



NSF Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER) Summary

For more information, see CAREER [solicitation 17-537](#) and the [2017 NSF Proposal Guidelines](#)

Deadlines

Proposals should be routed through [Cayuse SP](#) and ready for review at the [Office of Sponsored Programs](#) no later than 5 business days before the NSF deadline.

(Updated solicitation with the 2017 due dates has not yet been released.)

- Biological Sciences (BIO), Computer & Information Science and Engineering (CISE), and Education and Education Resources (EHR) Directorates: **July 19, 2017**
- Directorate for Engineering (ENG): **July 20, 2017**
- Geosciences (GEO), Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS) and Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorates: **July 21, 2017**

Eligibility

To be eligible, investigators must:

- Hold a doctoral degree in a field supported by NSF by the proposal deadline.
- Not hold tenure at their employing institution as of October 1 following the deadline date for which they are applying.
- Not have received a CAREER award previously.
- Be employed in a tenure-track position (or its equivalent) as an assistant professor (or an equivalent title) by October 1 following the application deadline.
- Not have submitted more than two CAREER applications.

Budget

For some programs, the minimum budget amounts listed below are also the maximum amount commonly awarded. Before preparing a CAREER proposal, PIs are strongly encouraged to contact their disciplinary Program Officer or the appropriate CAREER contact to discuss budget requests for their proposed CAREER activities, and typical funding levels for their discipline.

- Minimum of \$400,000 (including indirect costs) total for the 5-year project duration: CISE, EHE, MPS, and SBE.
- Minimum of \$500,000 (including indirect costs) total for the 5-year project duration: BIO, ENG, and OPP.

Integration of Research and Education

A distinctive feature of CAREER proposals is that they “must have an integrated research and education at their core.” NSF “encourages all applicants to think creatively about how their research will impact their education goals and, conversely, how their education activities will feed back into their research.”

Proposal Components

Document	Page Limit	Instructions
Cover Sheet		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Solicitation Number. Fastlane users: Select the CAREER program solicitation number from the drop-down menu. Grants.gov users: The solicitation number will be pre-populated by Grants.gov on the Application Cover Page. NSF Unit of Consideration. Select at least one disciplinary program form the drop-down list in Fastlane. The project title must begin with "CAREER:" and follow with an informative title. No co-PIs are permitted PI eligibility. The Departmental letter, to be included as a supplementary document, should state that the PI is eligible to participate in this program.
Project Summary	1	<p>Should be written in the third person and, insofar as possible, understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader. It should not be an abstract. The summary should be entered into the available three boxes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview: Describe the activity that would result if the proposal were funded and a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. Intellectual Merit: Describe the potential of the proposed activity to advance knowledge. Broader Impacts: Describe the potential of the proposed activity to contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes. <p>The summary may only be uploaded as a supplementary document if the use of special characters is necessary. If uploaded as a single document, you must include headings for the overview, intellectual merit, and broader impacts sections.</p>
Project Description	15	<p>The Project Description section should contain a well-argued and specific proposal for activities that will, over a 5-year period, build a firm foundation for a lifetime of contributions to research and education in the context of the Principal Investigator's organization. The description should include the items below.</p>
		<p>Proposed project: Describe the proposed research project, including preliminary supporting data where appropriate, specific objectives, methods and procedures to be used, and expected significance of the results.</p>
		<p>Educational activities: Describe the proposed educational activities, including plans to evaluate their impact on students and other participants. Proposed education activities may be in a broad range of areas and may be directed to any level: K-12 students, undergraduates, graduate students, and/or the general public, but should be related to the proposed research. Some examples are: designing innovative courses or curricula; supporting teacher preparation and enhancement; conducting outreach and mentoring activities to enhance scientific literacy or involve students from groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in science; researching students' learning and conceptual development in the discipline; incorporating research activities into undergraduate courses; providing mentored international research experiences for U.S. students; linking education activities to industrial, international, or cross-disciplinary work; and implementing innovative methods for evaluation and assessment. Education activities may also include designing new or adapting and implementing effective educational materials and practices. Such activities should be consistent with research and best practices in curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation. Proposers may build on NSF-supported activities or other educational projects ongoing on campus. See CAREER solicitation for resources.</p>
		<p>Research/education integration: Describe how the research and educational activities are integrated with one another.</p>

		<p>Broader impacts: The Project Description must contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a section labeled "Broader Impacts." This section should provide a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities. Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to the achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the US; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.</p>
	Up to 5 pages within the project description	<p>Results from Prior NSF Support: If the PI has received any type of NSF funding with a start date in the past five years (including any current funding and no cost extensions), information on the award is required, regardless of whether the support was directly related to the proposal or not. In cases where the PI has received more than one award (excluding amendments to existing awards), they need only report on the one award most closely related to the proposal. Support includes not just salary support, but any funding awarded by NSF. NSF awards such as standard or continuing grants, Graduate Research Fellowship, Major Research Instrumentation, travel, conference, and center awards, etc., are subject to this requirement.</p> <p>The following information must be provided:</p> <p>(a) the NSF award number, amount and period of support;</p> <p>(b) the title of the project;</p> <p>(c) a summary of the results of the completed work, including accomplishments, supported by the award. The results must be separately described under two distinct headings, Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts;</p> <p>(d) a listing of the publications resulting from the NSF award (a complete bibliographic citation for each publication must be provided either in this section or in the References Cited section of the proposal); if none, state "No publications were produced under this award."</p> <p>(e) evidence of research products and their availability, including, but not limited to: data, publications, samples, physical collections, software, and models, as described in any Data Management Plan.</p> <p>If the project was recently awarded and therefore no new results exist, describe the major goals and broader impacts of the project.</p>
References	N/A	Each reference must include the names of all authors (no et al.), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. If the proposer has a website address readily available, the PI has the option to include it in the citation.
Biographical Sketch	2	The PI's biographical sketch should include both research and education activities. Collaborators are now listed in a separate document and are no longer included in the biosketch. Click here for a biosketch template.
Departmental Letter	2	<p>The letter from the PI's department head should be uploaded into the supplementary documents section (not the Single Copy Documents section) of Fastlane or Grants.gov. The letter, which will be included as part of the consideration of the overall merits of the proposal, should demonstrate an understanding of, and a commitment to, the effective integration of research and education as a primary objective of the CAREER award. A letter that fails to acknowledge institutional commitment to the professional development and mentoring of the PI in both research and education may disadvantage an otherwise outstanding proposal. The</p> <p>Departmental Letter should be no more than 2 pages in length, and include the department head's name and title, below the signature.</p>

