NHERI GSC
NSF Proposal Writing Workshop
Chat Questions & Answers

June 10, 2022
2:00-3:30 pm

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Important Resources

- NSF Proposal Writing Workshop Dropbox Link:
  https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2onkrvpyrzzug5l/AABTyXmPss3cushrEeJ-Cxaxa?dl=0

- The Grant Writing Guide: A Road Map for Scholars:
  https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691231884/the-grant-writing-guide

Questions & Answers from chat

1. *Is there only one officer in charge of making decision for a proposal or committee?* Usually, single officers and some collaboration between officers in the reviewing phase, and determine if it goes to full panel

2. *If NSF funds a proposal, do they ask for progress report? If yes, how often?* Yes, yearly reports and sometimes site reviews

3. *How can we be a viewer?* Send CV to program officer. NHERI GSC - I'm so struck by why it is so important to sit on panels. Dr. Gurley and I can "tell" you all day what these elements look like and why they are necessary, but there is nothing better than actually reading the proposals. That is how you learn. These proposals do all look different, but as Dr. Gurley is suggesting, there are common elements and a "formula" to winning proposals.

4. *Does the rank of University where proposal is submitted to NSF impact the officer's decision?* It does not matter. Does your idea stick? That is important. You have to show that your institution can support he research you propose.

5. *Assume that a PhD student wants to submit a proposal, does he/she can do it as PI or it must be submitted by a professor and student is co-PI?* Students can be a PI for doctoral dissertation improvement grant. I have not seen a graduate student serve as a PI for a regular, open proposal at the NSF. Here is more on NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program: https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2018/nsf18108/nsf18108.jsp. I would definitely go to NSF and look at the Humans, Disasters, and Built Environment (HDBE) program and look at what is funded there, as the name suggests, they do a great job of funding multi and interdisciplinary funding!

6. *Is there page limitation for an NSF proposal?* Also, a great question! It depends on the mechanism. An EAGER is 8 pages. A regular open call proposal is 15 pages. A Workshop proposal is often only about 5-8 pages.

7. *Are there any setbacks of writing a proposal with one of my advisors or one of my previous collaborators?* Great question. I actually had a slightly different take on that. I know Dr. Gurley did not recommend it, but I think that writing with your advisor can also be a great way to learn! So as with all great questions, it really does depend. If You really need to distinguish yourself, or if your department discourages you working with your advisor (as they want to see what you can do on your own) then you may Need to get out their solo or with new collaborators. But other people think it is great to continue to work with people you know and trust. It really does depend.

8. *Can request time extension on a funded project by NSF?* I mean in proposal it was 4 years now you need 5 yrs. Yes! NSF automatically approves the first one year no-cost extension. So, if your grant ended in 2024, and you wanted to extend to 2025, that will be automatically approved. For another year extension, you do have to explain and receive approval.

9. *If NSF rejects a proposal, do they explain why?* YES! They do! You will get the individual reviews from reviewers, and you will also get a panel summary that tells you the overall recommendation. So, you might get 5 reviews, and they could range from POOR to EXCELLENT (sometimes they are aligned, sometimes they are all over the map). The panel summary though will be the synthesis review. So, you get a lot of feedback. If you get rejected, you should definitely read the reviews carefully, give yourself a few days to process, and then write down any questions. Then I would reach out to the program officer to discuss. They will give you feedback, including whether you are encouraged to resubmit.

10. *Could you tell us where the recording of this presentation will be available?*
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkMC6GG5Xcw&feature=youtu.be
    https://www.designsafe-ci.org/learning-center/nheri-graduate-student-council/explore/events/