

# NSF Funding in Anthropology & Related Sciences



*Deborah Winslow*  
Cultural Anthropology Program  
[dwinslow@nsf.gov](mailto:dwinslow@nsf.gov)

# Plan of this talk

---

- I. Overview of NSF
- II. Overview of funding sources
- III. Proposal writing



# *Part I. Overview of NSF*



*Arlington, Virginia*



# Creating NSF: 1946 - 1950

- 4 years of contentious debate
- Major issues: Who owns patents? Applied or basic research? Allocations by state or merit? Social science?
- "...Mathematical, physical, medical, biological, engineering, & *other sciences*.."
- 1950: passed by Congress and signed by President Truman.



# *It didn't take long for social science to appear at NSF.*

- 1951: \$225,000 NSF's original budget
- 1952: First 28 research awards were made
- 1957: Social Science Research Program established in 4 fields:
  - Economics
  - Anthropology
  - Sociology
  - History & philosophy of science



# Today, NSF ([nsf.gov](http://nsf.gov))....

---

- Annual budget of \$7.5 billion
- Competitive merit review of ~ 50,000 proposals/year (funds ~11,500)
- Welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists and engineers
- Encourages women, members of minority groups, and persons with disabilities to compete fully in all NSF programs
- Supports graduate students through fellowships, dissertation improvement grants, and funding through faculty research grants.





National Science Board

Office of  
Inspector  
General



National Science Foundation  
Director & Deputy Director

### Office of the Director

- ◆ Office of Diversity & Inclusion (ODI)
- ◆ Office of General Counsel (OGC)
- ◆ Office of International Science & Engineering (OISE)
- ◆ Office of Integrative Activities (OIA)
- ◆ Office of Legislative & Public Affairs (OLPA)
- ◆ Office of Diversity & Inclusion

### Directorates

- ◆ Biological Sciences (BIO)
- ◆ Computer & Information Science & Engineering (CISE)
- ◆ Education & Human Resources (EHR)
- ◆ Engineering (ENG)
- ◆ Geosciences (GEO)
- ◆ Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS)
- ◆ **Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences (SBE)**

# “Our” directorate: SBE



Dr. Fay Lomax Cook, Assistant Director  
Dr. Kellina Craig-Henderson,  
Deputy Assistant Director

SBE Office of  
Multidisciplinary  
Activities (Virtual)

Division of Behavioral  
and Cognitive  
Sciences (BCS)

Division of Social  
and Economic  
Sciences (SES)

National Center for  
Science &  
Engineering  
Statistics



# *Part II. Funding Sources*

---

1. HOW money is spent  
("mechanisms")

1. WHO has the money ("programs,"  
"opportunities")



# Different ways programs can spend money: “mechanisms”

---

- DDRIGs
- Regular/senior research grants
- Training programs (including Scholars)
- Workshops
- Research Coordination Networks (RCNs)
- Research experience supplements (REG, REU, RET)
- Fellowships
- High risk awards (EAGER, RAPID)
- CAREER awards



# RAPIDs: Rapid Response Research

*New Orleans, 2005*



- Urgent awards to collect ephemeral data (or time-sensitive opportunity)
- Fast turnaround, in-house review
- 3-5 page proposal
- Program permission
- In CA: \$15,000-\$40,000 is typical (NSF: up to \$200,000)

# EAGER: Early Concept Grants for Exploratory Research

*Jeff Snodgrass: A Biocultural Study of the Functional Genomics of Intensive Internet Use*



