**2012: NSF CAREER PROPOSAL PREPARATION TIPS FROM ORSP**

* Getting started: Go to: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inors/PSForm.htm> and provide as much information as possible.
  + **BY PROVIDING THIS INFORMATION WE ARE ABLE TO ESTABLISH THE PROPOSAL IN A DATABASE THAT IS USED TO GENERATE SUMMARY REPORTS. BASIC INFORMATION IS REQUESTED SUCH AS THE TITLE, PROJECT PERIOD, BUDGETARY NEEDS**
* Get registered in NSF FastLane: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inors/fastlaneform.htm>
* Read the Program Solicitation: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2011/nsf11690/nsf11690.htm>
* Inform your ORSP contact as soon as possible that you are planning to submit a CAREER proposal. Even if you later decide not to submit, it is better to plan for it as far in advance as possible.

Budget - Ask your ORSP contact to provide you a budget template which has preloaded cells containing employee benefits, tuition and indirect cost rates. We can draft the Budget Justification once the final budget has been determined.

* **COST SHARING IS NOT PERMITTED.**
* **ADVISED TO INCLUDE COSTS THAT MAY BE NEEDED TO ADEQUATELY SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT OF YOUR PROPOSAL.**
* **BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR BUDGET NEEDS. IF NSF IS INTERESTED IN FUDNING YOUR PROPOSAL THEY CAN ALWAYS ASK YOU TO REDUCE YOUR BUDGET – THEY MOST LIKELY WILL NOT ASK YOU TO INCREASE IT!**
* **WE HAVE FOUND THAT MINIMUM FUNDING LEVELS ALSO RELECT THE MAXIMUM FUNDING LEVEL. 7 OF 9 ACTIVE AWARDS FUNDED AT THE MINIMUM**
* **YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK FOR SUPPLEMENTS FOR UNDERGRADS/TEACHERS**

Current and Pending Support – the ORSP maintains a database from which we can extract the listing of activity that is required.

**Formatting guidelines**

Use one of the following typefaces identified below:

* Arial[11](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp#fn11), Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger;
* Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger; or
* Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger.

A font size of less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figure, table or diagram captions and when using a Symbol font to insert Greek letters or special characters. PIs are cautioned, however, that the text must still be readable.

b. No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.

c. Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch and each section should have page numbers.

These requirements apply to all uploaded sections of a proposal, including supplementary documentation.

Discuss your proposal with your Department Chair and request the “Departmental Letter” which is a required document. Proposals that do not have this letter will be returned without review. **(THERE IS A 2 PAGE LIMIT FOR THIS LETTER)**

Letters of Collaboration are permitted if applicable (1 page maximum). The collaboration letters should NOT include a personal endorsement or recommendation. See the program guidelines for what is expected for Collaboration Letters

Stand-alone letters of support, recommendation, or endorsement for the proposal or the PI are NOT permitted.

Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan is required if you request funding for a post-doc.

A Data Management Plan is required for all proposals which describe your plan for data management and sharing of the products of your project.

Make sure you are current on NSF project reporting – NSF will delay the review of your proposal if you are not current with meeting your reporting obligations.

NSF FAQS for CAREER Program: [http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2011/nsf11038/nsf11038.jsp#b41](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2011/nsf11038/nsf11038.jsp%23b41)

**DON’T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SUBMIT!!!!**  THE LAST THING WE WANT TO HAPPEN AFTER YOU HAVE WORKED LONG HOURS ON YOUR PROPOSAL IS TO MISS THE DEADLINE. IT IS IN EVERYONE’S BEST INTEREST TO PLAN TO SUBMIT A COUPLE DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE DEADLINE SO THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO REVIEW THE PROPSAL FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES AND AVOID TECHNICAL PROBLEMS THAT CAN OCCUR WHEN SUBMITTING

* **PLEASE CONTACT ORSP IF YOU WOULD LIKE US TO E-MAIL THIS DOCUMENT TO YOU SO YOU CAN EASILY ACCESS THE HYPERLINKS**