

NSF Project Summary – Instructions and Worksheet

Each proposal must contain a summary of the proposed project not more than one page in length. The Project Summary should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, and, insofar as possible, understandable to a broad audience within the scientific domain. It should not be an abstract of the proposal.

The Project Summary consists of an overview, a statement on the intellectual merit of the proposed activity, and a statement on the broader impacts of the proposed activity. The **overview** includes a description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded and a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. The statement on **intellectual merit** should describe the potential of the proposed activity to advance knowledge. The statement on **broader impacts** should describe the potential of the proposed activity to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The three sections are cut and pasted into text boxes on NSF FastLane. The character limit is 4,600 characters in total for all three text boxes. The proposer may determine how many characters to use in each text box, but the sum of characters across the three text boxes must not exceed 4,600 (including spaces). Check for characters that are turned into a question mark (such as ‘, “, / and –) and replace them in FastLane.

Suggested writing strategy. Use the following pre-writing template to list the possible strengths and benefits of your proposed project. Distinguish which category is most suitable for each point.

<u>Intellectual Merit</u>	<u>Broader Impacts</u>
Describe the potential of the proposed activity to advance knowledge.	Describe the potential of the proposed activity to benefit society.
What is the potential impact of the proposed activity? Will it resolve some theoretical debate, provide new evidence to link existing findings, be applied to understanding other disciplines or fields?	How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training and learning?
To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? Is it innovative; does it have the potential to be transformative?	How well does the activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)?
Is the proposer (individual or team) well qualified to conduct the project? Does the team include personnel with all the required expertise to conduct the project?	Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? (Data Sharing/Management Plans)
How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Are the goals and objectives clear? Is the plan detailed and thoughtful?	What are the benefits of the proposed activity to society?
Are the desired outcomes supported by current scholarship, pilot findings, or preliminary data?	What are the benefits of the proposed activity to the institution (infrastructure, faculty, students, recruitment of future students, etc.)?
	What are the benefits to the researchers in terms of their career, goals, and productivity?