

Notes from the Instructional Faculty Workshop of Thursday, May 4, 2023

Slides from the workshop are appended to the end of this document.

The recording of the workshop is available at:

https://video.vt.edu/media/COE+Promotion+Workshop+for+Instructional+Faculty+%28April+21%2C+2023%29/1_bvy1i54h

A survey was created to gather feedback on the workshop. That survey will remain open through May 15, 2023. The survey is available at:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=hGiVYK0Q-kCGPU8yweOjeiQRGbbz0dJMgkIgap8UmyhUNU02MjBNTzFETTJCOUNKTUVNVVU3OEZONy4u>

Links for Promotion and Tenure Resources:

The Faculty Handbook:

<https://faculty.vt.edu/faculty-handbook.html>

University P&T Guidelines:

<https://faculty.vt.edu/promotion-tenure.html>

COE College P&T Guidelines:

<https://eng.vt.edu/faculty-staff-resources/promotion-and-tenure-resources-for-coe-faculty.html>

To find out more about VT Faculty Governance and potential university-level internal service:

<https://governance.vt.edu/>

Information about COE Faculty Activity Reports and the EFAR system:

<https://eng.vt.edu/faculty-staff-resources/coe-faculty-activity-report.html>

<https://faculty.vt.edu/efars.html>

Questions Asked During the Workshop with Answers:

Q. Are external reviewers expected to be totally independent or can they be collaborators (maybe not be current but were at some point in time)? [Related Question: How old does a collaboration need to be before that individual could be considered as a letter writer?]

- A. COE applies the NSF conflict of interest (COI) rules (the ones typically used for panel review of proposals/grant applications). COI is flagged for any of the following:
- Spouse or family member
 - Business or professional partner
 - Former employer (within one year)
 - Present or past PhD advisor/student
 - Collaborator within the past 48 months (4 years)
 - Co-editor within the past 24 months (2 years)

In addition to how long ago the collaboration occurred, the nature and extent of the collaboration will also be examined. So, someone who collaborated 5 years ago as a co-author or Co-PI *once* might be considered acceptable. However, if there was a period 5-10 years ago where the collaboration was very close (multiple grants and papers created together), the department might steer away from that person as an external reviewer to avoid any appearance of COI.

Opinions on this differ. The above examples have been applied within COE, but at the university level, the dossier will be reviewed by non-COE faculty who may have different opinions about past collaboration.

Q. Do internal grants count towards personal share of research funding?

- A. The metric data that COE collects on total grant funding and personal share is for *external grants only*. In the executive summary of the dossier total and personal share for external grants and internal grants are presented separately.

Q. How is the personal share of a grant counted if the candidate is the PI and there are co-Is on the grant? Is the total amount of the grant counted 100% as the PI's personal share?

- A. Personal share is generally based on the breakdown of the budget from the grant proposal. In this sense, PI and Co-PI roles do not matter. What matters is how the budget states that the grant funds will be distributed among the group. Alternatively, personal share could be based on the distribution of actual grant expenditures, but this is generally harder to track and recover the information for.

Q. Are publication counts total or only the ones after joining VT?

- A. Numbers presented in the metric data summary are career totals. They could include publications from the candidate's time as a PhD student, post-doc, or at a prior position before joining VT. Within the dossier, the data will be more clearly presented. There will be a table in the executive summary that will have columns for "Before VT", "After VT", and "Total" for all important metrics (or similarly "Before Last Promotion", "Since Last Promotion" and "Total" as relevant for the particular case). Additionally, all publications will be listed in Section V.B. "List of contributions". Many candidates often split their list into "before" and "after" subsections which provides greater clarity on the timeline of scholarly work.

Q. Do the sources of external funding matter or should we just care about the total amount? (For example, is there a difference between NSF vs. a research institution vs. industry funds?)

- A. No. All external funding is treated equally. That being said, the reviewers do like to see some diversity of funding, particularly if a candidate receives a lot of industry sponsored projects. Questions regarding independence of the research work would likely arise if a candidate's sole source of funding was one particular company. Additionally, the committee may note positively when a candidate has been successful in securing funding from strategic research areas (such as NIH), but it certainly should not hurt any candidate who doesn't have this.

Q. If we have separated ourselves from our previous mentors and established ourselves on our own, but there is a great idea, resource, or collaboration on some level that can really be great for the field or for our work, is that considered negative in terms of P&T?

