



Division of Environmental Biology Virtual Office Hour

Today's topic:
How to Write a Great Review

Welcome!
We will begin soon.

Please submit questions via
the Q&A button in ZOOM.
Please set to "send
anonymously"

Division of Environmental Biology (DEB) Welcome!

Program Officers in attendance today

- Matt Carling – Evolutionary Processes (mcarling@nsf.gov)
- Shannon Fehlberg – Systematics and Biodiversity Science (sfehlber@nsf.gov)
- Kendra McLauchlan – Ecosystem Science (kmclauch@nsf.gov)
- Jeremy Wojdak – Population & Community Ecology (jwojdak@nsf.gov)

Facilitators – Christina Washington, Bill Lawson, and Megan Lewis



Solicitations

(Web search: “NSF DEB” - then look under Funding Opportunities and Popular Links)

NEW* Core DEB solicitation ([NSF 22-541](#)) - no deadlines and no submission limits.

- [NSF 22-513](#) – Organismal Response to Climate Change (ORCC) – **Deadline March 1**
- [NSF 22-532](#) – Understanding the Rules of Life: Emergent Networks – **Deadline March 1**
- [NSF 22-508](#) – Biodiversity on a Changing Planet (BoCP) – **Deadline March 25**
- [NSF 22-550](#) – Signals in the Soil – **Deadline April 14**
- [NSF 22-500](#) – Building Research Capacity of New Faculty in Biology – **Submission Window June 1-30**
- [NSF 20-564](#) – Opportunities for Promoting Understanding through Synthesis (OPUS) – **Deadline Aug 1**
- [NSF 22-504](#) – Macrosystems Biology and NEON-Enabled Science – **Deadline Nov 14**
- [BIO 18-001](#) – Biological Sciences Temporary/Rotator Program Officer



DEB Virtual Office Hour

- DEB Office Hours: second Monday of each month, 1-2pm Eastern

Upcoming Topics:

Mar 14: Crossing Divisions in Biology: Opportunities in other NSF/BIO programs.

Integrative Organismal Systems

Division of Biological Infrastructure

Molecular and Cellular Biosciences

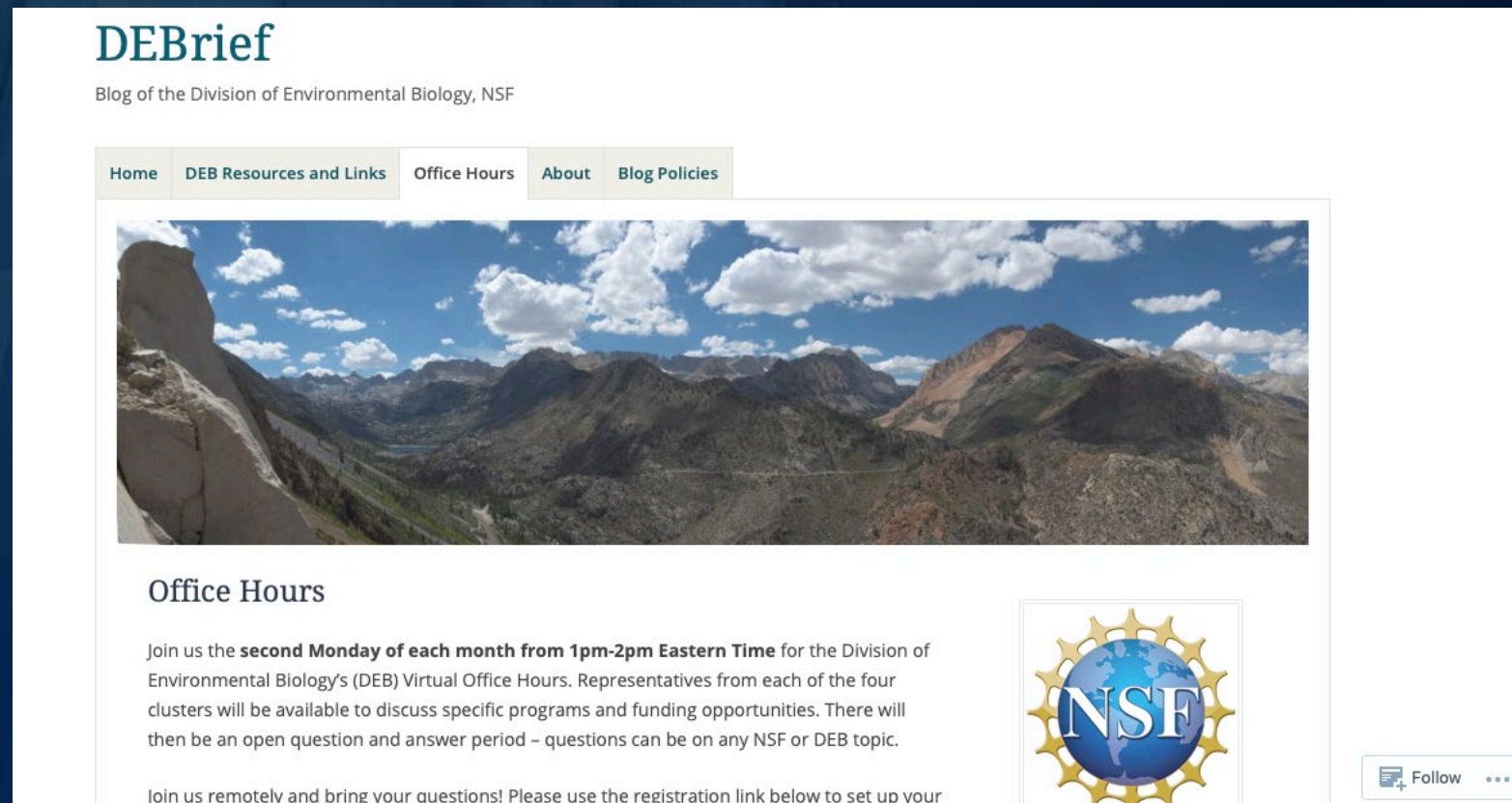
Apr 11: Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions

