



BI Criterion: How NSF Proposals are Reviewed

	Intellectual Merit	Broader Impacts	When proposals are reviewed, where are the gaps in understanding most visible?
Criterion Defined	The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge	The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes	Project summary, project description, biosketch, FEOR, DMP, PMP – almost everywhere
To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?	PIs might remember to write about the innovation of their research and how it is potentially transformative	Most PIs do not think this way about broader impacts (but now they need to)	Project summary, project description
Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?	Most PIs see this as describing their methodology, giving details so that reviewers can see that PIs know how to perform their research. Most PIs assume that assessing success comes in publications (although planned dissemination should be described in the proposal)	Most PIs vaguely list that they want to work with particular groups (e.g., HS students, teachers, the public) but give no details as to how they will do this or evaluate its success (but they need to)	Project summary, project description, FEOR
How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities ?	Most PIs think about this in the context of their research (biosketch, research expertise, facilities available to the research, etc.)	Most PIs don't address in their proposals (but they need to) that they have the expertise and people power to carry about the activities or have support at their institution	Biosketches, FEOR, Letters of Commitment, space in the proposal
Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities ?	Most PIs understand that they should describe what is available to perform the research or other collaborators and the expertise they bring to the project	Some PIs will have found others to partner with to carry out broader impacts activities (e.g., K20 Center, Outreach, OK EPSCoR office, etc.); others will try to do everything on their own.	Project summary, project description, biosketch, FEOR, DMP, PMP, Letters of Commitment – almost everywhere

Reference: Alicia Knoedler, Associate VP of Research