Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by panels of disciplinary and interdisciplinary scientists, mathematicians, and engineers and other professional experts in graduate education. Applications will be assigned to panels based on the applicant's chosen field(s) of study and the discipline(s) represented. Thus, applicants are advised to select the fields of study in the FastLane applicant module that are most closely aligned to the proposed graduate program of study and research plan. Applications to interdisciplinary fields of study are reviewed by interdisciplinary panelists based on the disciplines indicated by the applicant and review of the application by the GRFP staff.

Each application, therefore, will be reviewed independently on the basis of merit using all available information in the completed application. In considering applications, reviewers will be instructed to address the two Merit Review Criteria as approved by the National Science Board – Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts (Grant and Proposal Guide, NSF 10-1). Applicants, therefore, must address each criterion in their written statements to provide reviewers with the information necessary to respond fully to both.

1. **Intellectual Merit**
    a. How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields?
    b. How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of prior work.)
    c. To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
    d. How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity?
    e. Is there sufficient access to resources?

2. **Broader Impacts*** – Activities and projects that:

    a. How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning?
    b. How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)?
    c. To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships?
    d. Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding?
    e. What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

    * NSF document for representative Broader Impact Activities can be found at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf022/bicexamples.pdf