

# Mentoring Program to Support NSF Grant Proposals by MSI Faculty

Angelino Viceisza

Spelman College and NBER

Twitter: @aviceisza

January 27, 2023

*Slides posted on the website!*

Supported by NSF Award 2127199



# 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](mailto:epepe@nber.org)

# BAM! Timeline Part I

February 6, 2023	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>
Late March 2023	Decisions sent out (Cohort of 10 mentees)  <i>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</i>
	So, if selected as a mentee:  Spelman will need to be in touch with your institution, e.g., Sponsored Programs Office, to set up the subaward ASAP
	This can take time, so please respond to our inquiries quickly
	The funds must be used for release time as opposed to a course overload for example
By August 2023	Release time available
Early August 2023	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

# BAM! Timeline Part II

August 29, 2023	First draft of primary documents (project description, project summary, and budget + justification) to mentor
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) <i>Mock review panel (primarily feedback from mentors and PIs)</i>
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



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



Senay Agca  
George Washington University



Kaye Husbands Fealing  
Georgia Institute of Technology



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



Sandra Orozco-Aleman  
Mississippi State University  
*Representative, American  
Society of Hispanic Economists*



Sinead Younge  
Morehouse College

# 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!