Guidelines for Advancement Under the Step Plus System for the Project Scientist Series

These are interim guidelines for the 2015-2016 merit cycle, assuming that they are supported by AF voters.

Principles for Advancement
In formulating criteria for recommending larger-than-normal advancements, a balance has been sought between concreteness and flexibility. The criteria for accelerations are clarified without specific quantitative assessments that understate or overstate the total contributions of candidates. The two areas of review are: research and creative work, and professional competency. University and public service is encouraged, but not a specific requirement.

One-Step Advancement
All Project Scientists are eligible for regular merit advancement at scheduled intervals determined by system-wide policy. A balanced record, appropriate for rank and step as stated in the APM, with evidence of good accomplishments in all areas of review is rewarded with normal advancement.

One-and-One-Half-Step Advancement
A larger-than-normal, 1.5-step advancement requires a strong record in all general areas of review, consistent with the Candidate’s position description, with outstanding achievement in at least one area of review. Outstanding achievement in one area does not qualify the candidate for 1.5-step advancement if balanced performance is not achieved. Based on the candidates’ stated achievements, Chairs and Deans should articulate in the departmental and Dean’s letters the grounds for acceleration beyond simple numerical tabulations by describing the special impact or quality of the work or the scale and scope of the undertaking.

Two-Step Advancement
A two-step advancement will require outstanding performance in all areas of review. Based on the candidates’ stated achievements, Chairs and Deans should articulate in the departmental and Dean’s letters the grounds for acceleration beyond simple numerical tabulations by describing the special impact or quality of the work or the scale and scope of the undertaking.

Advancements Beyond Two-Steps
An advancement beyond 2.0 steps is expected to be extremely rare. These advancements will require truly exceptional levels of achievement in all areas of review. Based on the candidates’ stated achievements, Chairs and Deans should articulate in the departmental and Dean’s letters the grounds for acceleration beyond simple numerical tabulations by describing the special impact or quality of the work or the scale and scope of the undertaking.