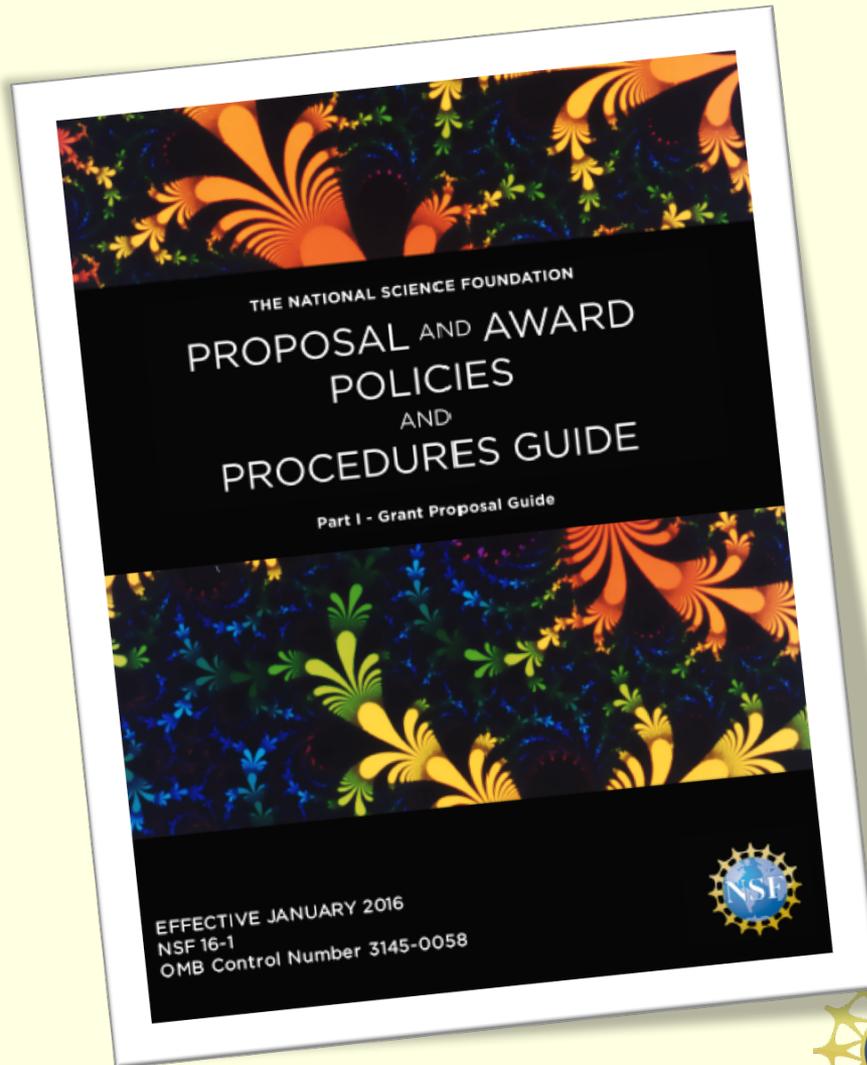
- Innovative: high risk/high return
- Fast turnaround, in-house review
- 5-8 page proposal
- Program permission
- In CA: \$15,000-\$40,000 is typical (NSF: up to \$300,000)

# CAREER awards

- 5 year awards, \$400,000 floor (in SBE)
- Career development of outstanding new teacher/scholars.
- Untenured Asst. Prof. (or equivalent), with PhD or equiv.
- Untenured at time of application and the following October 1; 3 tries
- Integrated educational component
- Deadline: July 2017 (?)



# Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPP Guide)



Describes  
mechanisms



# Who has the money at NSF?

---

- Divisions are divided into “programs” each with its own budget & funding priorities
- Also: Directorate-level programs
- Also: Inter-Directorate programs
- Also: Short-term opportunities – Dear Colleague Letters, Special Competitions, Investment Areas



# 1. SBE Programs: BCS Division

---

- Archaeology & Archaeometry
- Biological Anthropology
- Cultural Anthropology
- Documenting Endangered Languages
- Geography & Spatial Sciences
- Linguistics
- Perception, Action, & Cognition
- Developmental & Learning Sciences
- Social Psychology
- Cognitive Neurosciences



## 2. SBE Programs: SES Division

---

- Decision, Risk, & Management Sciences
- Economics
- Law & Social Sciences
- Methodology, Measurement, & Statistics
- Political Science
- Science of Organizations
- Science, Technology, and Society
- Sociology
- Secure & Trustworthy Cyberspace



# 3. SBE Programs: Office of Multidisciplinary Activities

---

- RIDIR (Resource Implementations for Data Intensive Research in the Social Behavioral & Economic Sciences)
- SBE Post-Doctoral Fellowships
- Science of Learning
- Science of Science & Innovation Policy



# Must you choose?

- Submit one proposal to multiple programs
- Choose programs on cover page
- Will go to more than one review panel
- Both fund, neither fund, one funds
- Some programs fund higher % of DDRIGs (= better odds?)
- Reviews from multiple perspectives  
(= better science)
- Check first: Not all programs do co-review.



