



Directorate for Biological Sciences Virtual Office Hour

Welcome! We will begin the Virtual Office Hour soon.
Please submit questions in the Zoom Q&A box.



Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) Welcome!

Program Directors in attendance today:

- Anna Allen
- Amanda Simcox
- Gordon Burleigh
- Leslie Rissler
- Diana Chu
- Kathy Dickson (BIO CAREER Representative)
- Krisztina Varga (BIO CAREER Representative)
- April Wright (BIO CAREER Representative)
- Manju Hingorani (BIO CAREER Representative)

Administrative Support & Technical Assistance:

- Jennifer Visosky



BIO Virtual Office Hour

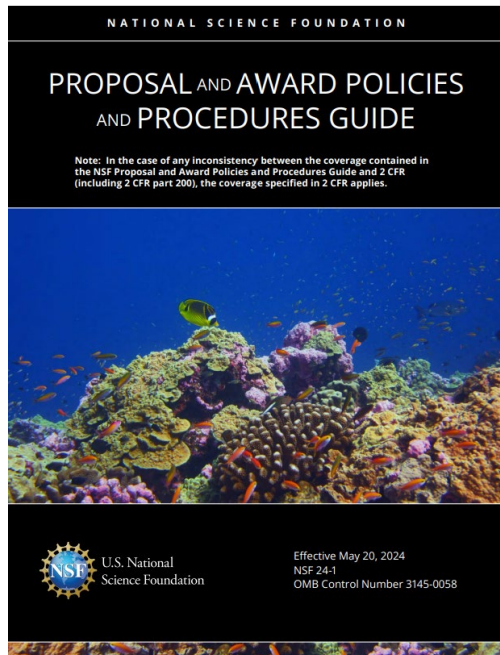
Today's Topics

- Updates and Reminders
- Recent Solicitations
- Topic of the Day: CAREER proposals
- Q&A with Program Directors



Reminders: General

Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)



- Current version is NSF 24-1
- Latest version can always be found at: <https://www.nsf.gov/policies/pappg>
- Check for recent mini-updates (supplements NSF 26-200 and NSF 26-202)

Implementation of Executive Orders

- Updates on NSF Priorities can be found at <https://www.nsf.gov/updates-on-priorities>
- Updates on NSF's Implementation of Executive Orders can be found at <https://www.nsf.gov/executive-orders>



Reminders: Solicitations

DBI: Infrastructure Innovation (NSF 23-578)

DBI: Infrastructure Capacity (NSF 23-580)

DBI: Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology (NSF 26-504)

DEB: Core solicitation (NSF 24-543)

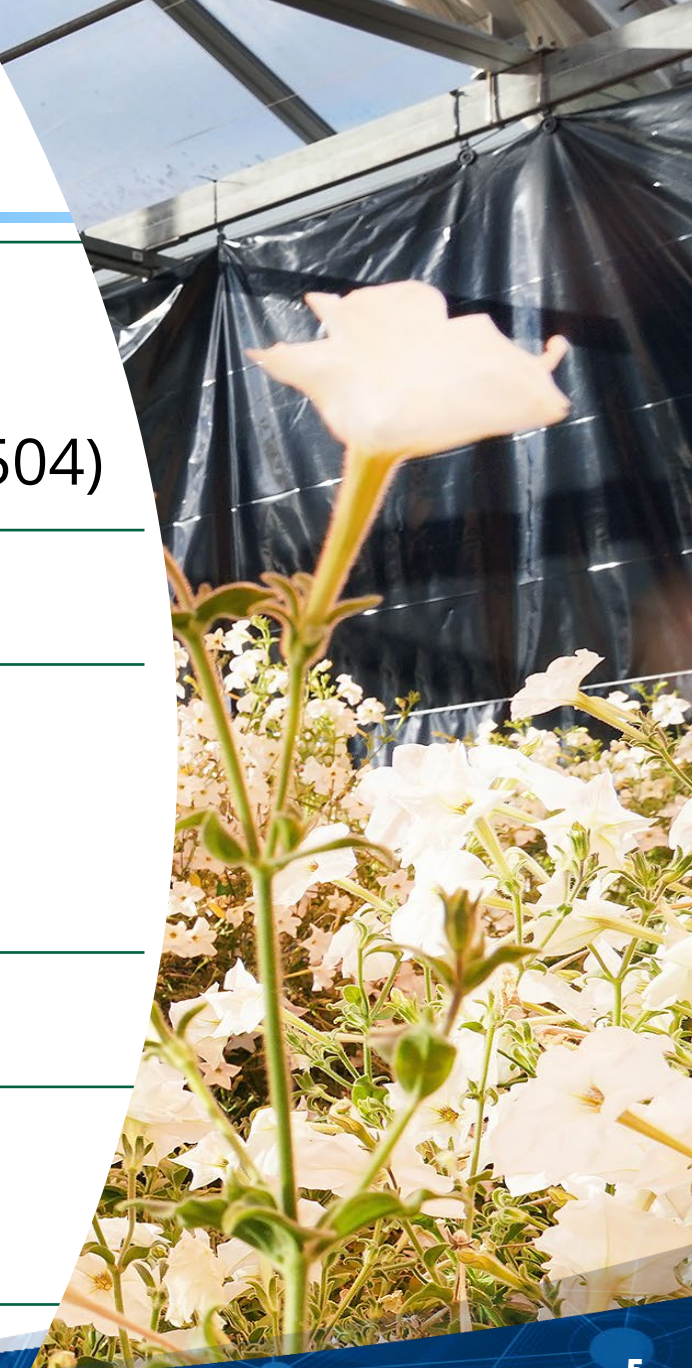
IOS: Core solicitation (NSF 24-546)

