

## National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Sample Score Sheet Comments

### Proposed Research:

#### Positive:

The project is *extremely timely*.

Applicant is proposing to investigate *a new angle to an established research area that could have significant impact in his/her field*.

His/her *research topic is firmly in step with his/her own previous research*.

This proposal is *highly innovative* and elegantly *combines the applicant's interest in X and Y*.

The project has a simple but *rigorous design*.

The research proposal is *clearly written, focused and defines an effective path to success*.

*The (X Institute) at Notre Dame is ideally suited for this project*.

S/he *clearly emphasizes the societal impact of the proposal*.

#### Negative:

The hypothesis seems pretty obvious; there is *little promise that this research will challenge conventional wisdom*. I did *not see as much evidence as I would have liked to see regarding his/her actual analysis and interpretation of data*.

*Methodological details were missing*.

The research proposal is fraught with *a very serious problem with validity and spuriousness*.

The main reservation I have about this work stems from the *murky causal connections* that are left unaddressed in this application.

There is a sizable *disconnect between the lengthy discussion of his/her undergraduate thesis and the new project*.

Simply *saying that you will publish your research findings* and tell others about them *is not much of a broader impact*.

Almost every proposal in X make to the NSF holds the same promise, so *the promised broader impact here does little to distinguish this proposal from other proposals*.

The proposed research is *not unusually creative*.

*A deeper discussion of the theoretical background and a broader discussion of extant finding in the field* would have strengthened the proposal.

Applicant needs to *explain concepts* like "X."

*Figures* need to be *large enough to read and have adequate explanation of the message to be conveyed*.

Project is not *explicit in how the results will be tested for significance and interpreted*.

Proposed research would be strengthened by an *acknowledgement of potential limitations*.

Proposed research would be improved with a *plan for scholarly communication and, where relevant, teaching*.

Proposal could have been strengthened by the applicant *fusing some of his/her past experience* in tutoring and peer advising *to outreach efforts regarding the research*.

Application would benefit from *clear integration of an outreach plan* into his/her research that captures his/her excellent potential to have broad impact.

Proposal lacks an explicit *plan for developing public participation in science and interpreting results for broader audiences*.

Elaborate on the broader impacts of research findings. Will they have an effect upon theory, education, and/or public policy? If so what kind? Are the impacts as likely to be national, regional, or local? While the importance of the research and potential significance of the finding to society could be intuited, the application would have been strengthened if the applicant had explored these ideas more fully.

## Personal Statement and Previous Research

### Positive:

(Applicant clearly self-identifies as *a member of an underrepresented group*).

S/he has *continued his/her activity in science outreach at his/her Ph.D. institute*.

The personal statement is *well written and gives a clear view of the candidate's beliefs and future goals*.

The prior research experience does *clearly show independence, the ability to work in a team and a sense of scientific creativity*.

His/her *sincerity in giving back* is demonstrated in his/her outreach activities.

His/her *passion for social justice* is clearly evident.

Your *enthusiasm for science* comes through clearly in all your statements.

Undergraduate research was *self-motivated and independent*.

Applicant has *sought out and catalyzed research opportunities* to enhance his/her education.

You make the case for *a record of outreach and engagement in educating the public*.

The student's *attention to community outreach and mentoring* is laudable.

The applicant has shown *great leadership in their local scientific community and campus*.

Your enthusiasm is clearly an *asset in communicating science to a wider audience*.

Applicant has demonstrated *motivation and tenacity in executing undergraduate research*.

S/he has good *experience in disseminating the results of research*, and has done well in interacting in teams and with peers.

Applicant has a wealth of personal experience and *current and future plans that demonstrate a commitment to the broader impacts of science research*.

Applicant has *demonstrated a sincere commitment to the promotion of education and science among various groups*.

Applicant *committed to advancing the participation of (underrepresented group) in science*.

Narrative provides *a very compelling sense of purpose and drive to impact a broad population*.

### Negative:

His/her *shift from (X discipline) to (Y discipline) is not explained*.

Research has led to *multiple presentations but no publications*.

*Limited documentation of past or present activities that meet the National Science Foundation's broader impact criteria*.

With the NSF GRF s/he could start science advocacy in graduate school but s/he does not seem to recognize this as a possibility.

Previous research experience statement could have been strengthened by *discussions of the rationales and hypotheses lying behind his/her research*.

The applicant has a good record of research, although *additional integration of the projects as they reflect scholarly development and motivation for the applicant's current research interests* would be helpful.

The proposal might be strengthened by a better *sense of how outreach activities will continue and be developed*.

A very good plan for future activities that would be greatly strengthened if these were *active now and in the recent past*.