Broader Impact Plan Rubric

This rubric is designed to help you evaluate a Broader Impacts (BI) plan.

The rubric can be used in several ways:

- Reviewers participating in the review process, as individual or panel reviewers, can use the rubric to assess the rigor and quality of a proposed BI plan. Of course, reviewers should always review NSF's Proposal Awards Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) for specific solicitation guidelines. Panelists should use this rubric in combination with their own experience and judgment when assessing proposals.

- Grant writers can also use this rubric for guidance when writing a BI statement. We encourage grant writers to explore their own career goals and objectives, and carefully consider the research impacts they would like to achieve.

To assess your Broader Impacts plan, select the box for each element that best describes the plan you're reviewing.

> **Cautionary Note:** BI projects vary greatly based on the solicitation requirements, the needs of the partners and audiences engaged, and the resources of the proposing institution. This rubric is designed to provide <u>general guidance</u> about a BI project's level of feasibility and completeness. It is not meant to devalue creativity and uniqueness, but rather to help promote understanding and rigor of the limitless possibilities available with BI project.

Question 1: What is the potential for the proposed activity to benefit society or advance desired social outcomes?
The BI plan should address one or more of the NSF's 10 investment areas.

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1a) Target audience characteristics: The characteristics of the target audience, including who they are, where they are located, and how many will be engaged are clearly described. The rationale for selecting the target audience is well-aligned with project objectives.				
○ Participants are clearly described. The description includes strong details about who participants are and how many will engage in the project. The target audience is very well-aligned with project objectives. There are letters of collaboration from each key partner.	○ Participants are described. The description includes details about who participants are and how many will engage in the project. The target audience is generally well-aligned with project objectives. There are letters of collaboration.	○ Participants are somewhat clearly described. There is some information on who participants are and how many will engage in the project. The target audience is somewhat well-aligned with project objectives.	○ Participants are not well described. There is little information on who participants are and how many will engage in the project. It is unclear if the target audience is well-aligned with project objectives.	○ Participants are not described. There is no information on who participants are and how many will engage in the project.

1b) Target audience engagement: The mechanisms for engaging the target audience are clearly described and well-aligned with project objectives.

○ Mechanisms for engaging participants in the project are very clearly described and well-aligned with project objectives.	○ Mechanisms for engaging participants in the project are described and generally well-aligned with project objectives.	○ Mechanisms for engaging participants in the project are somewhat clearly described and somewhat well-aligned with project objectives.	○ Mechanisms for engaging participants in the project are not well described and not well-aligned with project objectives.	○ No information is provided on the mechanisms for engaging participants in the project.

1c) Target audience alignment: The plan ensures the needs and interests of the audience can be met.

○ Mechanisms for ensuring the needs and interests of participants in the project are very clearly described.	○ Mechanisms for ensuring the needs and interests of the participants in the project are described.	○ Mechanisms for ensuring the needs and interests of participants in the project are somewhat clearly described.	○ Mechanisms for ensuring the needs and interests of participants in the project are not well described.	○ No information is provided on the mechanisms for addressing the needs and interests of the participants. In the project.

Question 2: To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
*The BI plan should address **at least one** of the criteria below to demonstrate the potentially transformative project.*

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor

2a) Research-based: The proposal draws upon prior experience and knowledge and/or the relevant literature is cited.

○ The project draws strongly upon prior experience and relevant knowledge. The relevant peer-reviewed literature is cited.	○ The project draws upon prior experience and relevant knowledge. The relevant peer-reviewed literature is generally cited.	○ There is some reference to prior experience or relevant knowledge. Some of the relevant peer-reviewed literature is cited.	○ There is little reference to prior experience or relevant knowledge.	○ There is no reference to prior experience or relevant knowledge.

2b) Evidence-based: The proposal leverages existing effective practices for working with your partners.

○ The project strongly leverages documented effective practices and relevant knowledge.	○ The project leverages documented effective practices and relevant knowledge.	○ The project somewhat leverages documented effective practices and relevant knowledge.	○ The project offers little reference to effective practices and relevant knowledge.	○ The project does not offer any reference to documented effective practices and relevant knowledge.

2c) Innovation: The proposal provides an original and creative BI plan to align with the proposed research and partner needs.

○ The project proposes a truly unique and creative BI plan which aligns well with the proposed research and demonstrates strong consideration of partner needs.	○ The project proposes a very novel and creative BI plan which aligns well with the proposed research and demonstrates consideration of partner needs.	○ The project proposes a creative BI plan which aligns with the proposed research and offers some consideration of partner needs.	○ The project proposes a BI plan which aligns with the proposed research.	○ The project proposes a BI plan which doesn't align well with the proposed research.

Question 3: 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?

The BI plan should address the NSF's 10 investment areas, and provides metrics aligned with project goals.

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
3a) Project objectives: The project objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).				
○ The project has very well-developed, SMART (Specific, Measurable, Audience-based, Relevant, Time-Bound) objectives.	○ The project has generally well-developed, SMART objectives.	○ The project has objectives that are somewhat SMART.	○ The project has underdeveloped objectives and goals.	○ The project does not have clear goals and objectives.
3b) Links to NSF target outcomes: The project objectives are well-aligned with NSF target outcomes (e.g., full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in STEM).				
○ Project objectives are clearly tied to NSF target outcomes.	○ Project objectives are generally tied to NSF target outcomes.	○ Project objectives are somewhat tied to NSF target outcomes.	○ It is not clear how the project is tied to the NSF target outcomes.	○ The project is not tied to NSF target outcomes.
3c) Evaluation: The proposal describes a plan to measure project outcomes.				
○ The project has very strong evaluation metrics which align to project goals, outcomes and impacts.	○ The project has a generally strong evaluation metrics to measure outcomes and impacts.	○ There are metrics to measure outcomes and impacts that could be more fully developed.	○ It is not clear how outcomes and impacts will be measured.	○ There is no evidence of evaluation metrics and no mention of potential impacts or outcomes.

