

(b) A request that the Agency defer an application for consideration in a subsequent year will be treated as a request for withdrawal.

### Subpart C—Evaluation and Selection Process

#### § 2301.16 Technical evaluation process.

(a) In determining whether to approve or defer a construction or planning grant application, in whole or in part, and the amount of such grant, the Agency will evaluate all the information in the application file.

(b) PTFP grants are awarded on the basis of a competitive review process. The evaluation of the applications is based upon the evaluation criteria provided under § 2301.17.

(c) The competitive review process may include the following: evaluation by PTFP staff; technical assessment by engineers; an evaluation by outside reviewers, all of whom have demonstrated expertise in either public broadcasting or distance learning; and rating by a national advisory panel, composed of representatives of major national public radio and television organizations.

(d) In acting on applications and carrying out other responsibilities under the Act, the Agency shall consult (as appropriate) with the FCC, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, state telecommunications agencies, public broadcasting agencies, organizations, and other agencies administering programs that may be coordinated effectively with Federal assistance provided under the Act; and, the state office established to review applications under Executive Order 12372, as amended by Executive Order 12416.

(e) Based upon the evaluation criteria contained in § 2301.17, the PTFP program staff will prepare summary evaluations. These will incorporate the outside reviewers' recommendations, engineering assessments, and program staff evaluations.

#### § 2301.17 Evaluation criteria for construction and planning applications.

(a) For each application that is filed in a timely manner by an applicant, is materially complete, and proposes an

eligible project, the Agency will consider the evaluation criteria listed in § 2301.17(b):

(1) The criteria in paragraphs (b)(1), *Applicant qualifications*, (b)(2), *Financial qualifications*, of this section are qualifying criteria. Applications meeting the minimum qualifications on these criteria will be considered for further review.

(2) The remaining four criteria listed in § 2301.17(b) will be weighted in the evaluation as follows:

(i) Criteria in paragraph (b)(3), *Project objectives*, and (b)(4), *Urgency*, of this section will be given the most weight in the evaluation.

(ii) The remaining criteria in paragraph (b)(5), *Technical/Planning qualifications*, and (b)(4), *Special consideration*, of this section will be given less weight and are listed in descending order.

(b) *Evaluation criteria*—(1) *Applicant qualifications*: Documentation that the applicant has or will have the ability to complete the project, including having sufficient qualified personnel to operate and maintain the facility, and to provide services of professional quality.

(2) *Financial qualifications*: Documentation reflecting the applicant's ability to provide non-Federal funds required for the project, including funds for the local match and funds to cover any ineligible costs required for completion of the project; and to ensure long-term financial support for the continued operation of the facility during the Federal interest period.

(3) *Project objectives*: The degree to which the application documents that the proposed project fulfills the objectives and specific requirements of one or more of the categories set forth in § 2301.4, documents the applicant's ability to implement the proposed project and adequately justify the need for Federal funds in excess of fifty (50) percent of total project costs (see § 2301.6(b)(2)), if requested for equipment replacement, improvement, or augmentation projects; and, in the case of planning, adequately justifies the need for Federal funds in excess of seventy five (75) percent of total project costs (see § 2301.6(a)(2)), if requested.