Supporting NSF Grant Proposals: The Broader Impact Statement

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• Who includes grant support as part of their duties and responsibilities for faculty and students?

• What types of grant support do you provide for researchers? Examples include data management plan support, data storage support, literature review assistance, etc.
• Who has directly supported faculty or students drafting NSF grant proposals?

• Who is familiar with the NSF Broader Impact Criterion? If you've heard of it or know what it is, how did you learn about it?
NSF Review Criteria for Proposals

• Potential Intellectual Merit of the grant proposal
• Potential Broader Impacts of the grant proposal
“Not enough of our fellow citizens understand how relevant the research . . . conducted is to their daily lives . . . we need to engage the public in order to help improve the understanding of the value of basic research and why our projects are worthy of investment.” – France Córdova, Director, NSF (NSF, 2014)
Challenges for Researchers

• No widely used standardized framework or best practices for designing, implementing, and evaluating broader impact plans

• Lack of knowledge of effective communication strategies when developing broader impact plans
“The widespread notion among scientists that simply providing scientific information will change public opinions or help the public solve environmental problems remains a fallacy that undermines the very mission of the BI criterion.” (Skrip, 2015)
Challenges for Researchers

• Lack of knowledge of appropriate assessment and evaluation methods for broader impact activities that assume a behavior change or an increase in scientific knowledge

• Difficulty identifying partners that can offset researcher knowledge gaps and lack of experience in doing outreach
• Have faculty or graduate students approached you with questions about the Broader Impact Criterion or Broader Impact Statement as they prepare their proposals?
• What sorts of questions have you gotten regarding the Broader Impact Statement? (if any – the assumption is that you've gotten questions!)
• How were you able to support or assist researchers working on the Broader Impact Statement?
• What challenges did you encounter as you worked to assist these researchers?
What can librarians do to support development of broader impact statements and plans?
• Provide recommendations to science researchers based on their knowledge of interdisciplinary research and scholarly communications among and across disciplines. Examples include introducing researchers to the extensive science communication scholarship.

• Connect science researchers to other disciplines that can inform the development of their broader impact activities.
• Coordinate training across disciplines in collaboration with information/subject specialist librarians to introduce science researchers to institutional units and programs that may be candidates for partnering

• Provide information about resources to guide the development of broader impact plans
• Train researchers on using Web of Science and other search tools that allow results to be filtered by funding agency
Resources

• NABI Guiding Principles for Evaluating (and Developing) Broader Impacts
• The Connector at the University of Missouri
• The COSEE Broader Impacts Wizard
• LSU Libraries Guide on NSF Broader Impact Statements
References