May 9: CAREER proposals




Visit webpage for upcoming topics, registration, and recaps

<https://deblog.nsfbio.com/office-hours/>




DEB Brief
Blog of the Division of Environmental Biology, NSF

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Office Hours

Join us the **second Monday of each month from 1pm-2pm Eastern Time** for the Division of Environmental Biology's (DEB) Virtual Office Hours. Representatives from each of the four clusters will be available to discuss specific programs and funding opportunities. There will then be an open question and answer period – questions can be on any NSF or DEB topic.



Join us remotely and bring your questions! Please use the registration link below to set up your

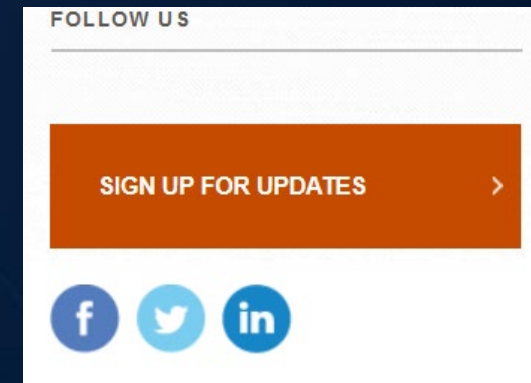
Follow ...



BIO Newsletter

Quarterly updates on new priorities and solicitations, highlights from the community, and more!

Visit www.nsf.gov scroll down to the orange box.



Volunteer to review for DEB:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DEBexpertise>



RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENT:

2 Rotating Program Officers: Broadening Participation, Education and Training

- **WHERE:** Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI) in the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO)
- **WHO:** (1) An individual with experience in diversity, equity, and inclusion in biology research or programs; (2) Experience with education & training programs in biology.
- **WHAT:** These positions will be members of a collaborative team of Program Officers in the Human Resources Cluster that work with Program Officers across all BIO Divisions to oversee its new programs that have a strong focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion and training/education in biology: ***BRC-BIO***, ***RaMP***, and ***BIO-LEAPS***.
- **WHEN:** Applications will begin to be reviewed on **2/17/22**; open until filled.
<https://beta.nsf.gov/careers/openings/bio/dbi/dbi-2021-24748> DBIRotators@nsf.gov



