

NSF Panel
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Dr. Mirka Koro-Ljungberg, Facilitator

Dr. Bruce MacFadden

- Learned to write grants by mentoring from senior colleagues; broke in as a co-PI
- The funding success rate at NSF can be as low as 10%
- Regarding Program Officer (PO), 98% really care about helping PIs craft a proposal
- There aren't issues of favoritism, but the PO can help with red flags; they really try to be objective
- Don't be afraid to contact POs
- You can even meet with POs in Washington
- Read the solicitation (RFP) carefully and write to the solicitation (e.g., follow guidelines)
- Be choice of collaborators; don't join quickly and do some background checking on people you don't know; find out how busy they are; understand their personality; it can be a rewarding or frustrating experience
- NSF is an a-political organization; don't try to politic with program officer; do meet with them, email, call, etc. – a good strategy is to send an email to schedule a time to engage in discussion
- Certain trends change over time so do pay attention to the politics between NSF and Congress
- Don't resubmit an unrevised proposal
- Prime/Sub Award (one PI then sub-awards are given) or Collaborative (more visibility because multiple PIs) – two ways of proposing – same thing but money is distributed differently; NSF doesn't have a preference
- IDC varies by kind of proposal (e.g., research, training, etc.)

Dr. Sandra Russo

- Has always been tasked with securing external funding
- Lived and worked in Africa for many years
- Helped President of Botswana get a \$3m grant from USAD; looked to NSF to continue this work; involved 24 faculty, 4 colleges, IGERT grant, interdisciplinary, a great deal of evaluation, about \$3.5m
- NSF sent out a "Dear Colleague" letter for any NSF training grant; the PIs of several of these wrote a proposal now is a \$1m grant to focus on graduate education in STEM
- There are over 500 NSF grants at UF
- There is also the "trick of supplements" to NSF grants; wrote a supplement to SPICE grant for \$100,000; SEAGEP has a supplement for graduate students to introduce them to scientists in other countries
- It's about relationships and getting to know people and how things work

- You can volunteer to be on a review panel; contact the Directorate
- Don't underestimate the time it will take to write a successful proposal, particularly when working with a team
- The IGERT project is very interdisciplinary and took a long time to develop – had bi-weekly meetings for two years and this showed who could stay the course; if someone has a piece but they are not stepping up to the plate, abandon the piece
- Keep in contact with the PO after being successful
- Don't ignore RCM; it will kick you with training grants with 8% IDC; UF has a higher IDC requirement so deans and chairs may not support low IDC grants

Dr. Milagros Pena

- Introduced to NSF through her advisor
- “Grease the wheels” = call the Program Officers and talk about project; establishing relationships is important for building collaboration
- Get as much information as possible
- Identify what area among the solicitation that is most appropriate for what might be proposed – sometimes behind a certain call, there is an idea of what will get funded and this sometimes does not come out clearly in the solicitation; learn where the proposal idea actually fits
- The broader impact has taken over in NSF and they should be well articulated; lay out a clear and compelling set of broader impact statements
- Identify the absolute collaborations that strengthen the proposal so that you have good connections; reviewers do comb through the budget to make sure the budget matches what is proposed especially a match between the budget and the collaborators
- NSF does have a relationship with the Congress; so NSF does pay attention to what is said in Congress about the way money is handled at NSF; there are politics in NSF in regards to how it has to respond to proposals given what is said in Congress
- In the panel review, intellectual biases do occur
- Rejection rate is high – does not mean that the proposal is not good – keep, keep trying! Use the feedback to continue to work on the proposal and consider other resources

Dr. Collette St. Mary

- A lot of grantsmanship is about speaking to the audience to whom the proposal goes
- The real key is speaking to the audience effectively
- A lot of exchange is the key – some comes from collaboration such as asking colleagues to give feedback on proposals to have the opportunity to refine what you are attempting to say
- When sitting on an NSF review panel, there is a lot of good work; the good work that gets funded is the good work that is communicated well
- Sign up for the NSF News – comes a couple of times a week; it includes information about new solicitations
- Funnel the reader to what they need to know; be focused

- What has been good in collaboration – not specifically professional but regarding working style
- Broader Impact: What am I doing to bring my research to the public? Why will it make a difference in the political landscape for science and education?
- The environment of the university is a more difficult place to navigate. The political landscape at the institution is an important one to be aware of.
- When you receive reviews, there's important information even if you don't agree with the reviews or feel bad about the reviews – every single comment is useful; ca refer to reviews in a revision

Dr. Mirka Koro-Ljungberg

- Her discipline is methods so there are few grants she can get as a PI
- She sees herself as a team player and can offer methodological innovations
- Got started by accident – met the UF colleague at an AERA conference and then met back in Gainesville
- The proposal should address the priorities of the call and those at the institution level
- Responsiveness among collaborators is important – in regards to time and intellect
- Track record of collaborators is important
- Grant work and collaboration is relationship
- Address and think through every single point of a review