- A. No. If the overall record indicates that the candidate is successful on their own, then a return collaboration with a past mentor will not impact the candidate negatively. However, it is important that the record of independent accomplishment stands sufficiently on its own.



Promotion Workshop for COE Faculty: Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure or Tenure Only

PANELISTS:

CAL RIBBENS: DEPARTMENT HEAD OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

RAFAEL DAVALOS: DEPARTMENT P&T COMMITTEE CHAIR, BEAM

PADMA RAJAGOPALAN: PAST COE REPRESENTATIVE TO UNIVERSITY P&T COMMITTEE

DANESH TAFTI: CURRENT COE REPRESENTATIVE TO UNIVERSITY P&T COMMITTEE &
COE WORK-LIFE LIAISON

MODERATOR:

KEITH THOMPSON: ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC (AND FACULTY) AFFAIRS

2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR
MAY 4, 2023



Notes about this workshop:

- **The workshop is being recorded** and will be posted later at:
<https://eng.vt.edu/faculty-staff-resources/promotion-and-tenure-resources-for-coe-faculty.html>
(There is no need to turn on your camera. Please make sure your mute is on.)
- **Place any questions in the chat.** I have some time set aside for Q&A at the end. I will also take all questions from the chat and create a document with answers to be posted later at the website above.
- **I welcome your feedback.** There will be a link to a feedback survey at the end of the workshop. This survey will remain open for one week after the recording of the session is posted for those who couldn't make it today, but watch the recording later on.

Topics of this Workshop:

1. Overview of the P&T review process
2. Panelists will discuss their perspectives as representatives involved at different levels of P&T review
3. Expectations and typical metrics for successful promotion and tenure cases
4. General advice on preparing your dossier
5. Panelists will offer advice for building a successful case for promotion and tenure
6. Q&A

The Review Process

What are the general steps in promotion review?

> Submit Dossier of your accomplishments		Summer to Early Fall	
> External Review		Late Summer to Early Fall	
> Department Committee Review	Department Level	Mid- to Late Fall	
> Department Head Review		Late Fall	
> College Committee Review	College Level	Early January	Changeover of Calendar Year
> Dean Review		Mid January	
> University Committee Review	University Level	February - March	~ 1 Year
> Provost		February - March	
> President		April	
> Board of Visitors		June	
> Conferral of New Rank		August (start of next contract)	

Who is on these committees?

- > Department Committees:
 - > Committee size varies from 4 to ~20; typically a simple majority required to pass
- > College Committee:
 - > All department heads + MLSOC Director (12 people)
 - > A faculty rep from each department & MLSOC; usually chairs of the Dept. P&T Comm. (12 people)
 - > One faculty representative from Engineering Faculty Organization (1 person)
 - > Associate Deans serve in Ex-Officio roles (non-voting)
- > University Committee:
 - > All Academic College Deans (9 people)
 - > A faculty rep from each Academic College (9 people)
 - > One at-large faculty rep (1 person)
 - > Provost chairs the committee (non-voting – does an independent recommendation)

What are the important documents?

- a) Faculty Handbook – Chapter 3 “Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty”
 - Descriptions of each faculty rank, the high-level expectations for promotion, review process, tenure limits, rights and procedures regarding appeals and grievances, and post-tenure review
- b) University Guidelines:
 - Dossier Guidelines (state the items that must be included in a dossier)
 - Dossier Templates
 - Dossier Cover Page
- c) College Guidelines (COE P&T Guidelines):
 - Covers the college procedures for review and general COE expectations for promotion plus additional dossier guidelines
- d) Department Guidelines:
 - Covers the department procedures for review and may have further expectations for promotion

The guidance is updated each year (typically from late Spring through the Summer)

Additional Information about Tenure and the Review Process:

- The dossier must follow the format specified by the university
- Promotion to Associate Professor is coincident with appointing of tenure
- There are only two attempts allowed for tenure
- The default mandatory year is the 6th year
- Faculty may go up earlier than their mandatory year
- There should be no difference in review whether someone is going forward in their mandatory year or earlier or if they have tenure clock extensions
- A maximum of two tenure clock extensions are permitted for approved circumstances
- Promotion and tenure are not rights earned by time in service - you need to make a case for your promotion based on your long-term performance and how you present your accomplishments in your dossier

