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UF/IFAS
RESEARCH
FORUM

NSF Proposals – Wendy Graham

What makes a good proposal?

- An intriguing idea
- That will advance science in each stated discipline
- Framed in specific hypothesis or science questions
- With a clear, innovative experimental plan
- That will collect (or use) specific types of data
- And with explicit methods to analyze the data to answer the questions or test the hypotheses
- So that what you learn can be extrapolated beyond the place you conducted the experiment

But the trick is that it can't be so well defined that it looks like a lists of tasks with risk-free outcomes that are known a priori!

Common Pitfalls

- Work is too close to what has been done before - i.e., incremental advance
- Project has too large a scope *or* is too narrowly focused to be exciting
- Proposed research plan will not clearly answer/test the stated questions/hypotheses
- Techniques + methodology are not cutting edge
- One of multiple disciplines is seen as an “add-on” and not well integrated

Broader Impacts

Advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning

curriculum; students; REU; teachers; K-12; RET; mentoring; postdoc

Broaden participation of underrepresented groups

community college; HBCU; minority; Native Americans

Build or enhance partnerships

with industry, internationally, with other federal agencies, etc.

Enhance infrastructure for research and education

international collaboration in developing countries; equipment; laboratories

Broad dissemination to enhance scientific and technological understanding

blogs; citizen-science; local media; museums

Benefits to society

hazards; policy; environmental impacts; local + state agencies

It is better to do one or two of these solidly and well, than to try and cover a number of them superficially

Contact Your Program Director!

- to learn about existing and new programs
- to gain program insights, learn about priorities
- to volunteer to review
- to determine the appropriateness of a proposal
- to ask administrative questions
- to discuss reviews and possible resubmittal