2018 NSF Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER)

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a CAREER award, investigators must:

- Hold a doctoral degree, and be engaged in research, in a field supported by the National Science Foundation by the deadline date for the competition to which they are applying;
- 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; and
- Be employed, in a tenure-track position (or its equivalent) as an assistant professor (or an equivalent title) at an accredited institution of higher education that awards degrees in a field supported by NSF (or a non-profit, non-degree-granting organization such as a museum, observatory, or research laboratory) by October 1 following the deadline date for which they are applying.

Associate professors (or their equivalents), with or without tenure, are *NOT* eligible for the CAREER program, and neither are adjunct faculty (or their equivalents)

NSF will not grant exceptions or exemptions to any of the eligibility requirements.

2018 Due Dates

- July 18 (Biological Sciences, Computer & Information Science and Engineering, and Education and Human Resources directorates)
- July 19 (Directorate for Engineering)
- July 20 (Geosciences; Mathematical and Physical Sciences; and Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences directorates)

Budget

The minimum CAREER award is $400,000 for a five-year period, except for proposals to the Directorate for Biological Sciences, the Directorate for Engineering, or the Division of Polar Programs. For BIO, ENG, and PLR, the minimum award size is $500,000 over five years. *Note: While these are minimum award amounts, in many cases they are also the maximum award amounts. TRO recommends discussing any significant deviations from these amounts with the cognizant program officer in the directorate, division, or program to which you are applying.*

The CAREER project is designed primarily to support the PI and his/her research efforts. Support for other senior personnel or consultants is *permitted*, but must be commensurate with their *limited roles* in the project. No other budgetary limitations or requirements apply.

Other Restrictions

Because the CAREER program is intended to foster individual career development, partners or collaborators on the project, while allowed, *may not be designated as co-PIs*. Proposals submitted with co-PIs will be returned without review.

No appendices are permitted on CAREER proposals.

No letters of support may be included with CAREER proposals, but a departmental letter is *required*, and letters of collaboration are permitted if applicable. Letters of collaboration must be limited to stating the intent to collaborate and may not contain endorsements or evaluation of the proposed project, and must follow the one-sentence format stipulated in the program solicitation.

CAREER proposals may not duplicate (or be substantially similar to) proposals already under consideration by NSF from the same investigator. In other words, your CAREER proposal must be substantially distinct from any other proposal awarded or under consideration by NSF. You may submit only *one* CAREER proposal per annual competition, and no more than *three* over your whole career.

Required Elements

- The project title must begin with "CAREER:" and follow with an informative title.
- **Project Summary** (no more than 1 page in length, written in the third person). The summary must be suitable for publication, cannot contain any proprietary or confidential information, and is not intended to be an abstract of the proposal. It should summarize the proposed research (and must explicitly address both the intellectual merit of the proposed research and its broader impacts, in addition to an overview section) in terms that an educated lay reader could understand.

- **Project Description** (no more than 15 pages in length). The description must provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken, and must contain separate sections on both intellectual merit and broader impacts. These sections *MUST* be labeled "Intellectual Merit" and "Broader Impacts"—do not use any other title for these sections, or NSF may return the proposal without review.

  DO NOT USE ANY URLs in the Project Description. You may reference websites in the references cited section, but reviewers are not obligated to check any URLs included. Make sure all the information reviewers and NSF staff need to understand your project is included in the project description. If you have previously received NSF funding (including pre- or post-doctoral fellowships, or a Graduate Research Fellowship), you must include a section on results from prior NSF support, and provide specific information in that section (which cannot be more than 5 pages in length, and which counts against the 15-page limitation for the project description). If you have received more than one NSF award before applying for a CAREER award, choose the *one* project that is most closely related to the CAREER proposal, or which best demonstrates your ability to complete a project on-time and on-budget. Some CAREER-specific requirements:

  o Your project description 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 your institution. The work proposed should be aimed at advancing your career goals and job responsibilities, as well as the mission of your department.

  o Your project description must have an integrated plan of research and education activities, reflecting your own disciplinary and educational interests and goals, as well as the needs and context of your institution, and may include, if applicable, activities such as entrepreneurship, industry partnerships, policy, and the development and testing of scientific software.

  o If applicable, the proposal should clearly state how the research and education activities will be enhanced by international engagements, and should describe the benefits to participants in the United States and abroad.

  o You must describe the goals and objectives of the proposed education activities, how these will be integrated with the research component, and the criteria for assessing how these goals will be met. NSF strongly encourages including a discussion of how the impact of the education activities will be assessed or evaluated.

  o Education activities can be in a broad range of areas and may be directed to any level (e.g., K-12 students, undergraduates, graduate students, and/or the general public), but should be related to the proposed research. You may also build on, or otherwise meaningfully participate in, existing NSF-supported activities or other educational projects ongoing at OU.