Panelists Explain Review at Different Levels

The Expectations for Promotion and Tenure

Common Expectations for All COE Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty:

The primary responsibilities are:

- Secure funding to maintaining a strong research program
- Produce scholarly work in peer-reviewed and high-quality venues of dissemination
- Advise graduate students - should demonstrate evidence that they can successfully recruit, fund, mentor, and **graduate** PhD students (and MS students in applicable) and that those students have accomplishments and achieve appropriate placement after graduation
- Teaching effectively
- Contribute to professional service
- Contribute to university, college, and/or department service

Accomplishments must be validated by objective, external reviewers (5 letters typically)

Requirements for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure:

- Evidence of an appropriate record of:
 - scholarship,
 - success in research funding,
 - successful mentoring and graduation of PhD and MS students,
 - effective teaching at the undergraduate and/or graduate level,
 - engagement with professional service in their field, and
 - engagement at some level with university service or outreach
- A trajectory suggesting further success and impact in their research field:
 - ⇒ The reviewers don't just look at total metrics, but trends over time, particularly performance since joining VT.
 - ⇒ For impact, they often look at H-index and citation counts on scholarship, but other indicators of impact are okay.

Requirements for Promotion to Professor:

- Continued trajectory of success in scholarship, research funding, and graduation of PhD students (dossier should highlight accomplishments since the last promotion)
- Continuous improvement of teaching or maintenance of effective teaching
- Leadership activities in professional and internal service
- National or international recognition as an outstanding scholar and educator:
 - ⇒ Awards or other professional distinctions
 - ⇒ Positions of leadership in professional societies, multi-institutional research projects, or other external activities
 - ⇒ H-index, citations, and other indicators that the scholarship is impacting the field meaningfully
 - ⇒ Validation by the external reviewers

The Criteria for Successful Promotion is Fuzzy:

- ***Expectations are written broadly*** to allow individualized treatment of candidates and to allow departments latitude to impose discipline-specific criteria. (“quality should be examined more than quantity”)
- At each step, ***reviewers are making judgement calls*** based on broad guidance and the evidence they see in your dossier.
- Is the case presented in your dossier strong enough that it convinces enough reviewers to vote “yes” on your promotion?



Metrics from Successful Promotion and Tenure Cases

None of these data should be treated as criteria for promotion and/or tenure. These data are provided for reference use only.

1. These data are for successful P&T cases in the College of Engineering. Cases that were not successful at the department, college, or university level are **not** included in this summary.
2. This summary does not represent all the information considered for a given case, does not reflect important information about quality or impact of scholarly work, and does not reflect the discussion and interpretation of information in the dossier. Each case for promotion and/or tenure is unique and is considered holistically.
3. It is **important to note that the same individual is typically not represented by the maximum or the minimum across the various indicators** – i.e., the same individual typically does not have the highest (or lowest) quantity of achievements across indicators such as journal articles, research funding, PhD graduates, etc. Each row of data represents only the statistical mean, median, and range (min & max) for that line item across all faculty in the given group. Each individual faculty member will have items for which their quantities were high and others in which their quantities were not. Particularly, **the cumulative column of minimum values should not be construed as a cumulative minimum benchmark for successful faculty performance.**
4. Data include cumulative (i.e., all) achievements and not just those after arriving at VT or after the last promotion.

Assoc. Prof. w/ Tenure	2017-18 N = 8	2018-19 N = 9	2019-20 N = 19	2020-21 N = 9	2021-22 N = 19	2022-23 N = 12	Cumulative 2017 to 2023		
Indicators							Mean	Min	Max
PhD Year	2011	2011	2011	2011	2012	2013	N/A	N/A	N/A
Years in Acad.	7.5	7.4	9.0	7.4	8.0	11.1	8.6	4.5	17
Years at Rank	5.8	5.8	5.4	6.0	5.5	6.9	5.8	2.0	10.0
Journal Papers	29	29	23	29	26	36	28	1	66
Ref. Proceedings	30	33	26	32	15	29	20	0	83
Avg. SPOT Rating	5.2	5.2	5.0	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.13	3.92	5.85
Num. of Res. Proj.	13	14	10	15	12	12	12	2	33
Total Ext. Funding (M)	\$9.97	\$7.21	\$5.06	\$4.21	\$6.43	\$4.96	\$6.06	\$0.61	\$40.08
Personal Share (M)	\$3.30	\$2.30	\$1.95	\$2.39	\$1.81	\$1.66	\$2.11	\$0.47	\$10.04
PhD Graduated	2.0	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.9	2.3	1.9	0	5
PhD in Progress	4.8	4.6	3.9	4.6	4.0	4.5	4.3	0	10
MS Graduated	4.5	3.2	3.6	4.8	3.8	2.5	3.7	0	17
MS in Progress	2.0	1.8	0.9	2.9	1.6	1.4	1.6	0	7