IOS: Plant Biotic Interactions (NSF 20-576)

IOS: Plant Genome Research Program (NSF 24-547)

MCB: Core solicitation (NSF 24-539)

Be sure you refer to the most up-to-date PAPPG
and most recent solicitation.



BIO Thematic Areas and Contacts



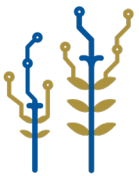
Foundations of Life: BIO-FL@nsf.gov

Exploring natural or synthetic molecules, cells and physiology that build living things



Living Systems: BIO-LS@nsf.gov

Understanding how species evolve, interact, and shape Earth's ecosystems



Bioinnovation & Infrastructure: BIO-BI@nsf.gov

Investigating the functional genomic complexity of life and developing the tools, data, and technologies to drive biological discovery



CAREER contacts for BIO and other information

CAREER contacts for BIO:

Kathryn Dickson (kdickson@nsf.gov) – BIO and IOS

Krisztina Varga (kvarga@nsf.gov) – DBI and BI

April Wright (apwright@nsf.gov) – DEB and LS

Manju Hingorani (mhingora@nsf.gov) – MCB and FL

CAREER web page

CAREER solicitation: [NSF 22-586](#)

CAREER FAQs: [NSF 22-100](#)



Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program: Goals

- “A Foundation-wide activity that offers the National Science Foundation’s most prestigious awards in support of early-career faculty who have the potential to serve as **academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the mission of their department or organization.**”
- “Activities pursued by early-career faculty should build a firm foundation for a **lifetime of leadership in integrating education and research.**”



CAREER Program (NSF 22-586)

- Read the solicitation **NSF 22-586** and NSF 22-100 **FAQs**
- Project duration: **5 years**
- Your proposal must be compliant with all the requirements of the current NSF Proposal and Award Policies & Procedures Guide **PAPPG (NSF 24-1)** and newest supplements **NSF 26-200** and **NSF 26-202**
- Eligibility is based on your status as of the submission date
- Deadline: the 4th Wednesday in July -- this year it falls on:



July 22, 2026, 5:00 pm local time



CAREER Program: Submission

- Submission is through **Research.gov** or Grants.gov
- We recommend **Research.gov** since it has built-in proposal compliance checks
- Recommend extra time for submission through Grants.gov
- Regardless, **submit early! Late proposals will not be accepted.**
- Proposals that are not compliant with all PAPPG (NSF 24-1) and CAREER solicitation (NSF 22-586) requirements will be **returned without review.**



CAREER Program: Submission to BIO in 2026

For CAREER proposals submitted for the July 22, 2026, deadline, in Research.gov, you will select “Where to Apply” from a pull-down menu with these options:

1. Select Directorate: Biological Sciences



2. Select one of the Divisions:

Biological Infrastructure (DBI)

Environmental Biology (DEB)

Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS)

Molecular and Cellular Bioscience (MCB)

3. Program Options (if any):



For DBI – *select one of the two options:*

Infrastructure Capacity for Biology

Infrastructure Innovation for Biological Research

For DEB – BIO CORE - Core Resrch in BIO (*auto-populated*)

For IOS – *select one of the two options:*

Cross-BIO Activities (equivalent to BIO CORE - Core Resrch in BIO)

Plant Biotic Interactions (PBI)

For MCB – BIO CORE - Core Resrch in BIO (*auto-populated*)



What is special about a CAREER proposal?

