Some suggestions from an ex-program officer at NSF

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Why do you want research funding?

- Essential to pursue the project

- Contributes to larger research agenda

- Considered as an important research contribution at your institution

- Provides valuable support such as graduate assistant to speed or expand on ideas

- Other: allows you to explore opportunities as they arise (Eagers, rapids, special competitions in addition to regular funding), you like to explore new research venues through grants

Which program fits best?

- Go to websites
- Look at solicitations
- Look at recent awards to see who received on what subject
- Join announced webinars for new programs
- Email program officers with a 1-2 page write-up to ask their opinion.

If you decide to submit

- Start **early** – you need more time than you think

- Read the **solicitation** carefully.

- Manage **competing priorities** – yourselves and your co-PIs – writing a proposal takes time and coordination

- Have a clear research idea – **ambitious but realistic** (should not be trust me proposal)

- Show that your research has strong **intellectual merit** with some initial findings or theory, and elaborate on potential **broad impact**.

- If there is **solicitation specific criteria**, make sure to address them.

- Suggest **reviewers** for your proposal if allowed.

- Spend time on **writing** – you have a certain number of pages, use it well.

- Ask **feedback** from those who received awards – feedback is always useful.

- Work with your **Sponsored Research Office**, learn about their timing and support.

- Make sure to follow up and be in time with the **deadlines**.

- **Review** for research institutions at any opportunity you have, this allows you to see different proposals and build relations with program officers.

After you submit

- Be patient. Allow at least 6 months.

- If proposal was successful, congratulations.

- If not, you received useful feedback from experts in your field – will help you shape your research early in the process.

- Learn from the feedback – weaknesses in idea, presentation, methodology, merit, impact, trust me, mostly done?

- Based on the feedback, apply again with that or other research proposals

- Continue to review or serve in panels to increase your exposure to the process.

Questions?