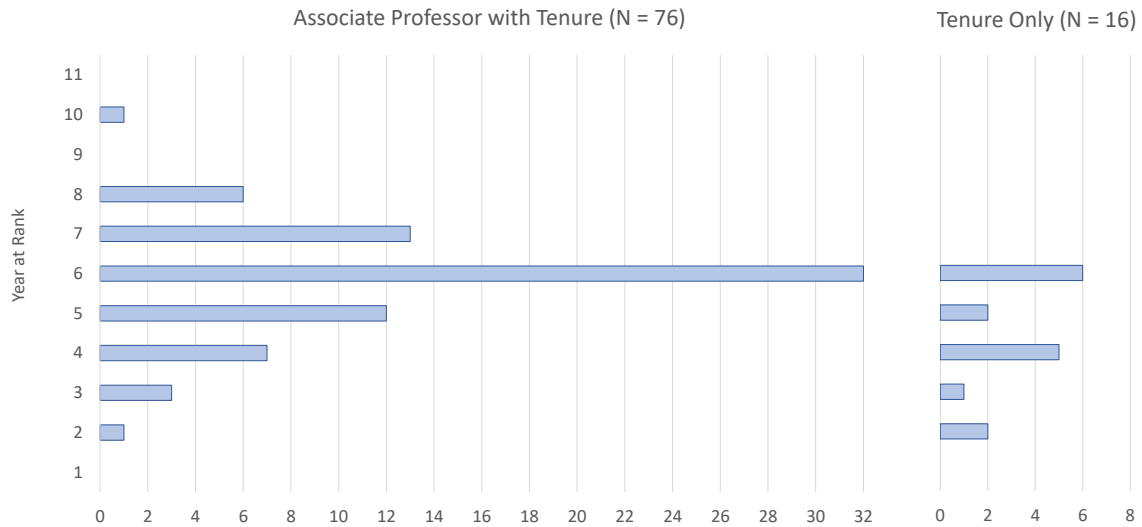
76 successful cases & 5 unsuccessful ones: **93.8% success rate**

Tenure Only	Cumulative 2017 to 2023		
Indicators	Mean	Min	Max
PhD Year	N/A	N/A	N/A
Years in Acad.	12.1	4	26
Years at Rank	4.5	1.5	6
Journal Papers	43	14	97
Ref. Proceedings	41	0	123
Avg. SPOT Rating	5.17	4.10	5.88
Num. of Res. Proj.	48	5	250
Total Ext. Funding (M)	\$31.49	\$2.51	\$170.86
Personal Share (M)	\$11.57	\$2.36	\$63.82
PhD Graduated	2.3	0	8
PhD in Progress	5.8	3	9
MS Graduated	4.9	3	14
MS in Progress	2.4	3	8

