Applying for National Science Foundation Funding in Cognitive Science: Cognition, Computation, Development, Education, and Neuroscience

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Keywords: cognitive science**;** research funding; grants; workshop; National Science Foundation.

Objectives and Background

This half-day workshop will provide information and hands-on experience related to applying for National Science Foundation (NSF) funding in cognitive science. Program officers will discuss the NSF review process and NSF merit criteria. Details regarding a range of cognitive science research programs will be covered, including cognition, computation, development, education, and neuroscience. In addition, as an interactive activity, attendees will participate in simulated review panels using actual cognitive science grant proposals.

It is expected that attendees will increase their knowledge of opportunities at NSF in support of cognitive science, for example a psychology researcher may learn more about education research opportunities and a computational researcher may learn more about neuroscience research opportunities. In addition, attendees will increase their understanding of how grant proposals are reviewed and funding decisions are made at NSF.

The target audience of this workshop is anyone who intends to seek funding for cognitive science research, including graduate students, postdocs, new faculty, and experienced researchers. This workshop is an outreach event for NSF, which seeks broad participation in research and strives to fund excellent research in cognitive science and related fields.

Outline of the Workshop

The workshop will have four parts.

1. General information about applying for NSF funding will be covered, such as eligibility, parts of a proposal, budget issues, and the merit criteria for review.
2. Program-specific information will be provided, including areas of emphasis and program-specific considerations. See Table 1 for a list of individual programs and Table 2 for a list of cross-directorate or NSF-wide initiatives. The focus will be on the newest initiatives and those most relevant to cognitive science, as well career development programs and international opportunities.
3. Attendees will participate in simulated grant review panels, where they will read actual cognitive science grant proposals and evaluate them in terms of NSF review criteria.
4. Finally, there will be an Ask a Program Officer session, for questions.

Table 1. Individual Programs

Cognition
Perception, Action & Cognition (PAC)
Computation
Information & Intelligent Systems (IIS)
Development
Developmental and Learning Sciences (DLS)
Education (see Common Guidelines for Education Research)
EHR Core Research (ECR)
Research on Education and Learning (REAL)
Discovery Research K-12 (DRK-12)
Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUSE)
Educational and Human Resources Directorate
Neuroscience
Cognitive Neuroscience

Table 2. Cross-directorate and NSF-wide initiatives

CAREER (Faculty early career development)
Computational Cognition
Cyberlearning
International Science and Engineering (ISE) (International funding and collaboration)
Understanding the Brain
Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)

Presenters

NSF program officers involved in cognitive science-related programs, a subset of the workshop co-authors, will lead the workshop. Follow-up opportunities to meet program officers may occur during the conference itself.