



Ecological Society of America
1990 M Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

The National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22230

July 12, 2011

Re: NSB/NSF Seeks Input on Proposed Merit Review Criteria Revision and Principles

The Ecological Society of America (ESA) would like to provide comments on the revisions to the National Science Foundation's (NSF) merit review criteria and the principles upon which the merit review criteria should be based as proposed by the National Science Board. Given NSF's role as the central agency supporting research into all fields of science, ESA recognizes the importance of effective merit review criteria to help ensure that NSF-funded projects are of the highest intellectual caliber.

We are pleased to note that the intellectual merit review criteria will advance scientific innovation while effectively linking scientific research with NSF's broader core principles and important national goals. We also welcome the clarifications on the broader impacts criterion and, like the intellectual merit review criterion, their connection to the national goals.

ESA would like to note the potential of partnerships in ensuring that broader impacts succeed. We believe that many of the national goals could benefit from long-term strategies, which could be challenging for some PIs and their home institutions. It is important to take into account the full range of potential broader impacts activities available (to PIs) for consideration.

The merit review criteria are essential in perpetuating high standards for quality science. They are pivotal in reaching our national goals and ensuring that NSF continues to support the most preeminent in scientific research.

Sincerely,

F. Stuart Chapin III

President
Ecological Society of America