



Request this document in an accessible format by visiting [nsf.gov/accessibility](https://www.nsf.gov/accessibility)

A Guide to Writing 1-pagers: ***Description, Ideas, and Template***

Courtney Jahn (cjahn@nsf.gov)

Division of Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS)
Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO)



Talking to Your Program Director

One of the most common pieces of advice I give is
“Talk to your Program Director”

This provides an opportunity to:

- Introduce yourself, your research program, and specific project idea
- Seek guidance on the fit of your project idea within/across NSF
- Ask questions about the submission and review process

Best way to contact your Program Director?

- Email a 1-pager





What Is The Purpose of a 1-pager?

A 1-pager is a **Tool** for both you and the Program Director.

- 1-pagers help **YOU** organize your ideas before you talk to a Program Director
- 1-pagers help **PROGRAM DIRECTORS** determine fit to program for a project and prepare useful feedback for meeting with you





Before You Start

Do your homework...

- Peruse the NSF website (www.nsf.gov) to try and identify the most appropriate Program and Program Director
- Read info on Division websites to learn about the scientific priorities of specific programs
- Read relevant solicitations (e.g., For IOS: NSF 23-547 for IOS CORE, 23-559 for PGRP, 20-576 for PBI, 21-546 for EDGE, or 22-513 for ORCC)
- If you have never submitted to NSF before, skim the intro chapter of the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG); NSF 23-1





What is a 1-pager?

A 1-pager should mirror the format of the NSF Project Summary of an NSF proposal and include:

- a brief overview,
- a statement of the **intellectual merit** of the proposed research activity, and
- a statement on the **broader impacts** of the proposed activity.

All NSF proposals are reviewed through use of the two National Science Board-approved merit review criteria: Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts.

Some proposals have additional review criteria described in the funding opportunity as Additional Solicitation Specific Review Criteria.





The Brief Overview of a Good 1-pager Includes... Overarching Biological Questions

What is the 30,000-foot view of your project?

For example:

How do cells know when to stop dividing?

Things you may care about that can help answer that question:

special proteins called cyclins, gene regulation, epistasis, chemical signaling, DNA damage or degradation, the cell's internal clock, p53-p21-Cyclin/CDK-DREAM-CDE/CHR pathway

Tie what you care about to the overarching biological question





The Intellectual Merit of a Good 1-pager Includes...

A description of the project's potential to advance knowledge

Include

- The big picture of your research area
- Knowledge gaps you are addressing
- The hypotheses you will use to address this question
- Specific aims and what you are planning to do
- Any key preliminary data

Highlight, as appropriate

- Potentially innovative or transformative elements
- Interdisciplinary aspects of the research





The Broader Impacts of a Good 1-pager Includes:

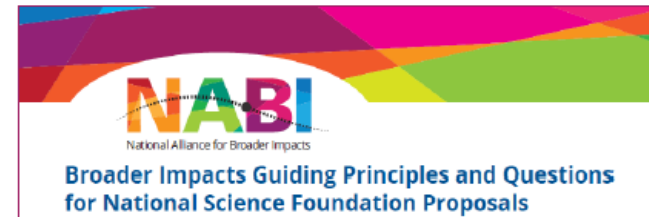
A description of the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes

A ***common mistake*** is to solely focus on the **Intellectual Merit**

Make sure to briefly describe your **Broader Impacts** so that we can provide feedback on this area as well

Need resources?

<https://www.researchinsociety.org/guiding-principles>





Good 1-pagers State How Your Ideas Align With the Program and Solicitation Requirements

Tell us how your project aligns with the scope of the program.

If you aren't sure about fit, ask when you write to the Program Director.

Include how you will address the solicitation specific criteria.

To be competitive, this additional information must be addressed in your proposal, so get feedback before you apply.

Be strategic and specific!

Use the 1-pager to tell us what you are proposing to do.

Keep background information to a minimum, use most of the page to explain your hypotheses and your approach(es).





General Dos and Don'ts

Dos	Don'ts
Present relevant info on the current state of the field	Waste half a page on general knowledge
Highlight overarching hypotheses and tightly focused specific aims	Bury the core goals and strengths of the project in dense text
Provide an overview of planned approaches or experiments	Get bogged down in experimental details
Explain your motivation	Propose research that is Human Health motivated
Write clearly and avoid technical jargon	Make the font too small; it's OK if your 1-pager goes a bit over



What Do Program Directors Do With Your Query?

Usually, we will acknowledge receipt of your email, ideally within timeframe for useful feedback.

Behind the scenes, we may:

- Discuss the idea with other colleagues in the program
- Request feedback from other programs if the idea is interdisciplinary or not a good fit for our program. This may include:
 - Other programs in IOS and/or BIO and/or other NSF directorates
 - Outside NSF





What You Should Expect in Response

Program Director follow-up usually includes:

- Feedback in an email message if your project is a fit to the program
- Encouragement to submit a proposal
- Any specific advice
- An invitation to schedule a phone or Zoom conversation. This provides an opportunity for you to ask specific clarifying questions about:
 - the solicitation, (including solicitation specific criteria);
 - your proposal ideas and preparation; and
 - other NSF funding opportunities that may be appropriate for your project

If the proposal ideas are not a fit for the program, we will usually provide:

- Advice on other programs to consider
- Name of the cognizant Program Director(s)





What to Do If You Don't Get a Response?

Responses to one-pager queries typically take a week to respond.

Do

Follow up if you don't hear back from us in about two weeks (or so)

Don't

Assume we don't care
(We get a lot of email)

If you do not hear back within two weeks, then please send a gentle reminder—we all get busy and we don't want things to fall through the cracks!





An Example Template: Include the Following Helpful Information

First Name, Last Name, Organization Name, Email

Target Program, Potential Secondary Program(s)

Proposal Type (full titles provided on the template): Research, CAREER, MCA, RAPID, EAGER, RAISE, GOALI, Conference, Center/Research Infrastructure, or Fellowship. (***Further information on these opportunities can be found in the PROPOSAL & AWARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDE (PAPPG) and program solicitations.***)

Relevance to Program: 1-2 sentences about how your research fits the program goals

Brief Submission Running Title

Key Terms: up to 6 key words or phrases

Then add your 1-page Concept Outline: brief overview, intellectual merit, and broader impacts



Questions?



