



Letter Writers' Bureau: User Guide & FAQs

Using Quick Consult to identify and connect with potential external promotion letter writers

The Letter Writers' Bureau is a special program within Quick Consult that helps faculty and institutions identify experienced academic family medicine faculty who are willing to serve as external reviewers for promotion. Quick Consult supports the matching and initial connection; the formal letter-writing process takes place outside the platform.

How to Use the Letter Writers' Bureau

1. Join the Letter Writers' Bureau and complete your profile

If you are new to Quick Consult or updating your profile, join the program to see matches and open access to this group in the search function. In your mentoring preferences for Letter Writers' Bureau, indicate any specific areas of interest. This information helps support useful matches and allows others to assess potential fit.

2. Identify potential letter writers

If you are seeking external promotion letters, review your suggested matches and use search to identify potential writers. When using the search tool, select Letter Writers' Bureau under "Group." You may need to identify and contact multiple potential writers.

3. Send a direct message

Contact potential letter writers through a direct Quick Consult message. Do not submit a formal mentoring request for Letter Writers' Bureau outreach.

4. Confirm fit and availability

Use the initial conversation to confirm eligibility, institutional requirements, potential conflicts, availability, timeline, and expectations before a writer agrees to serve.

5. Move the formal process outside Quick Consult

Once a potential writer and requester have connected, the formal institutional process takes place outside Quick Consult. Confidential candidate materials, formal instructions, and completed letters should be exchanged through the process established by the requesting institution.

Letter Writers' Bureau FAQs

What is the Letter Writers' Bureau?

Originally piloted by STFM's Faculty Development Collaborative, the Letter Writers' Bureau is a special program within Quick Consult that helps faculty and institutions identify experienced academic family medicine faculty who are willing to serve as external reviewers for promotion.

Through the Letter Writers' Bureau, potential letter writers indicate their willingness to serve and write external letters for promotion. Those seeking external promotion letters can use Quick Consult to identify and connect with potential letter writers. Quick Consult facilitates the list of potential letter writers and connection.

What parts of the Letter Writers' Bureau process happen in Quick Consult?

Use Quick Consult to identify potential letter writers, review profiles, make the initial connection, and confirm interest and availability. Once a requester has a list of available letter writers, the formal institutional process takes place outside Quick Consult, usually by a department chair who does outreach to request the letters.

Should I send a mentoring request to a potential Letter Writers' Bureau letter writer?

No. If you are seeking an external promotion letter writer, use your suggested matches or the search function to identify potential writers and send them a direct message rather than a formal mentoring request.

Quick Consult limits users to three active mentors, and you may need to contact more than three potential letter writers. Messaging allows you to make those connections without creating formal mentoring relationships.

How will I be contacted if someone is interested in having me serve as a letter writer?

If you have volunteered to participate in the Letter Writers' Bureau, someone seeking an external promotion letter may contact you through a direct message in Quick Consult rather than a formal mentoring request.

A message is an initial inquiry and does not commit you to writing a letter. Use the initial conversation to determine whether you meet the requesting institution's requirements and to confirm fit, potential conflicts, availability, and timeline before agreeing to serve. If it is a good fit, letter writers should respond with their contact information so the requester can give it to their department chair, who will do outreach to request the letter.

What does 'mentor' or 'mentee' mean in the Letter Writers' Bureau?

Quick Consult is an STFM mentoring platform, so you may see the terms "mentor," "mentee," or "mentoring relationship" in some areas of the site. Within the Letter Writers' Bureau, these terms simply identify whether you are offering to write or seeking an external promotion review letter. Participation does not establish or imply a mentoring relationship.

Does a suggested match mean the person has agreed to write my letter?

No. A suggested match identifies someone who may be a potential fit. A direct message is an initial inquiry, not an agreement to write. The parties still need to confirm institutional requirements, conflicts, availability, timeline, and other expectations before a writer agrees to serve.

What information should I confirm before agreeing to serve as a letter writer?

Before agreeing, confirm that you meet the requesting institution's reviewer requirements and discuss potential conflicts, availability, timeline, expectations, and any other criteria needed for an appropriate external review.

Should confidential promotion materials be shared through Quick Consult?

No. Quick Consult should be used for identifying potential writers and making the initial connection. Confidential candidate materials, formal institutional instructions, and the completed promotion letter should be exchanged outside Quick Consult through the process established by the requesting institution.

Need More Help?

Learn more about Quick Consult at <https://www.stfm.org/quickconsult/>. Download the step-by-step Quick Consult user guide at <https://pushfar.app/org/resources/ddb2c545-e2ce-11ee-9a2d-0a58a9feac02/>.

Contact Molly Roudebush, STFM Director of Communications & Engagement, with specific questions about the Letter Writers' Bureau at mroudebush@stfm.org.