Question 4: How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
The BI plan should engage a team for a robust BI implementation.

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
4a) BI Team: The proposal provides a clear description of a team that is appropriate in size/scope and has the necessary expertise to complete the project.				
○ The proposal identifies a strong team with strong qualifications to carry out the project. The scope/size of the team is ideal. There is high confidence in the team's ability to carry out the project.	○ The proposal identifies a team with very good qualifications to carry out the project. The scope/size of the team is appropriate. There is confidence in the team's ability to carry out the project.	○ The proposal identifies a team with good qualifications to carry out the project. The scope/size of the team is adequate. There is a moderate level of confidence in the team's ability to carry out the project.	○ The proposal identifies some of the necessary components of a team to carry out the project. The scope/size of the team is inadequate. There is a low level of confidence in the team's ability to carry out the project.	○ A team is not identified to carry out the BI project. No references to the qualifications of the team are mentioned in the project description.
4b) Partnership: The proposal clearly describes external partners or provides a rationale for why external partners are not needed.				
○ A partner or partners are very well described OR the reason external partners are not needed is well described.	○ A partner or partners is described OR the reason external partners are not needed is described.	○ A partner or partners is somewhat described OR the reason external partners are not needed is somewhat described.	○ The description of a partner or partners is not well described OR the reason external partners are not needed is not adequately described.	○ There is no mention of a partner or partners and no description of the reason external partners are not needed.

4c) Partnership needs: For plans with external partners, there is a clear description of the roles, needs, and contributions of the partners. There is a clear description of the budget allocation among partners.

○ There is a very well-articulated description of the roles and needs of partners. There is strong evidence of mutual understanding of the roles in the partnership. There is clear evidence of equitable and fair planning and budgeting of the partnership. It is very clear how the partners will contribute to the proposed outcomes and that the partnership is mutually beneficial.	○ There is a generally well-articulated description of the roles and needs of partners. There is evidence of mutual understanding of the roles in the partnership. There is evidence of equitable and fair planning and budgeting of the partnership. It is generally clear how the partners will contribute to the proposed outcomes and that the partnership is mutually beneficial.	○ There is some description of the roles and needs of partners. There is some evidence of mutual understanding of the roles in the partnership. There is some evidence for fair planning and budgeting of the partnership. It is somewhat clear how the partners will contribute to the proposed outcomes and that there is some mutual benefit to the partnership.	○ There is an inadequate description of the roles and needs of partners. There is little evidence of mutual understanding of the roles in the partnership. There is little evidence of fair planning and budgeting of the partnership. It is not clear how the partners will contribute to the proposed outcomes. There is little evidence of mutual benefit to the partnership.	○ There is no description of the roles and needs of partners. There is no evidence of mutual understanding of the roles in the partnership. There is no evidence of fair planning and budgeting of the partnership. There is no description of how the partners will contribute to the proposed outcomes and no evidence of mutual benefits to the partnership.

4d) Timeline: The timeline for completing project activities is clearly described and feasible.

○ The timeline for the project is very well described and can be reasonably achieved.	○ The timeline for the project is generally well described and can be achieved.	○ The timeline for the project is somewhat described. There is some evidence that the project can be achieved.	○ The timeline for the project is poorly described. There is little evidence that the project can be achieved.	○ There is no description of the timeline for the project. There is no evidence that the project can be achieved.

4e) Checklist: The qualifications of the team are clear in all proposal elements including the project description, prior support, budget justification, biosketches, and letters of collaboration.

○ References to the strong qualifications of the team are integrated throughout the project description, prior support, budget justification, biosketches, and letters of collaboration.	○ References to the very good qualifications of the team are described in the project description, prior support, budget justification, biosketches, and letters of collaboration.	○ Some references to the qualifications of the team are mentioned in the project description, prior support, budget justification, biosketches, and letters of collaboration.	○ There is little reference to the qualifications of the team project description, prior support, budget justification, biosketches, and letters of collaboration.	○ No references to the qualifications of the team are mentioned in the project description, prior support, budget justification, biosketches, and letters of collaboration.

Question 5: Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?
The BI plan should budget adequate resources to carry out the BI plan.

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
5a) Institutional/partner Infrastructure: The infrastructure is appropriate for supporting the proposed BI activities.				
○ The PI's institution, and/or that of an identified team or partner has strong infrastructure (e.g. programs, staff, partnerships) to support the project.	○ The PI's institution, and/or that of an identified project partner or team has generally strong infrastructure (e.g. programs, staff, partnerships) to support the project.	○ The PI's institution, and/or that of an identified project partner/team has some infrastructure (e.g. existing programs, staff, partnerships) to support the project.	○ The PI's institution and/or that of an identified project partner has minimal infrastructure (e.g. existing programs, staff, partnerships) to support the project.	○ There is no information on the infrastructure available to the PI to carry out the project or the infrastructure is inadequate.
5b) Budget and budget justification: The budget is appropriate for supporting the proposed BI activities. Staff and project expenses for BI activities are clearly articulated in the budget justification.				
○ The budget is very well-aligned to the proposed project work plan. Staff and project expenses are clearly articulated in the budget justification.	○ The budget is generally well-aligned to the proposed project work plan. Staff and project expenses are generally well-articulated in the budget justification.	○ The budget is somewhat aligned to the proposed work plan. Staff and project expenses are somewhat well-articulated in the budget justification.	○ The budget is not aligned to the proposed work plan. Staff and project expenses are not well-articulated in the budget justification.	○ The budget is insufficient for the proposed work plan. There is no evidence that resources have been allocated or leveraged for the BI project.