

Hallmarks of a Successful NSF Early CAREER Proposal

- An easily understood description of exactly how the proposed project will lay the groundwork for the rest of your career that...
 - Builds upon an area of research in which you are sufficiently **competent** and possess the necessary **publications/funding/presentations** to “prove” this.
 - Fundamentally **moves forward** the area of research to which you wish to dedicate your career.
 - Can be **reasonably** accomplished in the 5-year duration of the grant.
- A clear portrayal from the very beginning of the proposal of how your project will address the vital review criteria that NSF is looking for. ALL of the following are present and significantly addressed:
 - Integration of Research and Education, preferably in a variety of fashions.
 - The proposed activity relies heavily upon an innovative integration of **research and education** and explicitly shows how.
 - The proposed activity integrates **diversity** into your area of research, college, institution, etc., and explicitly shows how.
 - Intellectual Merit
 - The proposed project **advances knowledge** within the field of research and, when possible, impacts multiple fields and/or disciplines.
 - The proposed activity illustrates the use and development of **original, creative, and/or potentially transformative concepts**.
 - You, the researcher, have **access to sufficient resources** such as environments, work spaces, collaborators, material, and the like to carry out the proposed activity.
 - Broader Impact
 - The proposed activity **advances discovery and understanding** and **enhances the infrastructure for research and education**. Collaborations will be built, new coursework created, novel educational models pioneered, etc.
 - **Results will be broadly disseminated** through publications, educational opportunities, presentations, and similar methods to enhance science and technological understanding.
 - The proposed activity will have **obvious and strongly communicated benefits** to society.
- Requests a **minimum** of \$500,000 total for the 5-year duration of the project if being proposed to the Directorate of Biological Sciences or the Office of Polar Programs, or \$400,000 total for all other directorates.
 - Possesses a detailed Budget Justification that obviously depicts how the research activities, educational development and implementation, and dissemination of results will be funded.
- Presents letters of support, facility and staff descriptions, and other methods of showing **strong institutional support and commitment** to the proposed activity.