



NSF REVISES MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

Information for Reviewers of NSF Proposals

Effective for proposals submitted on or after January 14, 2013

The *Intellectual Merit* and *Broader Impacts* review criteria together capture the important elements that should guide the evaluation of all NSF proposals.

- Some solicitations require additional review criteria that must be addressed in your evaluation.

A set of three Merit Review Principles should be given due diligence by proposers and reviewers.

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals.
- Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects.

A set of five Merit Review Elements should be considered in the review of both criteria

- What is the potential for the proposed activity to a) advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and b) benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
- To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
- Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
- How well qualified is the individual, team, or institution to conduct the proposed activities?
- Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home institution or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

IMPORTANT LINKS:

National Science Foundation
www.nsf.gov

Division of Institution and
Award Support
www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias

Policy Office
www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy

NSF Proposal & Award Policies
and Procedures Guide
www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp

NSF Merit Review Website
www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/

Revisions to Merit Review
Resources
www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/resources/

Questions may be directed to the
Policy Office at NSF

Email: policy@nsf.gov

Phone: (703) 292-8243