**Invest 19 minutes:
“The art and science of reviewing
proposals”**

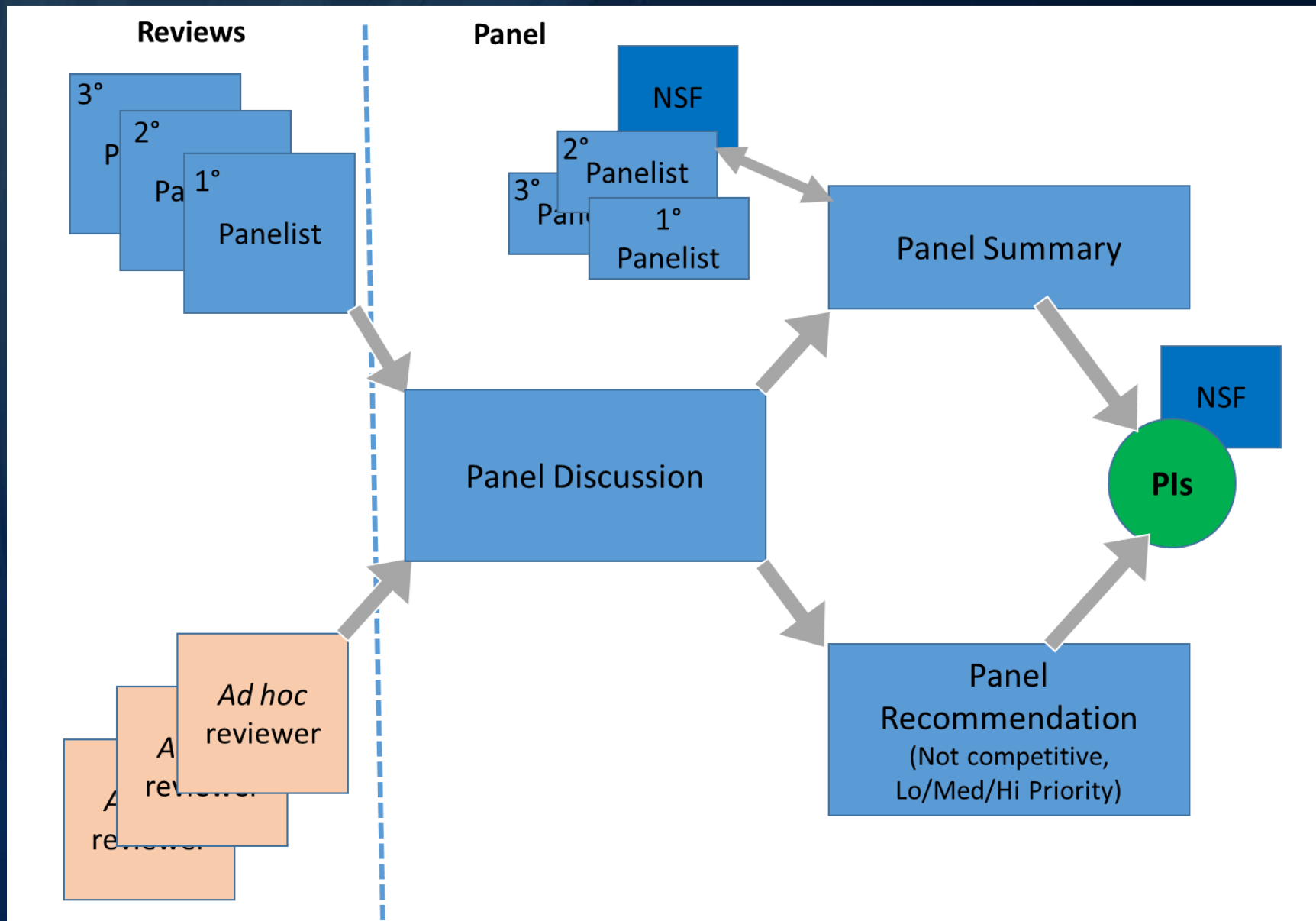
<https://tipsforreviewers.nsf.gov/>



Merit Review Process Overview

“Generalists”

“Specialists”



Merit Review Criteria

Intellectual Merit: The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge;

Broader Impacts: The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

- **Is this exciting science?**
- **Will it work?**
- How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
- Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations)?
- **Can this team do this work?**



Basic Guidelines

- Use a structured format, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts
- Focus on the most important aspects...
- Make sure the narrative review and proposal rating align:
 - Poor:** Proposal has serious deficiencies
 - Fair:** Proposal lacking in one or more critical aspects; key issues need to be addressed
 - Good:** A quality proposal, worthy of support
 - Very Good:** High quality proposal in nearly all aspects; should be supported if at all possible
 - Excellent:** Outstanding proposal in all respects; deserves highest priority for support



Reviewing Traps

- Mentally re-writing the proposal yourself
- Summarizing the proposal
- Giving a pass to underdeveloped plans by great / experienced PIs.
- Favoring charismatic systems
- Commenting on things you don't understand/know about
- Favoring quantity over quality in broader impacts
- Expecting novelty in broader impacts
- Piling on the negatives
- Not enough evaluation in the review



Special criteria

In addition to Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts, sometimes reviewers must consider:

Solicitation-specific criteria

- vary by solicitation, but may constrain scope, content, participants (e.g., RUI, CAREER, OPUS, LTREB)
- You just want to measure the proposal by the correct standard.
- NSF will provide guidance to reviewers for each solicitation.



Integrity of the review process

Bias – Many flavors, many origins... but awareness is first step in mitigation.

REDUCE COGNITIVE BIASES

- Actively reflect on your own thought processes
- Think of alternative views
- Play a devil's advocate
- Take time with your decision



Integrity of the review process

Conflicts of Interest – Your responsibility to identify COIs, both institutional and individual. Also, even if no official conflict exists, be honest and open if you don't feel you can be objective.

Confidentiality – Do not share proposal information.



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Thank you very much!

