Applying to NSF

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Overview

- Kwabena: General tips for all grant proposals

- Kwabena: Applying these to NSF and the Econ program

- Enrique: Applying these to Build and Broaden + HBCU-EIR

Tip One: Know why you're applying

- Writing a competitive proposal takes time.
- Focus your time on achieving your own professional goals:
  - I need money to do this project!
  - My employer says I should be writing grants.
  - I really want the recognition that can come with funding.
  - Early feedback on my research ideas would be great.
- Each of these reasons might mean a different proposal strategy.

Tip Two: Understand your target

- Every granting organization has a mission/goals.
- Every granting opportunity/program is aimed at a specific audience.
- Each granting unit has a process for evaluation.
- Every granting unit has specific requirements for applications/proposals/eligibility.

Your proposal needs to contribute to the mission, be written to convince the reviewers/decision makers, needs to follow the required format.

Tip Three: Look for the project's "Sweet Spot"

Trust Me, I've got an idea!

Foundation set, lots to discover

Already done

Tip Four: The details matter

- Start early.
- Learn your institution's process and deadlines.
- Focus writing effort on key piece/s.
- Gather all necessary documentation
- Ask for feedback from people in the reviewing audience.
- Rewrite.

Understanding the NSF Target: What is the National Science Foundation?

- Independent Federal Agency

- Mission: Promote the progress of science, advance national health, prosperity and welfare.

- Supports research in all fields of fundamental science and engineering with federal grants.

- Granting units are called "Programs"; we have an Economics Program.

- Some economists are funded by other interdisciplinary programs.

Learning About the NSF Target

- Review the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) available on the NSF Web site.

- Use the Funding Search (searches solicitations) and the Advanced Award Search to look for possible opportunities. Read the solicitation and program description carefully.

- Use Advanced Award Search to look at the program's recent awards.

- Some programs, especially special competitions, will present webinars and FAQs.

- Take every chance to review for NSF; it's a way to see actual proposals.

- Email the program director/s with your questions.

Official NSF Review Criteria

Intellectual merit – "highest quality" and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge. **Broader impacts**… should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals.

Intellectual Merit:

- Importance of topic
- Qualifications
- Creativity & originality
- Transformative?
- Conception & organization
- Access to resources

Broader Impacts:

- Training
- Mentoring
- Diversity
- Infrastructure
- Dissemination/Public awareness
- Societal Benefits: POLICY IMPACT

What Makes a Good NSF Econ Proposal?

1. Starts off with clear research question that is ambitious and will advance basic economic science.

2. Ties project clearly to that research question.

3. Results are verifiable and generalizable.

4. Has a discernable research design.

5. The implementation plan is executable.

6. Key necessary components are complete.

7. Strong on NSF's official Review Criteria.

In Case your Proposal Is NOT Funded

1. Carefully read the reviewers comments and the panel summaries

2. Use the comments to revise and resubmit

3. Attend webinar and other information sessions

4. Talk to the PO

5. PERSISTENCE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

Economics Program

- Program Officers:
  - Nancy Lutz   nlutz@nsf.gov
  - Kwabena Gyimah-Brempong kgyimahb@nsf.gov
  - Eric Bahel   ebahel@nsf.gov

- Best way to reach us by email. Be sure to send us 1-2-page summary ahead so we can have productive conversations.

- Target Dates:
  - January 18 and August 18 each year.

HBCU-EiR (NSF 20-542)

- Established as a congressional mandate to strengthen research capacity at HBCUs.

- Supports HBCU faculty in all NSF research areas

- All HBCU-EiR proposals are submitted to NSF's Office of Integrative Activities (OIA): PI *must* identify which NSF research program is the best fit for the proposal (across most NSF programs).

- OIA sends proposals to secondary programs for review

- OIA provides 100% of the funds for all awards.

Unique Characteristics of EiR

- Limited to faculty at HBCUs or collaboration with HBCU

- Letter of Intent (LOI)

- Submit to HBCU-EiR PO in OIA, but indicate a secondary program in an NSF research directorate

- Up to 20% of budget can be used to purchase equipment

- PIs can request resources to "buy" some teaching time off.

- Allows for collaborate with co-PIs from non-HBCUs but most of the award should go to HBCU. Collaboration should in the form of sub-award.

Additional Information

- SBE HBCU-EiR Program Officer

    Enrique Pumar   epumar@nsf.gov

Important Document

Submit to the Excellence in Research program
https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2020/nsf20542/nsf20542.htm

Build and Broaden 3.0

Goal: To enhance fundamental social, behavioral, and economic science (SBE) research at minority-serving institutions (MSIs)

- Anticipated number of awards: 20-25
  - There are no limits on individual award funds or duration

- Types of awards supported:
  - Standard grants
  - Collaborative proposals
  - Research Coordination Network (RCN)
  - Conference proposals

- Proposals may address any scientific area supported by SBE
  - Infrastructure, capacity-building, training may be included, but not primary objective
  - These activities should support, not supersede, the goals of the research

Recent proposal Target date:

March 1, 2022

Build and Broaden Program Page: https://go.usa.gov/xew62

The Build and Broaden (B2) Program Goals

Expand the number of proposal submissions from minority-serving institutions (MSIs)

Increase the number of partnerships and collaborative proposals between MSIs and non-MSIs

Enhance research productivity, infrastructure and capacity in SBE sciences at MSIs

Summary of eligibility requirements

Who may serve as principal investigator?

- A full-time scientist, educator, or researcher who is affiliated with an accredited minority-serving institution (MSI)…

- Or a full-time scientist, educator, or researcher who is not affiliated with an MSI, but who applies with co-investigators from an MSI

  - At least 50% of the overall project's direct costs must go to the participating MSI

***Note: An individual may be the PI or co-PI for only one proposal

Which institutions may be lead institutions on B2 3.0 proposals?

- The lead institution on a B2 3.0 proposal may be any MSI or non-MSI…

- However, NSF strongly encourages proposals from that have received fewer than $25,000,000 total in NSF awards or fewer than $3,000,000 total in SBE awards within the previous 5 years

How do I know if my institution is an eligible MSI?

- For the purposes of this solicitation, MSIs include: HBCU – HSI – TCU – ANNH – PBI – AANAPISI – NASNTI

- Ask administrators at your institution about your MSI status, or check the Department of Education website for eligibility (Link to eligibility lists for MSIs)

Questions before you submit? Contact B2. program officers

- sbe-buildandbroaden@nsf.gov

- Enrique Pumar, telephone: (703) 292-5188, email: epumar@nsf.gov

- Lee D. Walker, telephone: (703) 292-7174, email: lwalker@nsf.gov

- Alexander Romero, telephone (703) 292-2184, email: alromero@nsf.gov

- URL: https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/build-broaden-enhancing-social-behavioral-economic

For specific questions about your B2 3.0 proposal, you may include a one-page project synopsis with your inquiries to the program officers

Thank You!

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