- CAREER proposals are **single-PI** projects that include research and education activities that are integrated, innovative, and ambitious
- CAREER proposals require an exceptionally strong foundation and commitment for a competitive proposal and a successful research and educational program
- Are you at the right stage in your career to undertake the commitments of a CAREER award?
- Have you demonstrated commitment to both research and education?
- Have you discussed your ideas with mentors / peers / program directors?
- CAREER proposals require a Departmental letter, usually from the Chair, as a Supplementary Document



Departmental Letter (2 pages max)

- Statement indicating the PI's eligibility for the CAREER program based on PI's status as of the deadline date
- Description of how the PI's career goals and responsibilities mesh with that of the organization and department
- Commitment to the PI's proposed CAREER research and education activities
- Description of how the department will contribute to the professional development of the PI with mentoring and whatever is needed to further the PI's efforts to integrate research and education



The Departmental letter is not a letter of recommendation but should address the items above.



CAREER Program: Eligibility

Eligibility for PIs is based on the CAREER deadline date, July 22, 2026

- Hold a doctoral degree
- Be untenured and employed in an at least 50% tenure-track (or tenure-track-equivalent) assistant professor (or equivalent title) position at an eligible institution; untenured Associate Professors are not eligible
- Have both research and educational responsibilities at the eligible institution
- Have not previously received an NSF CAREER award
- Have not had more than two CAREER proposals reviewed previously

Eligibility certified in Departmental Letter



CAREER Program: Tenure-Track Equivalency

- Adjunct faculty are not eligible
- Non-tenure track faculty are potentially eligible if:
 - Continuing appointment is expected to last the five years of the CAREER award; the solicitation says “expected to last” not “guaranteed to last” so no institution is promising a guarantee of full employment with this letter.
 - Appointment has substantial research and educational goals
 - Early career equivalent to pre-tenure
- All other eligibility requirements also apply
- Eligibility certified in Departmental Letter



CAREER Personnel and Budgets

- Co-PIs on the proposal Cover Page are not allowed (such proposals will be returned without review)
- Request for support of other senior personnel, consultants, or sub-awards is allowed, commensurate with a limited role in the project
- International activities are encouraged
- It may be possible to request buy-out of academic year time for teaching-intensive institutions (check with the relevant Program Director)
- Budgets should match the scope of work and be well justified; minimum of \$500,000 for 5 years for BIO; use the [NSF Award Search](#) for range of recent CAREER award amounts (typically \$150,000-\$300,000/year).



Unfunded Collaborators

- Follow requirements of the PAPPG (NSF 24-1), Chapter II.D.2.d(iv).
- Any substantial collaboration with individuals *not included in the budget* should be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal (see Chapter II.D.2.g) and documented in a signed Letter of Collaboration from each collaborator, limited to a simple statement specified in PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.i-iii.
- Letters of Collaboration should be provided in the Supplementary Documents section in Research.gov
- Unfunded collaborators should have a limited role in the project's Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts for a CAREER project.
- Collaborative activities that are identified in the budget should follow the instructions in PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.f.



CAREER Proposal Review Criteria

- **CAREER proposals are evaluated using NSF's two merit review criteria:**
 - The **Intellectual Merit** is the potential for your research to advance the knowledge base of the field of science.
 - The **Broader Impacts** reflects the potential benefit to society and achievement of desired societal outcomes.
- **Plus, a key Additional Consideration for CAREER proposals:**
 - The **integration of research and education** describes the reciprocal relationship between the proposed research and education activities and how they may inform each other in the PI's career development as an outstanding researcher and educator.



Intellectual Merit

- Your proposal will be evaluated by external reviewers.
- Reviewers need to know:
 - What is the proposal about (research objectives, hypotheses to be tested)?
 - How will you do it (the technical/experimental approach)?
 - Can you do it (feasibility based on expertise, facilities, resources, etc.)?
 - Is it worth doing?
 - How will the research advance the field and the PI's career development?
 - Will the effort provide a firm foundation for the PI's career plans (integration of education and research)?
- These evaluations apply to both Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts.