- **Bibliography/References Cited**. Provide a bibliography of all works cited in the project description. You may use any style of references, as long as it is consistent. Complete bibliographic information for all works cited must be included, including the names of all authors (in the same order in which they appear on the original publication), the title of the article, book, book chapter, or presentation being cited, and, where appropriate, both starting and ending page numbers. *Do not* use "*et al.*" in an author list, even if it is called for in the bibliographic style you are using. Failure to provide complete citations in the bibliography is grounds for NSF to return proposals without review. There is no page limit for this section.

- **Biographical Sketch**. Biosketches may not be longer than two pages, and must follow the format prescribed by NSF exactly. Do not include any personal information in the biosketch (e.g., home address and telephone number, citizenship or marital status, date of birth, hobbies, etc.). NSF also does not permit listing of awards and honors or grant history in the biographical sketch. Inclusion of any of that information, or failure to follow the prescribed format, is grounds for NSF to return the proposal without review. Your biosketch should include *both* research and education activities and accomplishments.

- **Budget Justification**. TRO will help you prepare a budget justification, which explains the items included on the budget and provides information about how the amounts were calculated. This document is limited to no more than 5 pages for the primary award, and up to 5 additional pages for each subcontract (if any).

- **Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources**. Provide information about other resources that are available to support or perform the proposed research (e.g., laboratory space, analytical equipment, computer resources, personnel). List only those resources that are relevant to the proposed work. No quantifiable financial information should be included in the Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources document. The document should be in narrative form, and should avoid using words such as "contribute" or "share" (except when discussing sharing of

physical space or resources between one or more units or institutions). Describe all resources as if they were already available, and do not indicate whether they are extant or planned for future acquisition.

- **Current and Pending Support**. Provide information on all current and pending support you have for ongoing projects and proposals, including the CAREER proposal, whether or not you are receiving salary support from the project. This includes any institutional grants or awards (but not start-up funds).

- **Single-Copy Document:**
    - Collaborators and Other Affiliations. Use the Excel sheet template (available at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa/coa_template.xlsx) prescribed by NSF guidelines to provide information about the following (together with their current organizational affiliations, if known):
        - Table 1: Your name and current institutional affiliation (include any other institutions with which you are or have been affiliated within the last 12 months, if any)
        - Table 2: Other Relationships. All individuals with whom you have a personal, financial, family, or business relationship that would preclude their serving as a reviewer for the proposal.
        - Table 3: Your Ph.D. advisors, and all individuals for whom you've served as the primary research director on their Ph.D. dissertation (this applies to your whole career)
        - Table 4: Collaborators. All persons who are currently, or who have been collaborators or co-authors with you on a project, book, article, report, abstract or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of the proposal.
        - Table 5: Co-Editors. All individuals who are currently or have been co-editors of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings with you during the 24 months preceding the submission of the proposal. If you are the editor-in-chief, you must list the entire editorial board in this section.

- **Supplementary Documentation**. All of the following documents, if required, should be submitted as Supplementary Documentation (do not submit any of these documents as single-copy documents, or NSF will return the proposal without review).
    - Data Management Plan. Provide a plan, no more than two pages in length, describing how the proposed project will comply with NSF and federal government policies on the dissemination and sharing of research results and project data. Failure to include a data management plan will preclude submission of the proposal.
    - Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan. If you plan to request funding for a postdoctoral researcher as part of the CAREER proposal, you must include a one-page mentoring plan for that individual. Failure to include a mentoring plan, if required, will preclude submission of the proposal.
    - Departmental Letter. A letter, no more than 2 pages in length, from your department chair. If you have a joint appointment, the letter should come from the department in which you expect to receive tenure. Failure to include the departmental letter is grounds for NSF to return the proposal without review. The letter must include all of the following elements:
        - The name and title of the department chair (below the signature);
        - An indication that the research and education activities proposed in the CAREER project are supported by and integrated into the department's and the university's educational and research goals, and that the department is committed to the support and professional development of the PI;
        - A description of the relationship between the CAREER project, the PI's career goals and job responsibilities, and the goals of the department/organization;
        - A description of the ways in which the department chair (or equivalent) will ensure appropriate mentoring for the PI, in the context of the PI's career development and his/her efforts to integrate research and education throughout the award period and beyond; and
        - A statement that the PI is eligible for the CAREER program
    - Letters of Collaboration (if any). If the project includes collaboration by other researchers (at OU or at another institution), a one-sentence letter from each collaborator may be included. The letter must be strictly limited to the following language: "If the proposal submitted by Dr. [insert name of the PI] entitled [insert 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." No other language may be included.
    - Proposal Classification Form. All proposals submitted to the Directorate for Biological Sciences must include BIO's proposal classification form. Failure to complete this form will preclude submission of the proposal.