Recommended Selection Process for Regional "Sweet Sixteen" and Projects for Supplemental Brochures

This guidance was put together to help standardize the Sweet Sixteen selection process with the understanding that each region will be able to modify the guidelines to meet their needs. Each region shall review and vote on their regional Sweet Sixteen submittals starting April 1 through April 30.

The selection of the Supplemental Brochures will be based on the High Value Research (HVR) regional votes on safety projects and the selected additional topic for that year.

Research Advisory Council (RAC) Region Chairs must submit their final ballots to the Value of Research Task force for the Sweet Sixteen projects and overall ranking of Supplemental Brochure projects no later than May 15. This will allow the Sweet Sixteen recipient states ample time to decide on attending and to prepare their presentations for the RAC/TRB State Representatives Annual Meeting typically held in July. It will also provide time to develop the Supplemental Brochures that highlight safety and another research topic.

Recommended steps in the voting process:

Step 1: After the HVR submittal deadline (March 31), RAC Region Chairs will coordinate their regional voting process for Sweet Sixteen projects, the Safety Supplemental Brochure, and the additional Supplemental Brochure, the topic of which will be selected annually. Prior to the voting period, the Value of Research Task Force will identify the additional Supplemental Brochure topic based on the most popular (by number of submittals) project National Study Code. Each region will be asked to provide four Sweet Sixteen projects, two additional safety projects (for the Safety Supplemental Brochure), and two additional projects on a designated topic (for a second Supplemental Brochure).

Step 2: The RAC Region Chair compiles the HVR projects for their region from the HVR website (https://www.highvalueresearch.org/) and facilitates the voting for their top four HVR projects and both Supplemental Brochures.

The recommended process for voting is:

- Each RAC member should rank the projects in order of value, with one (1) being the top candidate project. Please note that RAC members should not rank their own state's projects.
- Each region may set up its own scoring protocol, but may use the following as a guideline.

  o Projects may address areas of expertise that are not common to state DOT research programs.
  o Research managers should be careful not to be naturally biased when rating projects that fall into their own expertise. To help address this concern, research managers may want to seek the advice of others within their agency to review and rate projects.
  o Projects may address topical or business areas that are not represented in all state DOTs. For example, only a portion of state DOTs handle motor vehicle functions, but some DOTs fund policy or safety-related research that relate to motor vehicle activities. Evaluators

should take this into account and review projects based on the merit to the sponsor agency, even if their own agency may not have an application for the research.

- o Evaluators should understand the impacts of projects considering both breadth and depth. For example, one project may have a minor impact across a wide range of applications. Another project might have a major impact in a single or small set of applications. Either project may be considered to have high value.

- The Region Chair will collate the ballots from their region to create a ranked list of the submitted projects and will submit the list to the Value of Research Task Force Chair.

Step 3: From the collated ballots, the Region Chair will identify the top four projects from their region as Sweet Sixteen projects and submit the list to the Value of Research Task Force Chair. Note that the four HVR projects must come from different states.

Step 4: The Region Chair will also identify the next two safety projects from each region for inclusion in the Safety Supplemental Brochure.

Step 5: The Region Chair will also identify the next two projects to be included in that topic's Supplemental Brochure for the year.