



Working with a Program Officer (What's in it for you?)

Karen Cone (kccone@nsf.gov)
Program Officer (aka Director)
Biological Sciences Directorate
Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences
Genetic Mechanisms Cluster



National Science Foundation

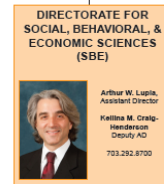
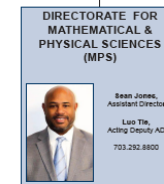
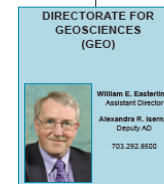
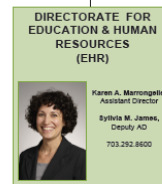
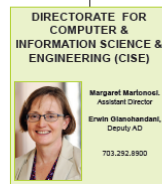
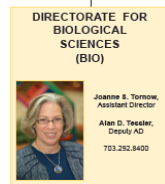
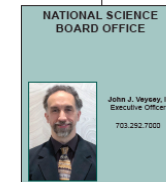
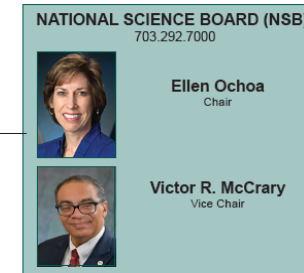
- Supports **basic** research and education via grants
- Discipline-based structure
- Cross-disciplinary programs
- Annual budget ~\$ 8 billion
- >50,000 proposals; ~12,000 new awards per year supporting ~350,000 scientists, educators and students





NSF Organization

Director's Office National Science Board



Directorates

Biological Sciences

- Biological Infrastructure
- Environmental Biology
- Integrative Organismal Systems
- Molecular and Cellular Bioscience

Engineering

- Chemical, Bioengineering, Environmental and Transport Systems

Math & Physical Sciences

- Chemistry
- Physics

Divisions



NSF Organization: Scientific Staff

President



Director



Assistant Director of a Directorate



Division Director
Deputy Division Director



Program Officer
aka
Program Director



Program Officers

Who are we?

- Permanent Federal employees
 - Often former faculty
 - Working full-time at NSF
 - May be conducting research part-time
- Rotators
 - Current faculty
 - Working at NSF and maintaining research programs back home



Program Officers

What do we do?

- **Program planning and management**
 - Maintain dynamic, high-quality merit **proposal review** process
 - Serve as **ongoing advisor** to applicants and grantees
- **Stewardship**
 - Upholds, interprets, communicates NSF policies
 - Serves as a **technical expert** on NSF policies to the scientific community



Program Officers

What do we do?

- **Organization Coordination and Liaison**
 - Provide leadership and direction to support the NSF mission
 - Communicate and coordinate within NSF and with other Federal science agencies
- **Diversity and Outreach**
 - Foster diversity in the review process and the award portfolio
 - Participate in outreach visits designed to broaden participation in NSF activities



Why seek out a Program Officer?

We are fountains of information





How to find us?

NSF Websites (nsf.gov)
Virtual Office Hours (access via Blogs)
Meetings and Conferences

The screenshot shows the NSF website with the Biological Sciences (BIO) section selected. The page title is "Genetic Mechanisms". Below the title is a "CONTACTS" section with a table listing contact information for several individuals. Below the table is a "SYNOPSIS" section with a brief description of the cluster's research focus.

Name	Email	Phone	Room
Manju Hingorani	mhingora@nsf.gov	703-292-7323	E12409
Karen C. Cone	kcocone@nsf.gov	(703) 292-4967	
Stephen DiFazio	sdifazio@nsf.gov	(703) 292-4517	E12472
Candi Phoebe Lostroh	clostroh@nsf.gov	(703) 292-7145	E12474
Arcady R. Mushegian	amushegi@nsf.gov	(703) 292-8528	E 12475

SYNOPSIS
Apply to NSF 21-509

The cluster supports inventive research to address fundamental mechanisms involved in the organization, dynamics, processing, expression, regulation, and evolution of genetic and epigenetic information. Cross-disciplinary and collaborative research is encouraged, especially when perspectives and quantitative approaches from computational, mathematical, chemical and physical sciences, and engineering are used. Development of creative technological solutions is also welcome, when driven by the potential to produce significant new knowledge about genetic mechanisms. Projects that are primarily descriptive are given lower priority.





When to engage with your program officer?



The IDEA

- **Before** you submit a proposal
 - Introduce yourself
 - ✓ Your background
 - ✓ Where you are now
 - Share a short description of your research
 - ✓ One-pager
 - ✓ What to include in the one-pager
 - See [MCB VOH from Feb 2020](#)
 - Seek input on best program fit
 - ✓ Do some homework ahead of time
 - ✓ Indicate which programs seem best to you



When to engage with your program officer?

- If your proposal is declined
 - Don't give up!
 - Seek advice on what went wrong
 - ✓ Too ambitious?
 - ✓ Not enough preliminary data?
 - Ask about re-submission
 - ✓ Same program? What timing?
 - ✓ Is there a better program?
 - Seek input on how to revise
 - ✓ What to emphasize?
 - ✓ What to avoid?



A Decline



When to engage with your program officer?



An AWARD!

- If your proposal is awarded:
 - You can learn what to expect
 - ✓ Timeframe for funding
 - You can learn what to report: The 3 P's
 - ✓ Progress (scientific and broader impacts)
 - ✓ Publications
 - ✓ Problems (unexpected turns and solutions)
 - Why stay in touch?
 - ✓ Hearing your success stories as they happen helps us convey the excitement of the science we fund
 - ✓ We can share new funding opportunities

NSF Needs You!

Become Part of Our Ecosystem



Questions?



Karen Cone, kccone@nsf.gov