation two months prior to the review may be too early to include the most recent findings.
- There was slightly less time allowed from last year’s submission. Meeting organizers and staff were very helpful in responding to questions regarding the upcoming submission prior to the “official” release.
- The submittal of presentations was too early.
- Time between receiving instructions and the due date for the slideshow is very short; the time from the due date to the presentation is very long. Presentations are thus already out of date by the AMR. I would like DOE to work on this.
- The deadline for submittal was very far in advance.
- The submission deadlines were surprisingly early.
- I would have preferred about one to two months in advance and not three months, but I understand the need for advanced planning.
- I feel that the deadline for the presentation was too far in advance of the AMR.
- It was too early (more than two months) to submit the presentation. I think one month earlier is enough, so the presenter can have enough time to update his or her research.
- The lead time was sufficient, but earlier requests would be better.
- Ample time was provided.
- Presentation request were too early; data was dated by the time of the review.
- Too little time was provided.
- Presentations were due very early. Less lead time would allow for results that reflect project status at the time the review is actually conducted, not ~25% of the year before.
- For first-time presenters, the timeframe was short, at three weeks. Next time, this will not be a problem.
- Information was well organized. Although the best help I received was when I called the administrator for the presentation day and got very good advice on what to present and what was important.
- It came as a surprise to me that the slides had to be submitted long before the actual meeting, especially for someone who was not being reviewed.
- The deadline for submission seems inappropriately earlier than the AMR, and the different organizations seemed to have double standards on maintaining the deadlines. We recommend shortening the timeframe between the submission deadline and the AMR.

- I was not informed directly, but had to request the DOE to present. This was not a problem; however, the submission deadline was only a couple of days after I found out about it. It put a lot of pressure on me to complete it, receive internal approval, and submit it before the deadline.
- The presentations were asked for too early. Progress was made in between.
- It was requested too early; therefore, some of the numbers were out-of-date because we were not allowed to change them.
- I did not like having to send in the reviewer's package so early, in March, for a meeting that would not be held in May. Two months is 1/6 of a year, which is a long time.

4.2. Instructions for preparing the presentation were sufficient.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
0	1	2	56	46
0%	1%	2%	53%	44%

10 Comment(s)

- Instructions for preparing the presentation were more than adequate!
- If DOE wants consistent formats to be used, they should provide a PowerPoint template with all of the required formatting and required slides in place.
- The instructions were very thorough and the example slides were helpful.
- The expectations for submissions are clearly defined and extremely helpful in preparing and submitting the material.
- Instructions for preparing the presentation were excellent.
- Instructions for preparing the presentation were excellent, as has been the case, with good examples provided.
- My talk was for a DOE Office of Basic Energy Sciences (BES)-supported grant. There was some confusion as to the rules for BES talks. *[note: this is not accurate, as BES has been part of the AMR for several years.]*
- There was some confusion at first about the instructions for presentations that were not under review.
- The difference between poster and "formal" could be made more clear for first-time attendees and presenters.
- People who are new to the system may be confused. The instructions should make it clear that poster and oral presentations are quite different from each other, but that the packages provided to the reviewers should be similar.

4.3. The audio and visual equipment worked properly and were adequate.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
1	4	3	46	46
1%	4%	3%	46%	46%

10 Comment(s)

- I appreciated having audio-visual support in the room. I believe that is why things ran smoothly, with very little fumbling by the presenters.
- The poster placement was hidden and poorly planned.
- There were some problems with microphones in room five.
- Some interference and overlap between wireless microphones in other rooms was bothersome.
- The audio-visual team did a great job of replacing the non-functioning laser pens, loading the presentations, and answering questions before the presentation.

- In one presentation, the room was set up in such a manner that I was unable to see my presentation clearly on the big screen. This made it difficult to have effective continuity to the presentation. It appeared other presenters were also having similar difficulties.
- The pointer had a weak battery.
- The audio and visual equipment was too complex; there were many issues with a presentation jumping to another presentation.
- My presentation was fine, but some presentations with animation had some missing items. I think DOE should discourage animation in the interest of simpler logistics.
- The audio was very problematic—it kept cutting out in the room where I spent most of my time.