# A few program statistics

<b>Selected SBE Programs</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Allocations</b>	<b>Senior Success Rates (2009-14)</b>	<b>Average Award Size (2009-14)</b>	<b>DDRIG Success Rates (2009-14)</b>	<b>Average Award Size (2009-14)</b>
Archaeology & Archaeometry	\$7,386,940	28%	\$147,291	37% (147/412)	\$21,423
Biological Anthropology	\$4,377,709	27%	\$274,534	18% (49/275)	\$20,291
Cultural Anthropology	\$3,953,395	12%	\$151,965	16% (143/901)	\$17,959
Documenting Endangered Languages	\$2,282,666	32%	\$81,080	83% (19/23)	\$11,502
Geography & Spatial Sciences	\$7,483,356	13%	\$278,235	20% (114/565)	\$13,592
Law & Social Sciences	\$5,609,643	19%	\$240,000	30%	
Linguistics	\$6,338,149	29%	\$283,953	42% (72/172)	\$12,369



# Outside SBE: lots of other anthropology-relevant programs!

---

- Arctic Social Sciences
- Infrastructure Mgmt. & Extreme Events (IMEE)
- Ecology & Evolution of Infectious Diseases (EEID)
- Dynamics of Coupled Natural & Human Systems (CNH)
- Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy, & Water Systems (INFEWS)



# Ecology & Evolution of Infectious Diseases (EEID)

Douglas Call, Louise Matthews, **Robert Quinlan**, Margaret Davis, Jonathan Rushton:  
“US-UK Collaborative: Ecological and socio-economic factors impacting maintenance and dissemination of antibiotic resistance in the Greater Serengeti Ecosystem”



# Fellowships

(U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens)

- **GRFP**: Early stages of graduate study. 3 years of support (\$32,000/yr. plus \$12,000 to institution).
- **East Asia & Pacific Summer Institutes (EAPSI)**: grad student research experience in Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, or Taiwan. \$5000, travel, & living expenses for 8 weeks.
- **SBE Post Doctoral Research Fellowships (SPRF)**: Within 3 years of degree.



# III. Proposals



# Basics I

- PIs register in FastLane (SR/PO)
- Access on-line proposal submission modules
- Multiple parts:
  - Cover page
  - Project summary
  - Project description
  - References cited
  - Biographical sketch
  - Budget & budget justification
  - Current & Pending support
  - Facilities & other resources
  - Supplementary documents: Data Management Plan, Advisor letter template, Collaborators/affiliations.
- You give research office access.
- Research office adds indirect costs & submits.



# Basics II

- NSF reviews proposal (4-6 months)
  - Compliance check
  - In-house reviews (sometimes)
  - Ad hoc reviews (usually)
  - Advisory panels (usually)
  - Program officer recommendation
  - Division Director recommendation
  - Division of Grants & Agreements checks.
  - Award letter is issued.
  - Money goes to institution.
  - You contact SR/PO about accessing funds.



# DDRIG Requirements

- Every program that funds dissertation research has a “solicitation.”
  - Specific requirements.
  - General advice.
- *Read the solicitation.*
- Also consult: NSF-wide Grant Proposal Guide.
- If they conflict? Go with solicitation.
- Cultural Anthropology: \$20,000, 10 pages, two “target dates” a year (8/15, 1/15), 2 tries



# Budget

---

- Budget: ask for what you need to make a success of the research (DDRIG: up to \$20,000 in direct costs; seniors: no limits, but typical is \$100,000/project year).
- DDRIGs: explain all you need, what you request from NSF, what you will do to make up the rest.



# Data Management Plan

---

- Supplementary document. 2 pages.
- Describe data.
- Protection during research.
- Access by other researchers: when, how?
- Long-term archiving.
- Not an IRB plan but mention how you will protect privacy.



# Official NSF review criteria

---

## Intellectual Merit:

- Importance
- Qualifications
- Originality
- Transformative?
- Conception & organization
- Access to resources

## Broader Impacts:

- Training
- Mentoring
- Diversity
- Infrastructure
- Dissemination/  
Public awareness
- Societal Benefits



# Advice

---

- Clear, interesting research question.
- Connected to larger science question.
- Clear about needed data: how will you gather it, how will you analyze it, how will this answer the question?
- Operationalize methods.
- Convince reader of feasibility.
- Be prepared to resubmit (16% success rate).



# “Larger science question” = ?

- Rebecca Bird: “A co-evolutionary approach to a complex adaptive system”
- Question: do humans always devastate their environments?
- Case: indigenous burning in Australia.



# Common problems

---

- Research question(s) buried.
- Assumes conclusions (not research).
- Lacks data analysis plan.
- Jargon – not ordinary English.
- Unimportant: why should we care?
- You lack skills.
- Methods listed, not operationalized (including archival research).
- Access unclear. (Letters?)
- Disorganized, unclear, not proofread.