Broader Impacts and NSF priorities

- If relevant, explain how the project aligns with current priorities in Biotechnology, Artificial Intelligence, Advanced Manufacturing, or Quantum Information Systems
- NSF's broadening participation activities, including activities undertaken in fulfillment of the Broader Impacts criterion, and research on broadening participation, must aim to create opportunities for all Americans everywhere. These efforts should not preference some (protected) groups at the expense of others, or directly or indirectly exclude individuals or groups.
- NSF will continue to support research with the goal of understanding or addressing participation in STEM.
- See NSF web pages for more information:
<https://www.nsf.gov/funding/learn/broader-impacts>
<https://www.nsf.gov/focus-areas>
<https://www.nsf.gov/updates-on-priorities>



Integration of Research and Education

- All CAREER proposals must have an integrated research and education plan at their core.
- NSF recognizes that there is no single approach to an integrated research and education plan, but 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.
- These plans should reflect the proposer's own disciplinary and educational interests and goals, as well as the needs and context of the institution.
- A wide range of research and education activities may be appropriate for the CAREER program.
- The Departmental Letter should address how the proposal activities mesh with departmental goals and how the department will help support the PI.



CAREER Proposal Components

- An integrated plan for research and education, ambitious but feasible in the 5-year project
- Compelling argument that project will achieve effective integration of or synergy between research and education activities
- Departmental Letter confirming eligibility and demonstrating commitment to the career development of the investigator
- Letters of Collaboration (not of support or endorsement) when appropriate
- A well-justified budget that is consistent with the scope of the research and education activities



We encourage you to contact Program Directors

- Well in advance of the deadline, email the appropriate program director(s), send a one-page summary of the project, and ask whether your research project fits their area.
- The program director can:
 - Confirm programmatic fit
 - Give advice on common proposal preparation errors
 - Help you understand the review of a previous proposal, if applicable
 - Give general guidance on proposal writing
 - Point you to resources you may use to help write a better proposal
- Tip: Ask others to read the proposal before submitting.



CAREER contacts for BIO and other information

- **CAREER contacts:**

- **Kathryn Dickson** (kdickson@nsf.gov) – BIO and IOS
- **Krisztina Varga** (kvarga@nsf.gov) – DBI and BI
- **April Wright** (apwright@nsf.gov) – DEB and LS
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- [CAREER web page](#)

- CAREER solicitation: [NSF 22-586](#)

- CAREER FAQs: [NSF 22-100](#)

- Logistics questions: careerproposalprep@nsf.gov

- Upcoming [submission logistics webinar](#): June 25, 2:00-3:30 pm EDT



BIO REU Sites

- Research Experiences for Undergraduates, [NSF 23-601](#)
- Supports cohorts of students to conduct research in summer programs
- Deadline: August 19, 2026
- [Virtual Office Hour](#): June 10, 1-2 pm ET



New Postdoc Funding Opportunity

- Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology, [NSF 26-504](#)
- Focus area: Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Biological Sciences to Strengthen and Safeguard Biotechnology Innovations
- Deadline: September 29, 2026
- [Virtual Office Hour](#): June 17, 2026



BIO Virtual Office Hour Reminders

- Submit questions in the Zoom Q&A box
- Project-specific questions are best addressed individually by contacting a Program Officer
- Next BIO Virtual Office Hours:
 - [June 10, 2026](#) (1-2pm ET): Research Experiences for Undergraduate (REU) Sites program
 - [June 17, 2026](#) (1-2pm ET): Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology (PRFB) Program



BIO Thematic Areas and Contacts



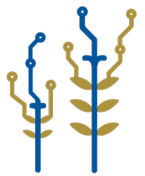
Foundations of Life: BIO-FL@nsf.gov

Exploring natural or synthetic molecules, cells and physiology that build living things



Living Systems: BIO-LS@nsf.gov

Understanding how species evolve, interact, and shape Earth's ecosystems



Bioinnovation & Infrastructure: BIO-BI@nsf.gov

Investigating the functional genomic complexity of life and developing the tools, data, and technologies to drive biological discovery



For more info:

Sign-up for emails on new solicitations; events; due date reminders; and BIO's quarterly newsletter, including information on new priorities and solicitations, highlights from the community, and more!

Visit www.nsf.gov and scroll down until you see the Sign up and social media banner, click on the yellow box, and follow the prompts.