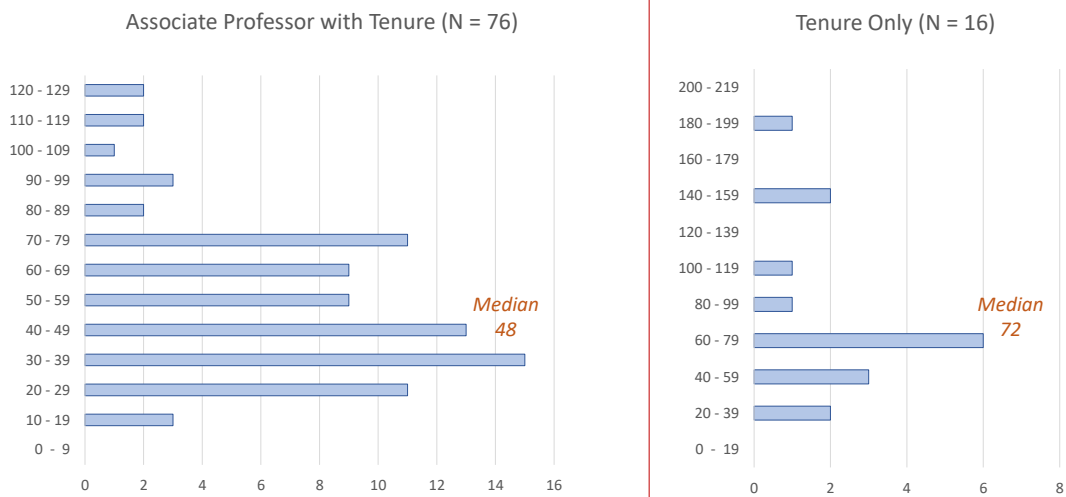
- Tenure only cases include faculty appointed at Associate Prof. without tenure and, in some rarer cases, faculty appointed at (Full) Prof. rank without tenure.
- It's not unusual for some tenure only cases to include faculty who started at research centers who have very high funding levels from that time.

16 successful cases & 0 unsuccessful ones: **100% success rate**

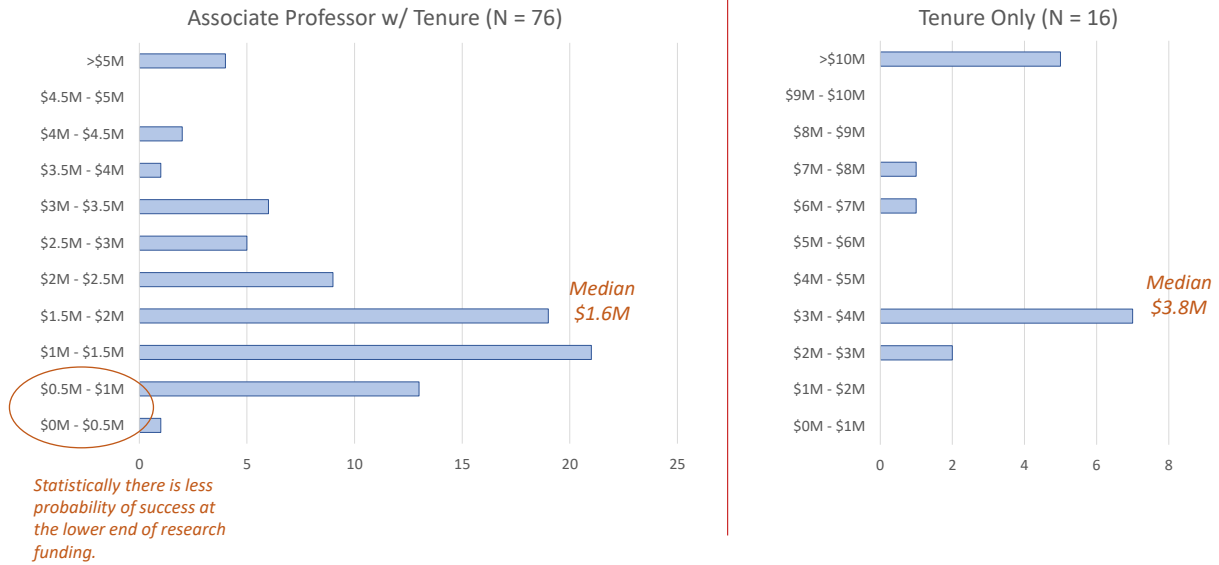
2017-18 to 2022-23 P&T cycles – Years at Rank



2017-18 to 2022-23 P&T cycles – Peer-Reviewed Journal Papers + Conference Proceedings

