

## Intellectual Merit Criterion

### Overall Assessment of Intellectual Merit

Excellent

### Explanation to Applicant

The applicant proposes to study raptor evolution and conservation. The diversity of raptors is certainly important when a species responds to habitat change. Further, understanding extinction risk in an apex species in light of an era of global change (e.g., globalization, climate change) is critical.

## Broader Impacts Criterion

### Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts

Excellent

### Explanation to Applicant

The applicant does an incredible job describing the broader impacts, which target marginalized communities.

### Summary Comments

This is a nice proposal from a non-traditional student. Moreover, the broader impacts are VERY well developed and I greatly appreciate the targeting of marginalized communities. The applicant has completed previous research that's directly related to the topic and expects to publish that work shortly. I especially enjoyed the applicants unique/creative approach to her personal narrative.

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### Explanation to Applicant

This applicant has not had a traditional route to graduate school, which makes her sincerity about becoming a scientist and studying birds highly believable. She has taken much initiative to set goals and then participate in activities to reach those goals (e.g., first volunteering in the lab that she is now a PhD student in). Her sincerity and maturity, as discussed in all letters of reference, suggest a very high potential to succeed in graduate school and beyond.

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### Explanation to Applicant

The varied experiences of this applicant outside of academia have resulted in a deep commitment to provide educational outreach in science and conservation. This application has the clearest plans for outreach among all applications I reviewed.

### Summary Comments

The applicant has performed well academically and has many experiences outside of academia that support her motivation to obtain a PhD and become a scientist. Clear evidence and plans for future broader impacts are provided in great detail to suggest that she really cares about using her skills to promote better education in schools where science education is most needed.

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### Explanation to Applicant

This is one of my favorite proposed research programs. It is thoughtful and well-written. The applicant's maturation and experience assembling a song bird phylogeny

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### Explanation to Applicant

This applicant has one of the best, if not the best BI's I have read. Her engagement in BI's during her post graduation time has undoubtedly helped her form strong BIs for her personal statement. Conducting virtual tours and finding ways to accommodate students/classrooms at schools with less funding to support field trips is an excellent idea.

## Summary Comments

The applicant is very strong. She has taken considerable time off from her undergraduate to her doctoral training and this time has simply helped her secure and mature her interests. She has been awarded fellowships at her current institute and she and her lab are involved in detailed broader impacts that affect the local schools in rural Minnesota. The BIs were the best I have read. The statements were clearly written and I was absolutely engaged. This is an exemplary application. The applicant's intelligence, curiosity, motivation, and commitments has been well explained by her supporters.