

Suggestions for Developing a Broader Impacts Plan

Below are four steps that can help in developing a broader impacts plan:

Step 1: Perform an inventory of internal factors:

- What are your strengths?
- What are you passionate about?
- What does your research lend itself to?
- What constraints (i.e. time, effort, budget, logistics) are you likely to encounter?

Step 2: Perform an inventory of external factors:

- Who is your target audience?
- What does your audience already know? What don't they know?
- What is the context?
- What exists already? What is missing?
- What potential partners could you enlist in this work?

Step 3: Define goals. Goals should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable

Step 4: Establish implementation plans:

- Timeline (with milestones)
- Budget
- Effort, personnel
- Assessment (tied to goals)

Here are several basic elements for success:

- Provide sufficient detail (avoid leaving assumptions about the project plan to the reviewers).
- Integrate your education and research activities to the degree possible.
- Align the project with collaborators as appropriate.
- Include meaningful engagement with underrepresented groups.
- Show how the work will be sustained.
- Involve your whole lab if possible.

NSF proposal briefings have suggested key questions prospective investigators should consider in proposing research and broader impacts:

- What do you intend to do?
- Why do you want to do it?

- How do you plan to do it?
- How will you know if you succeed?
- What benefits would accrue if the project is successful?

Note: Some solicitations expect a more extensive broader impacts section than others. For example, NSF puts particular emphasis on the integration of research and education in its [Faculty Early Career Development \(CAREER\) Program](#).