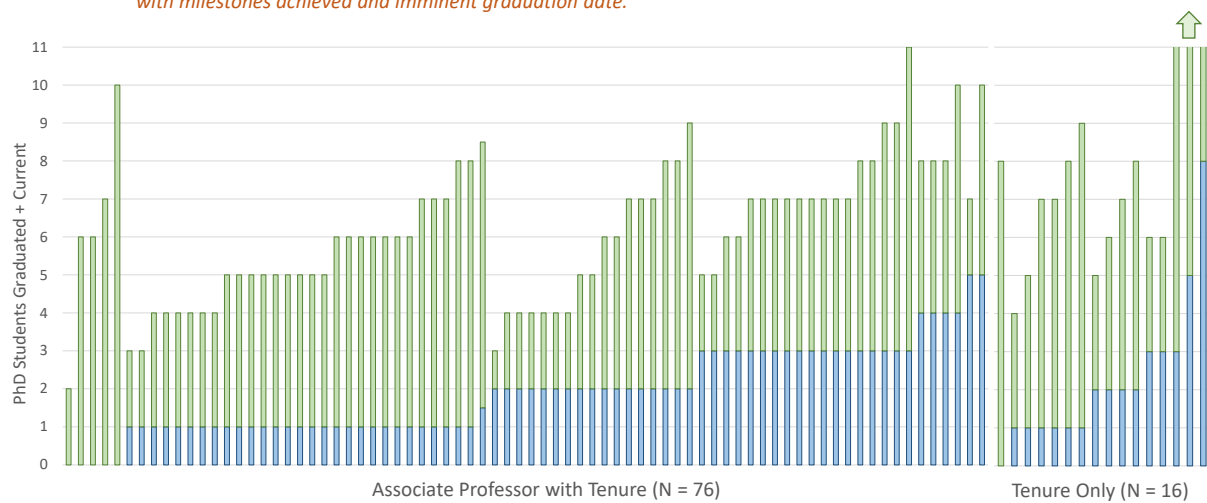


2017-18 to 2022-23 P&T cycles – Personal Share of Research Funding



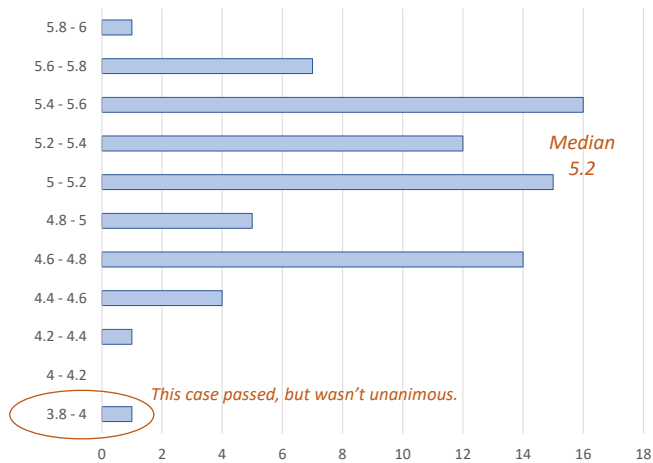
2017-18 to 2022-23 P&T cycles – Advising PhD Students

If no PhD's graduated, need to be able to show students in pipeline with milestones achieved and imminent graduation date.

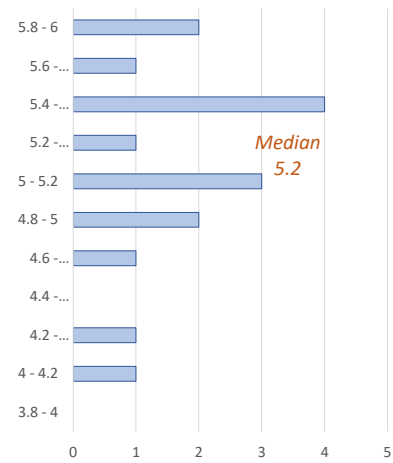


2017-18 to 2022-23 P&T cycles – SPOT Ratings

Associate Professor with Tenure (N = 76)



Tenure Only (N = 16)



Advice

Make your dossier organized and clear

- Reviewers get tired – they need to dossier to follow the correct formatting to make it easier for them to read.
- ***Do not wait until you want to go up to fill in your dossier!***
 - Download the dossier template now
 - Find out what should be included in it
 - Keep a running document – insert information as you go (update it each semester)
 - Keep copies of your SPOT results and grade distributions
 - Ask to look at samples of “good” dossiers – find out how grants, papers, participation in professional development, etc. should be listed

Advice from the Panelists

Q & A in the time we have left

How did we do?

Please complete the feedback survey:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=hGiVYK0Q-kCGPU8yweOjejQRGbbz0dJMgklqap8UmyhUNU02MjBNTzFETTJCOUNKTUVNVVU3OEZONy4u>

