

# Evaluation Criteria

*Below are evaluation criteria quoted from the 2025 NSF GRFP solicitation. For each Intellectual Merit criteria, and 1-2 Broader Impacts criteria, write down an idea for how you could demonstrate this in your application (either through a research proposal or personal statement).*

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Applicants are reviewed on their demonstrated potential to advance knowledge and to make significant research achievements and contributions to their fields, and to benefit society throughout their careers. Reviewers are asked to assess applications using a comprehensive approach, giving balanced consideration to all components of the application, including the educational and research record, leadership, outreach, service activities, and future plans, as well as individual competencies, experiences, and other attributes such as innovation and perseverance that are likely to result in success in a STEM graduate program. The aim is to recruit and retain a strong cohort of early-career individuals with high potential for future achievements, contributions, and broader impacts in STEM, including STEM education.

Factors reviewers will consider in assessing the potential **Intellectual Merit** of the application and the applicant's potential to advance knowledge and understanding in one or more fields may include (but are not limited to) the applicant's ability to:

- Plan and conduct research
- Work as a part of a team
- Interpret and communicate research (e.g., through publications, or presentations)
- Take initiative
- Think creatively
- Solve problems
- Persist and overcome challenges
- The applicant's demonstrated intellectual ability (as indicated by grades, coursework, awards, etc.)

Factors reviewers will consider in assessing the potential **Broader Impacts** of the application and the applicant's potential to benefit society and achieve specific, desired societal outcomes may include (but are not limited to) the likelihood that the applicant's activities will:

- Increase participation in STEM
- Improve STEM education in schools through outreach and mentoring
- Increase public scientific literacy and public engagement with STEM through community outreach
- Increase collaboration among academia, industry, and other types of organizations
- Improve education and educator development – at any level – in STEM
- Improve the well-being of individuals in society
- Develop a globally competitive STEM workforce
- Improve national security
- Increase the economic competitiveness of the U.S.
- Enhance infrastructure for research and education.

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