		<p>The letter should contain the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An indication that the PI's proposed CAREER research and education activities are supported by and integrated into the educational and research goals of the department and the organization, and that the department is committed to the support and professional development of the PI; • A description of a) the relationship between the CAREER project, the PI's career goals and job responsibilities, and the goals of his/her department/organization, and b) the ways in which the department head (or equivalent) will ensure the appropriate mentoring of the PI, in the context of the PI's career development and his/her efforts to integrate research and education throughout the period of the award and beyond; and • A statement to the effect that the PI is eligible for the CAREER program.
Budget	N/A	<p>The minimum CAREER award size is \$400,000 for a five-year period for all directorates except for the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO), the Directorate for Engineering (ENG), and the Division of Polar Programs (PLR). For proposals submitted to BIO, ENG, or PLR, the minimum award size is \$500,000 over five years. Before preparing a CAREER proposal, PIs are strongly encouraged to contact their disciplinary Program Officer or the appropriate CAREER contact to discuss budget requests for their proposed CAREER activities, and typical funding levels for their discipline. Many programs and Directorates prefer to make more awards by funding CAREER proposals closer to the minimum award size. Proposers should also review the list of recent CAREER awards made in their discipline for guidance on average award size. Support for senior personnel is allowed only for the PI's salary. Support for other Senior Personnel (i.e., in the Budget Category A) is not permitted, either in the primary budget or in any subawards. Allowable costs include funds for postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, undergraduate students, summer salary, education or outreach activities, support for an evaluator, travel and subsistence expenses for the PI and U.S. participants when working abroad with foreign collaborators, and consultant expenses. In some cases, it may be appropriate to include academic year salary support for the PI on a CAREER budget (for example, PIs who have heavy teaching responsibilities or who must conduct field work during the academic year). Proposers should talk to the cognizant Program Officers about their individual cases.</p> <p>UT budget information is on the OSP budget preparation page.</p>
Budget Justification	3	<p>The amounts for each budget line item requested must be documented and justified. For proposals that contain a subaward(s), each subaward must include a separate budget justification of no more than three pages. A sample NSF budget justification is available here.</p>
Current and Pending Support	N/A	<p>All current and pending project support (including the current CAREER proposal) from whatever source (e.g., Federal, State, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other commercial organizations, or internal funds allocated toward specific projects) must be listed. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the PI and other senior personnel must be included, even if they receive no salary support from the project(s). The total award amount for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs) must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of source of support.</p>
Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources	N/A	<p>This section of the proposal is used to assess the adequacy of the resources available to perform the effort proposed to satisfy both the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts review criteria. Proposers should describe only those resources that are directly applicable. Proposers should include an aggregated description of the internal and external resources (both physical and personnel) that the organization and its collaborators will provide to the project, should it be funded. Such information must be provided in this section, in lieu of other parts of the proposal (e.g., budget justification, project description). The description should be narrative in nature and must not include any quantifiable financial information. Reviewers will evaluate the information during the merit review process and the cognizant NSF Program Officer will review it for programmatic and technical sufficiency.</p>

(If applicable) Letters of Collaboration	1	Letters of collaboration may not include any information other than what is included in the one-sentence template provided by NSF: "If the proposal submitted by Dr. [PI name] entitled [proposal title] is selected for funding by the NSF, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description." Letters of support are not allowed.
(If applicable) Postdoc Mentoring Plan	1	<p>In no more than one page, the mentoring plan must describe the mentoring that will be provided to all postdoctoral researchers supported by the project, regardless of whether they reside at the submitting organization, any subrecipient organization, or at any organization participating in a simultaneously submitted collaborative project. Mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers supported on the project will be evaluated under the Broader Impacts review criterion.</p> <p>Examples of mentoring activities include, but are not limited to: career counseling; training in preparation of grant proposals, publications and presentations; guidance on ways to improve teaching and mentoring skills; guidance on how to effectively collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas; and training in responsible professional practices.</p>
Data Management Plan	2	<p>Proposals must include a supplementary document of no more than two pages labeled "Data Management Plan" that describes the plans for data management and sharing of the products of research. This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project; • standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies); • policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements; • policies and provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and • plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of access to them. <p>Data management requirements and plans specific to the Directorate, Office, Division, Program, or other NSF unit, relevant to a proposal are available at: http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp. If guidance specific to the program is not available, then the requirements established in this section apply. See the "special information and supplementary documentation" section of the Grant Proposal Guide and Hodges Library data management plan resources for more information.</p>