
Early Research Awards Workshop, Research Commons

SOME (VERY GENERAL)
INSIGHTS FROM **FIVE**
YEARS ON E.R.A.
ADJUDICATION PANELS



A PANEL MEMBERS PERSPECTIVE

from inside the room where it happened...

Some Basic Errors I've observed from Applicants

Adjudication Panel Members' Unconscious Biases

AMA (Ask Me Anything) — I will answer your question without breaking the confidentiality rules (I can answer your question in the most general sense from a high-level PoV)

SUCCESS RATES

Overall Competition Success Rates

Round	Eligible	Awarded	Rate
17	309	54	17.5%
16	345	54	15.7%
15	294	54	18.4%
14	274	74	27%

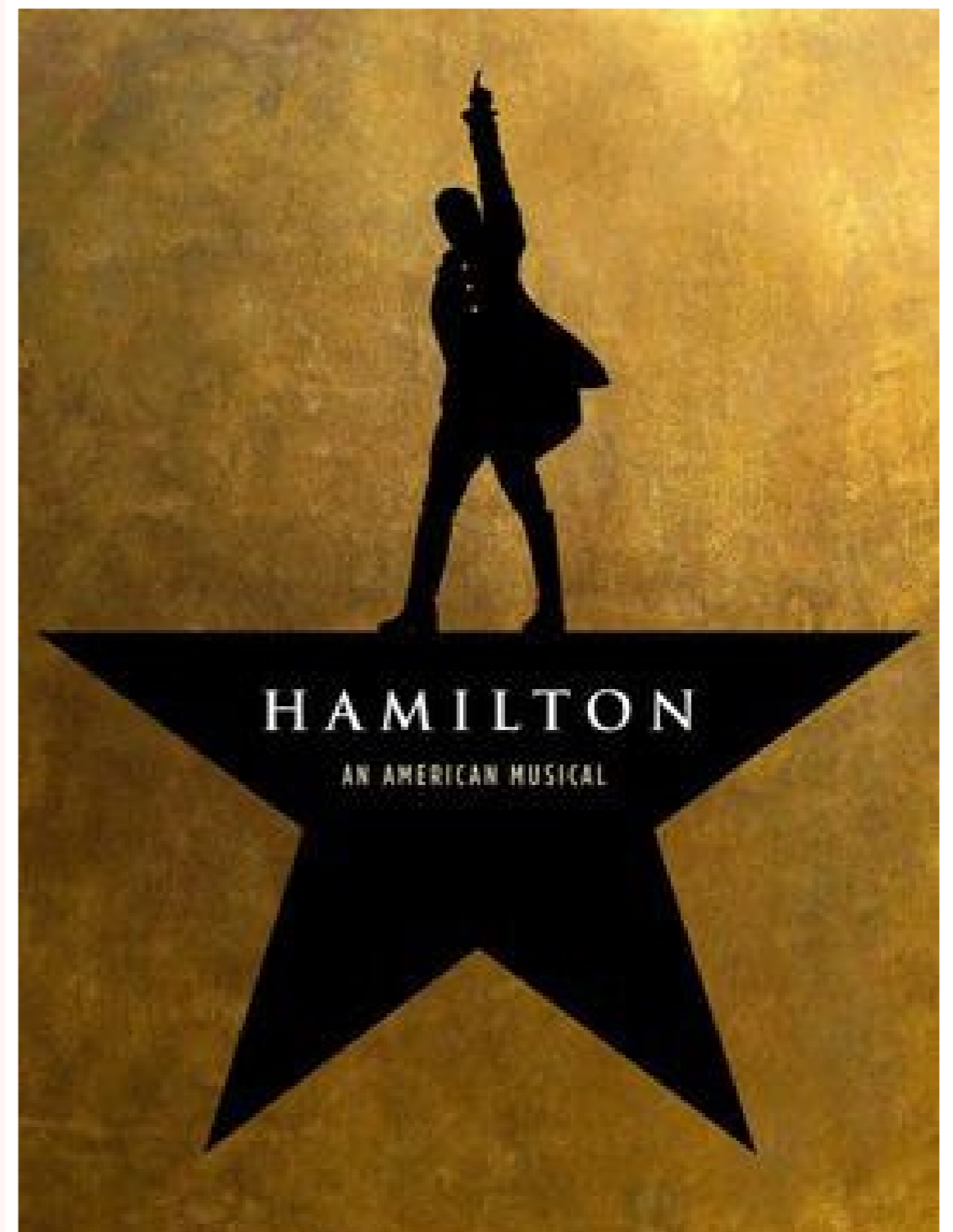
Government change

YorkU Success Rates

Round	Submitted	Awarded	Rate
17	19	1	5.3%
16	25	0	0%
15	18	2	11%
14	16	2	12.5%

MY SERVICE ON ERA PANELS

- Environmental Sciences Panel
- Round 11 (2015) – IRL downtown TO
- Round 12 (2016) – IRL downtown TO
- Round 13 (2017) – IRL downtown TO
- Round 14 (2018) – IRL downtown TO
- I had an annoying panel experience and withdrew from serving in Round 15
- By 2020 I was being asked to serve on the panel again (Why? Let's discuss)
- I returned for Round 17 in 2023 – Zoom



HAMILTON BY LIN MANUEL MIRANDA:

- *“No one really knows how the game is played. The art of the trade. How the sausage gets made. We just assume that it happens. But no one else is in the room where it happens.”*
- <https://youtu.be/6o2FPRLLAGU?t=25>





“I'm sorry Burr I gotta go
But decisions are happening over dinner...

And here's the pièce de résistance
No one else was in the room where it happened”

BASIC ERRORS

YOU'D BE SURPRISED

- Not reading the instructions carefully 🤔
- Not following the brief 😲
- Not finding someone who got funded to read your grant 😞🤔
- Not finding someone who sat on an adjudication committee to read your grant (could be difficult but you could discover who in your university has such experience) 🙌
- Not finding a compelling narrative – NB that the committees *are* subject-matter specialized, but also broad 📝
- E.g. my panel is Environmental Sciences, *not* the more specialized Evolution & Ecology, GSC18, at NSERC ✂



**ADJUDICATION PANEL
MEMBERS ARE HUMAN**

WE READ 100'S OF SINGLE-SPACED PAGES

- we have access to all of the proposals, and are assigned up to 10 to review in great detail
- we're tasked with mastering a proposal's argumentation & budgets in order to speak succinctly about the it, and advocate for its strengths plus point out gaps



I GET CRANKY:

- when the application forms are NOT cleanly filled in and the instructions are NOT followed to the letter
- with other Adjudication Committee members, especially when THEY appear not to be following the COI and EDI rules
- when Plain Language summaries are NOT Plain Language
- ask me about Gunning-Fog: <http://gunning-fog-index.com/>



HIDDEN CURRICULUM

FWIW: DAWN'S ADVICE

- READ your feedback carefully & re-apply **every** year of your eligibility
- It will translate over to the NFRF competition (YorkU is punching below our weight)
- make your research applicable to Ontario — we don't rate if it's going to save the world
- make sure you know what your references are writing about you, and whether THEY are following their particular set of rules (see Abby's recurring critique slide)
- it's obvious if the applicant has never previously engaged with EDI and mentorship



QUESTIONS?

thanks for listening...
