Mentoring Program to Support NSF Grant Proposals by MSI Faculty

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Slides posted on the website!

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Rationale for the BAM! Program

• The NSF has received comparatively low numbers of grant proposals from Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) in scientific areas that the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate supports

• The reason for the low level of proposal activity is not fully clear; however, candidate explanations include:
  • Lack of information on the part of faculty at MSIs
  • Lack of time to prepare proposals
  • Lack of mentoring about how to write proposals

• This mentoring program “Boosting Applications and Awards by MSIs (BAM)!” seeks to understand and relax all these constraints (mentor plus release time) by focusing on Economics faculty at MSIs, even though this workshop is open to all
What is an MSI?

• We are using the NSF Build and Broaden definition of an MSI, which is based on the following list:
  
  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html

• To qualify as an MSI, an institution must be in the United States or a US territory. Examples of MSIs are Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, and Predominantly Black Institutions

• We will be verifying MSI status for every application prior to selecting mentees for the next stage. If unclear, reach out to Elisa Pepe at epepe@nber.org
## BAM! Timeline Part I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 6, 2023</td>
<td>Applications are due by 11:59 PM ET. Assemble in one pdf (1) cover letter, (2) CV, (3) one-page summary of research projects (intellectual merit and broader impacts). Administrator letter sent to <a href="mailto:epepe@nber.org">epepe@nber.org</a></td>
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<td>Late March 2023</td>
<td>Decisions sent out (Cohort of 10 mentees)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Participation in BAM! is conditional on you being able to take one course release (funded by our grant) at your institution and thus, being subawarded by Spelman</em></td>
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<td>So, if selected as a mentee:</td>
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<td>Spelman will need to be in touch with your institution, e.g., Sponsored Programs Office, to set up the subaward ASAP</td>
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<td>This can take time, so please respond to our inquiries quickly</td>
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<td>The funds must be used for release time as opposed to a course overload for example</td>
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<td>By August 2023</td>
<td>Release time available</td>
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<td>Early August 2023</td>
<td>First meeting between mentors and mentees (as a group as well as one on one) Reach out to NSF program officers about “fit” of potential submission/s</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29, 2023</td>
<td>First draft of primary documents (project description, project summary, and budget + justification) to mentor</td>
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| September 15, 2023    | Feedback on first draft of primary documents to mentee  
First draft of secondary documents (references, bio, current and pending support, facilities, etc.) to mentor |
| September 30, 2023    | Feedback on first draft of secondary documents to mentee                                                                                          |
| Mid October 2023      | Mid-semester workshop (mentees, mentors, PIs, advisory board)  
Mock review panel (primarily feedback from mentors and PIs)                                        |
| October 31, 2023      | Mentee sends final drafts of all documents to mentor                                                                                              |
| November 14, 2023     | Mentor to give final round of major feedback to mentee                                                                                           |
| December 5, 2023      | Internal routing begins  
Dotting i’s and crossing t’s phase                                                                                                               |
| Spring-Summer 2024    | Proposal submission to NSF                                                                                                                     |
| Fall 2023-Spring 2024 | Surveys and focus groups                                                                                                                      |
Day-to-day Project Management

Danielle Dickens
Spelman College
Principal Investigator

James Poterba
MIT and NBER
Principal Investigator

Angelino Viceisza
Spelman College and NBER
Principal Investigator

Elisa Pepe
NBER
Grant Administrator

Renee Jones
Spelman College
Program Coordinator
Project Advisory Board

Senay Agca
George Washington University

Larry Chavis
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Representative, Association for Economic Research of Indigenous Peoples

Kaye Husbands Fealing
Georgia Institute of Technology

Patrick Mason
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Representative, National Economic Association

Sinead Younge
Morehouse College

Sandra Orozco-Aleman
Mississippi State University
Representative, American Society of Hispanic Economists
My Own Story in One Slide

• My first NSF award came after 8-9 submissions, which included:
  • Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant proposals (Economics)
  • Standard proposals (Economics and others)
  • CAREER proposals

• I recall it being December, I was about to travel to the National Economic Association (ASSA) Meetings and got a rejection from NSF. So, I decided never to apply again!

• After finishing my presentation at the NEA Meetings, two people came up to me and asked if I had considered applying to NSF:
  • One of those people was Kaye Husbands Fealing who ended up providing detailed comments on my next proposal draft
  • The other was Kwabena Gyimah-Brempong (before he became a Program Officer at NSF) who ended up providing much encouragement
  • The rest, as they say, is history (note: yes, I still get rejected)
  • The moral of the story: If getting NSF funding is important to you, you might need to persevere!