# Avoid:

## 1. **Jargon**

- Vague, trendy words: interrogate, put into conversation with, unpack, attend to, engage with, deconstruct.
- Use active verbs: analyze, count, listen, observe, collect, explain, test

## 2. **Hackneyed & excessive citations**

- Studying up (Nader), method whatever (Bernard), friction (Tsing), etc.
- Engage references, don't just list.



# Virtues in a proposal

---

- Starts off with clear research problem.
- Ties project clearly to that problem.
- Not overly focused on that single case.
- Reader can picture researcher in field.
- Has a research design.
- Does not assume conclusions.
- Initial intuitions are put at risk.
- Proposal tacks back to the question with data analysis plan.





- HOME
- FUNDING
- AWARDS
- DISCOVERIES
- NEWS
- PUBLICATIONS
- STATISTICS
- ABOUT NSF
- FASTLANE



find programs

find awards

Search the NSF website



Funding



Find Funding

[A-Z Index of Funding Opportunities](#)

[Recent Funding Opportunities](#)

[Upcoming Due Dates](#)

[Advanced Funding Search](#)

[Interdisciplinary Research](#)

[How to Prepare Your Proposal](#)

[About Funding](#)

Proposals and Awards

[Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide](#)

Introduction

[Proposal Preparation and Submission](#)

[Grant Proposal Guide](#)

[Grants.gov Application Guide](#)

[Award and Administration](#)

Email Print Share

Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences

Cultural Anthropology

CONTACTS

Name	Email
<a href="#">Jeffrey Mantz-Program</a>	
<a href="#">Deborah Winslow- Program Director</a>	
<a href="#">Kristin Kuyuk - REG/RE</a>	
<a href="#">Jill Avalos-Program Assi</a>	

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Apply to PD 98-1390 as follows:

For full proposals submitted via FastLane: standard [Grant Proposal Guide](#) proposal preparation guidelines apply.

For full proposals submitted [Guide for the Preparation of Proposals](#) applies. (Note: The [NSF Grants.gov website](#) and on the [NSF website](#) ([ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](#)).

Important Information for

A revised version of the [NSF Grants.gov Application Guide](#) (NSF 16-1), is effective for [Proposals](#). Please be advised that, dep

**What Has Been Funded (Recent Awards Made Through This Program, with Abstracts)**

Export up to 3,000 Awards: [CSV](#) | [XML](#) | [Excel](#) | [Text](#) [Email this List](#)

Sort By: Relevance Results size: 30 per page [Table](#) | [List](#) [Page 1 of 5](#)

Customize Columns

Click on column header to sort (except Programs, Co-Principal Investigator and Awarded Amount to Date)

Award Number	Title	NSF Organization	Programs	Start Date	Principal Investigator	Co-Principal Investigator	State	Organization	Award Amount
1504957	An Anthropological Exploration of Totalitarianism	BCS	CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY	07/01/2014	Ryang, Sonia		TX	William Marsh Rice University	\$
1261682	The medieval Black Death: analysis of the demographic, health, and social consequences of a historic emerging disease	BCS	CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY , Biological Anthropology , EXP PROG TO STIM COMP RES	06/01/2013	DeWitte, Sharon		SC	University of South Carolina at Columbia	\$
1157368	Managed Migration and the Value of Labor	BCS	CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY	06/01/2012	Griffith, David	Preibisch, Kerry; Juarez, Elizabeth; Contre Ricardo;	NC	East Carolina University	\$
1150813	CAREER: Social Closeness, Helping, and Neglect: Examining the Roots of Favoritism in Rural Bangladesh	BCS	SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY , CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY , DECISION RISK & MANAGEMENT SCI	05/01/2012	Hruschka, Daniel		AZ	Arizona State University	\$
1623555	Workshop: Enhancing robust and generalizable experimental behavioral science	BCS	DEVELOP& LEARNING SCIENCES/CRI , LINGUISTICS , PERCEPTION, ACTION & COGNITION , SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY , COGNEURO , DECISION RISK & MANAGEMENT SCI , CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY	02/15/2016	Hruschka, Daniel	Medin, Douglas;	AZ	Arizona State University	\$

# Need help?

## Contact Program Officers

---

Web sites have:  
E-mail addresses & phone numbers.  
Encourage students  
to make direct contact.  
Don't hesitate to ask for help.