4.4. The evaluation criteria upon which the Review was organized were clearly defined and used appropriately.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Relevance	1	2	7	69	17
	1%	2%	7%	72%	18%
Approach	1	2	6	68	19
	1%	2%	6%	71%	20%
Accomplishments & Progress	1	1	5	64	24
	1%	1%	5%	67%	25%
Collaboration & Coordination	1	1	9	65	18
	1%	1%	10%	69%	19%
Proposed Future Work	1	1	9	65	20
	1%	1%	9%	68%	21%

9 Comment(s)

- We will have to wait and see if they are used appropriately by the reviewers.
- I cannot comment on how it was “used,” but it was defined well.
- I understand the role and importance of encouraging and explaining the amount of collaboration throughout the DOE programs. It is difficult, however, to receive feedback that another partner should be added to a program that already had two years completed, had a set budget, and was proposed and accepted with the partners in place. More direct emphasis should be placed on how well the partners work together, rather than how many there are in the program (which I believe is the intent of the criteria).
- I did not receive any evaluation criteria associated with our posterboard, nor did a reviewer identify him/herself, so I am not sure if a review even transpired.
- I do not believe that the responses by some of the presenters are based on the same understanding as others. That is, some took the guidance very seriously and others seemed to take it very casually, possibly leading reviewers to inappropriate comparisons.
- It seems that often there is repetition on these criteria in the presentation; for example, the Approach and the Accomplishments can contain the same material depending on the progress of the project.
- The DOE reviewers in the sessions I attended seemed to be mostly unqualified people with no technical merits to serve in this capacity. I do not know how these people were selected to serve in this capacity. I hope that DOE staff will do better job on selecting qualified reviewers.
- Relevance is ill-defined. Funded projects were initially reviewed; if tasks are being completed, then the project is relevant. Relevance should be substituted for staying on course.
- I am not sure how I can know whether they were used appropriately until the project review results come back.

4.5. Explanation of the questions within the criteria was clear and sufficient.

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Relevance	3	1	11	69	14
	3%	1%	11%	70%	14%
Approach	2	2	10	70	14
	2%	2%	10%	71%	14%
Accomplishments & Progress	2	1	9	67	18
	2%	1%	9%	69%	19%
Collaboration & Coordination	2	2	11	66	15
	2%	2%	11%	69%	16%
Proposed Future Work	2	1	12	66	15
	2%	1%	13%	69%	16%

4 Comment(s)

- I am not certain if future research proposed is relevant if the project is ending and there is no indication from the program whether the project will be continued based on proposed future research.
- The example slides that were sent were very helpful to me.
- The way of knowing if the explanation was clear and sufficient is whether the reviewers understand the criteria the same way as the presenter.
- It seems that often there is repetition on these criteria in the presentation; for example, the Approach and the Accomplishments can contain the same material depending on the progress of the project.

4.6. The right criteria and weightings were used to evaluate the project(s)/program(s).

The top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. The bottom percentage is the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
Relevance	1	1	26	55	12
	1%	1%	27%	58%	13%
Approach	1	0	26	55	13
	1%	0%	27%	58%	14%
Accomplishments & Progress	1	0	22	57	15
	1%	0%	23%	60%	16%
Collaboration & Coordination	1	3	25	54	12
	1%	3%	26%	57%	13%
Proposed Future Work	1	1	24	53	15
	1%	1%	26%	56%	16%

7 Comment(s)

- It is not clear if the same criteria and weightings should be applicable for all of the projects. Some may need different weightings, but there is a need for consistency and uniformity.
- I think that if a project was not relevant, it would not have been given funding in the first place. Almost everyone’s project is relevant in those two programs. It is not a good criterion for distinguishing between the different projects, so I would lower it to 10% from 20%. Perhaps the projects that were Congressional earmarks would be the only exception, but I noticed only a few of those.
- I do not recall the weightings being stated.
- I believe I know of one or two cases where the technology transfer and collaborations were misrepresented based on my knowledge of the projects. I wonder how a reviewer would ever know.

