CAREER Proposals: Integration of Research, Education, & Outreach

Division of Chemical, Bioengineering, Environmental, and Transport Systems (CBET)
Directorate for Engineering

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CAREER Proposal Setup: KEY Elements (study NSF 15-555)

**FRONT END INCLUDES:**
- Cover Sheet
  - "CAREER: " in Title
- Project Summary (1 page)
  - Intellectual Merit
  - Broader Impacts
- Project Description (15 pages)
  - Proposed Research Project & Plan
  - Proposed Education Activities, Integration with Research, and Assessment

**BACK END INCLUDES:**
- Biographical Sketch (2 pages)
  - Research and Education Accomplishments
- Departmental Letter (2 pages)
  - Activities supported by institution Career development of PI
- Budget
  - Five years, $500,000 total
CAREER proposals must have an integrated research & education plan

- Propose creative research and education plans and how they will be integrated & assessed
- Envision how the research program will impact educational goals, and how education activities will feed back to the research
- Balance both research and education, but avoid “over proposing” activities (quality over quantity)
To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?

Well-reasoned, well-organized plan based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?

Qualifications of PI to conduct the proposed activities?

Adequate resources available to PI/PI team at home/ collaborator institution?

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**Intellectual Merit**
Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields

**Broader Impacts**
Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes
Balance Intellectual Merit & Broader Impacts

Intellectual Merit (Research & Education)

- Advancement and contribution of knowledge in its own field or across different disciplines?
- Creative and original concepts?
- Well-conceived and organized proposal?
- Qualifications of the PI?
- Adequate resources available to the PI?

Broader Impacts (Broadening Participation)

- Advancement of discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, & learning?
- Broad dissemination to enhance scientific and technological understanding, e.g. Outreach?
- Participation of under-represented groups in STEM?
- Educational Impact, including undergraduate & K-12?
## Balance Research & Education

### Research (10-12 pages)
- Vision for five year research & education program for a lifetime of contributions?
- Creative & original concepts?
- Advancement and contribution of knowledge in its own field or across different disciplines?
- Well-conceived and organized research plan?

### Education (3-5 pages)
- Are the proposed activities inspired by the research program?
- Creative & original concepts?
- Are education & outreach activities well conceived & integrated with the research?
- Are these activities assessed and evaluated?
- Do these activities engage participation of under-represented groups in STEM?
Getting Feedback & Insights: Integration of Research & Education

Submit a Proposal Concept
Study desired Program Description on NSF website (www.nsf.gov)
One-page Summary (Intellectual Merit & Broader Impacts) to Program Director (PD) by email
PD provides feedback by email

Visit NSF Arlington, VA
Contact cognizant Program Director with dates to visit

Phone Call to Program Director
Request a phone conversation by email
Submit a proposal concept
Provide a list of questions by email at least 24 hours before the call
Question: Whom should I contact to discuss my ideas for a CAREER proposal to be sure CBET supports the topic area?

- France Cordova, Director of NSF
- ENG CAREER Coordinators
- CBET Program Director
- Pramod Khargonekar, Assistant Director of ENG
Answer

• France Cordova, Director of NSF
• **ENG CAREER Coordinators**
• **CBET Program Director**
• Pramod Khargonekar, Assistant Director of ENG
Question: I am non-tenured but hold the title of associate professor. May I apply to the CAREER Program?
No! An associate professor (with or without tenure) is not eligible to apply for a CAREER award.

Only assistant professors without tenure are eligible.

The CAREER Program is intended for faculty members who are at or near the beginning of their careers.
Question: I was promoted to Associate Professor (tenured or tenure track) after I submitted my CAREER proposal. Am I still eligible?
Answer

• **Maybe!** As long as you remain in a tenure-track Assistant Professor (or equivalent) position until the **October 1st** following your proposal submission deadline **you will be eligible** for CAREER.

• If your appointment changes to Associate Professor (either tenure-track or tenured) on or before the **October 1st** following your proposal submission deadline **you are not eligible** for CAREER.
Answer

• *Note* CAREER appointment eligibility is determined by the date your appointment becomes effective at your university, not by the date on the letter notifying you of your promotion.

• You should not submit a proposal if you anticipate your title will change to Associate Professor on or before the October 1st following the proposal submission deadline.
Which of the following will result in a proposal being returned without review?

A. A co-principal investigator is listed
B. The PI did not submit to the current CAREER solicitation
C. Departmental letter is missing
Answer

All of the Above
A, B, and C

A. A co-principal investigator is listed
B. The PI did not submit to the current CAREER solicitation
C. Departmental Letter is missing
Question: How does having another NSF grant affect the CAREER award decision?
Answer

- Having an NSF grant when applying for a CAREER award **does not** affect the possibility of winning a CAREER award.

- However, the content of the two proposals must be significantly different from one another, so as not to give the impression that the same proposal is being resubmitted for a second grant.
Question: How are CAREER proposals reviewed? Are they mainly panel reviewed, ad-hoc/mail reviewed or a combination of these methods?
Answer

- CAREER awards are mainly reviewed by panel review.
Question: I have two possible projects. May I submit two CAREER proposals to two different Programs, Divisions or Directorates?
Answer

No! You may submit only one CAREER proposal per competition.
Question: May I submit a CAREER proposal and a regular research proposal on a similar topic to NSF at the same time?
No! The same work cannot be funded twice, so a proposal should be submitted only once to NSF (either as a CAREER or as a regular research proposal to any NSF program or programs).

The submission of duplicate or substantially similar proposals concurrently for review by more than one program without prior NSF approval will result in the return of the redundant proposal.
Question: Do I need to involve an outside evaluator for the education component?
Answer

No! You do not need to utilize an outside evaluator.

However, you should have some sort of evaluation plan to provide feedback that could lead to future improvements.

Seek someone within your organization to help you if you have never done an evaluation. Most academic institutions have either an education department where you might find collaborators, or an evaluation system in place for coursework that could be modified to suit your needs.