BROADENING PARTICIPATION

How YOU can get involved to help train and engage a diverse (and growing) pool of individuals to move science forward

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES DIRECTORATE

DIVISION OF BIOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE (DBI)
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Broadening participation is an element of broader impacts, which is part of the overall merit review process used at NSF. The goal is to discover and nurture talent wherever it may be found.

At NSF, this means reaching out to:
- Individuals from a wide range of underrepresented groups
- Institutions with diverse research and instructional goals and practices, including community colleges, minority serving institutions, women’s colleges, institutions for people with disabilities
- Geographic areas with lower rates of participation in NSF programs.

Researchers seeking NSF funding may propose nonexclusive, nondiscriminatory strategies to broaden the participation of individuals who belong to underrepresented groups:

- Alaska Natives
- Native Americans
- Blacks or African Americans
- Hispanics
- Native Hawaiians
- Other Pacific Islanders
- Persons with Disabilities

Disabilities may be observable (e.g., physical) or unobservable (e.g., dyslexia).

Women remain underrepresented in some fields.
Why is Broadening Participation Important?

- It promotes the future of the US STEM workforce in light of changing demographics.
- It encourages collaboration among diverse social groups that can foster innovation.
- It helps the US lead in science by giving all students and citizens the opportunity to participate regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or income.
Broadening participation has been a primary goal at NSF for many years and remains a difficult challenge (NSF 2008). In the Division of Environmental Biology, for example, a random sample of 280 awards revealed that broadening participation was by far the least often addressed type of broader impact (Watts et al. 2013).

**NSF. 2008. Broadening Participation at the National Science Foundation: A Framework for Action.**

Opportunities to broaden participation exist in many aspects of your research, consider:

**RAHSS**
Research Assistantships for High School Students

**RET**
Research Experiences for Teachers

**REU**
Research Experiences for Undergraduates
- There is an advantage in identifying an underrepresented student in REU requests.

Resources for biology undergraduate students and postdoctoral researchers include:

**UNDERGRADUATE**
Encourage undergraduate biology students to apply directly to REU Sites. See searchable list at: www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu

**POSTDOCTORAL**
Encourage postdoctoral scholars to apply for the Broadening Participation area in the Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology. Information at: www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=503622

The NSF Broadening Participation portfolio also includes capacity building, centers, partnerships, and alliances, as well as research. Some examples include:

- Tribal Colleges and Universities Program
- Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate
- Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation
- Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology
- ADVANCE
- Science of Broadening Participation
TIPS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED

A. Seek existing expertise and infrastructure to plan, carry out, and assess your activities.

B. Mentoring is a key source of academic and social support. Enhance your skills mentoring diverse groups from programs like “Entering Mentoring” [www.researchmentortraining.org](http://www.researchmentortraining.org).

C. Set goals and network with colleagues.

D. Engage through public schools (teachers, science fairs, summer programs).

E. Work with your university’s offices for outreach, disabilities, or assessment.

F. Partner with regional institutions, community colleges, museums, or field stations.

G. Partner with minority serving institutions, community colleges, women’s colleges, or institutions for people with disabilities.

H. Connect with professional societies that have programs to promote and support diversity.

I. Use resources available through many national organizations, only a few are listed here.
SOME RESOURCES TO GO FURTHER

NSF-funded Centers have broadening participation in their mission; resources may be found at their respective websites:

- go.usa.gov/XE4B
- www.nsf.gov/od/iia/programs/stc

- Society for Advancing Chicano and Native American Scientists (SACNAS)
  - www.sacnas.org

- AISES, American Indian Science and Engineering Society
  - www.aises.org

- Institute for Broadening Participation, partner-ships to increase diversity in STEM workforce
  - www.pathwaystoscience.org

- Understanding Interventions that Broaden Participation in Research Careers
  - understanding-interventions.org

Minority Scientist Network, a virtual community for minority students
- www.miscinet.org

BIONIC, Broader Impacts and Outreach Network for Institutional Collaboration, a new Research Coordination Network
- broaderimpacts.net

CAISE, online community and collection of learning, evaluation, and research resources
- www.informalscience.org

Beyond Rigor, Improving Evaluations with Diverse Populations
- www.beyondrigor.org

Classroom Undergraduate Research Experiences assessment tool
- www.aacu.org/resources/assessment/STEMAssessments.cfm

Views expressed on web sites listed here are not necessarily those of NSF.
Keep up-to-date on programs and funding opportunities that help train and engage a diverse pool of individuals to move science forward.

For details and deadlines, see:

**NSF BROADENING PARTICIPATION PROGRAMS**
www.nsf.gov/od/broadeningparticipation/bp.jsp

**DIRECTORATE FOR BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**
www.nsf.gov/bio

For updates, visit the Directorate for Biological Sciences blogs:

**IOS INFOCUS**
nsfiosinfocus.wordpress.com

**DEBRIEF**
nsfdeb.wordpress.com

**MCB BLOG**
nsfmcb.wordpress.com

**BIO BUZZ**
Blog of the Office of the Assistant Director
nsfbiobuzz.wordpress.com

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