- Collaboration varies between project type; this criterion should be modified to reflect that.
- DOE reviewers are unqualified to serve in this capacity. DOE staff should do a better job in selecting reviewers with better education and technical merits than we have seen in the 2011 AMR.
- The criteria and weighting were unclear, or I do not recall them.

4.7. Please provide additional comments:

26 Response(s)

- It would have been very helpful if there was wireless internet available in the conference room, even if it was just for purchase. This forced many people to exit and enter the room to get a signal in the hallway. I would also suggest shifting the coffee break area down from the main doors to the conference area; it was rather loud.
- It would be helpful to provide feedback to presenters directly. We often had to look for it or ask the program managers.
- The plenary session speakers should be asked to stick to a specific time limit as the presenters are during the review sessions.
- There were too many sessions to attend at different hotels. Consider keeping the meetings in one hotel and luncheon sessions in a different hotel.
- The only negative comments that I can come up with are (1) because DOE emphasized time constraints, it should have also stayed within the limits that were set, and (2) every place in that hotel was too cold. I wore suits with jackets and still shivered most of the time.
- Most presentations focus too much on the process of the project—approach, schedule, budget, scope, collaborations—and not enough on the technical details about what work was actually done!
- The hotel did not offer a room rate that was within the per-diem allowed by DOE. Because the conference is sponsored by DOE for the purpose of having contractors of DOE present their results, this seems ridiculous! A negotiated rate should be achieved that is within the per-diem rates.
- I thought the 2011 AMR was well organized and ran smoothly compared to past meetings. Most of the managers did a great job of ensuring that the presentations were completed on time; the ORISE staff was extremely helpful and readily available; and the audio-visual team made the switch to the new presentation format very easy.
- On the first posterboard night, while looking over one presentation, an individual joined the conversation and quickly identified himself as the reviewer with a checklist. That did not occur with us at our posterboard session. We are not doing research, and only expanding capacity on a proven process. It was unclear why there was no formal review.
- The due date for the presentations seems quite early. It would be nice to be able to extend the due date to a point closer to the actual meeting instead of a few months in advance.
- The event was well organized and interesting overall.
- There is a conflict of interest for the person who is currently supported by DOE to have a role as a reviewer.
- I was a reviewer as well as a presenter, and the reviewer's laboratory full of computers was much appreciated. The conference was extremely well organized and well managed, as always.
- I would have liked to see all of the presentations arranged at the same hotel venue rather than at two hotels. Most of us work on multiple topics so it was difficult to go back and forth (e.g., I was interested both in magnetic materials and lightweight materials but these were held at different venues about 10–15 minutes apart).
- The presentations are requested too far in advance. Some of the information may be outdated by the time the event takes place. The meeting should be more directed at providing interaction between reviewers and presenters. Making it completely open dilutes this interaction.
- The schedule for different areas should be rotated. Arrangements should be made with the hotel for late checkout, especially for the presenters who presented on Friday morning.
- DOE should not have the meeting during the academic semester, and should rather go back to holding it in June.
- Wireless computer access in the presentation rooms for all attendees would be very valuable.
- The overall setting and format made it very convenient to network with other recipients, some of whom are potential customers. This review exceeded my expectations on this point.
- I participated primarily in the energy storage review. I presented an overview of several projects that were not being reviewed this year. I thought the energy storage session was excellent.

- I wish the reviewers could have tough questions asked in public rather than in behind-the-door reviews so the presenters may have a chance to answer or defend.
- Our reviewers were not properly equipped to judge the work (poor selection of reviewers). With proper logistics, all of the presentations can be held in Gateway.
- I was not a big fan of the poster presentations; not a lot of people were in attendance.
- This was a great networking opportunity!
- This year the names of the hotels were similar, which led to confusion.