

Are You CAREER Ready?

This tool is to help you decide if you are ready to submit a competitive CAREER proposal and to find areas where you need additional preparation, reflection, networking, and study. We make NO promises of you receiving a CAREER award or any other funding. If you use this tool well, though, it will give you better questions to ask and thoughts for your next steps.

Idea

Describe your idea in no more than 100 words.

What makes your idea interesting to reviewers?

What makes your plan feasible?

What makes your idea and/or plan risky?

What would you learn if your idea or plan didn't work?



This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under grants 1837805 and 1837808. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Integration

Describe your education goals for this proposal in no more than 100 words.

How do your education goals connect to your big idea?

How will your education activities inform your big idea? How will your big idea inform your education activities?

How do both your education goals and your big idea come together to inform your intended career trajectory?



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Impact

What is the primary value of the idea to the engineering ecosystem?

Who is going to receive this value directly? Indirectly?

What evidence (literature, information from practice, other subject matter experts, etc.) do you have for the size of this value?

Identity

What is your unique advantage in putting together this project?

Fill in the blank: In the research community, I am the _____ person.



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Infrastructure

Does your department chair support your idea and desire to submit it as a CAREER proposal?

Do you have senior faculty mentors (in or out of your department) that your department chair can name in their letter of support?

Do you have the space, facilities, and equipment you will need to complete your plan? Have you talked to your department chair about anything you need to secure from the institution?

Have you started talking to your sponsored programs folks? Have they connected you with any offices or resources that might be vital to making sure the institutional infrastructure is prepared for you needs?

While you can fund senior personnel in a supportive role, a CAREER award is still a solo endeavor. Do you have access to the post-award knowledge you need for a solo PI role?

Think about your workstyle, do you need an accountability group to keep your energy high while completing a 5-year solo award?



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