

Template, NSF CAREER Dept./Dean Letter

1. Addressed to: National Science Foundation;
2. No more than two pages long! On Unit or School Letterhead; Signed by By-Law55 unit head if there is one, otherwise by Dean
3. Signed by Dept. head or equivalent (See above); with their name and title

From the Solicitation: “This integration of research and education requires close collaboration between the CAREER principal investigator (PI) and his/her organization throughout the duration of the award. To demonstrate the department’s support of the integrated research and education plan of the CAREER awardee, the proposal must include one (and only one) letter from the PI’s department head (or equivalent organizational official). If a proposer is in two departments, the letter should be signed by the Department Head in which tenure will be granted. In those cases where tenure is a joint decision, the letter should be signed by both Department Heads. The letter, which will be included as part of the consideration of the overall merits of the proposal, should demonstrate an understanding of, and a commitment to, the effective integration of research and education as a primary objective of the CAREER award. *A letter that fails to acknowledge institutional commitment to the professional development and mentoring of the PI in both research and education may disadvantage an otherwise outstanding proposal.*” (emphasis added)

Important elements:

1. An indication that the PI’s proposed CAREER research and education activities are supported by and integrated into the educational and research goals of the department and the organization, and that the department is committed to the support and professional development of the PI; (Say how!)
2. A description of a) the relationship between the CAREER project, the PI’s career goals and job responsibilities, and the goals of his/her department/organization, and b) the ways in which the department head (or equivalent) will ensure the appropriate mentoring of the PI, in the context of the PI’s career development and his/her efforts to integrate research and education throughout the period of the award and beyond; and
3. A statement to the effect that the PI is eligible for the CAREER program.

EXAMPLE:

Review Panel, CAREER Award
The National Science Foundation
Directorate for (insert)
4201 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Panel Members,

On behalf of the [xxxx] of the University of California, Merced, I am very pleased to provide this letter of institutional support for Dr. YYY's application to the National Science Foundation, *CAREER: insert title here.* I have read Dr. YYY's proposal and endorse it with the highest enthusiasm.

Susan Carter 5/28/14 3:15 PM
Comment [1]: Insert school or Bylaw 55 unit name here

Dr. YYY has proposed an innovative and comprehensive research and education plan that is very well aligned with and will greatly contribute to initiatives and programs at UC Merced to support our [Name of Unit's/ School's] research and education excellence.

Susan Carter 6/17/13 1:25 PM
Comment [2]: Choose one

Describe the specifics of the research and education plan and objectives and how they are related to and integrated into the applicant's job responsibilities and career goals.

Describe how the completed work will contribute to the applicant's field, the Unit/School and University goals and objectives, as well as to the experiences of students at UC Merced.

The School of xxx/xxxx Unit is fully committed to providing Dr. YYY with the research and mentoring support s/he needs to further develop his/her academic career. *Give further description and details of the specifics of support, including discussion of specifics of start up, TA and RA support, laboratory and office space, etc. Describe the ways in which the signer of the letter will ensure the appropriate mentoring of the PI, in the context of the PI's career development and his/her efforts to integrate research and education throughout the period of the award and beyond. What mentoring will be provided?* In addition, I am providing mentoring support to Dr. YYY and have met with him/her regularly to discuss this proposal. I agree to continue at least once every two months to discuss a wide range of topics related to teaching, research, and promotion and tenure.

Susan Carter 6/17/13 1:39 PM
Comment [3]: Or some other time frame

Finally, I also personally verify that Dr. YYY is eligible for the NSF CAREER award: Dr. YYY received hi/her a doctoral degree in [xxx] (Discipline), is untenured, has not previously received a CAREER award, and is employed as an Assistant Professor in a tenure-track position at the University of California, Merced. I look forward to continue to support this exciting work and his/her academic career. This project

Susan Carter 6/17/13 1:38 PM
Comment [4]: Good to put in even if mentoring support is being provided elsewhere.

Susan Carter 6/17/13 1:41 PM
Comment [5]: Insert year and discipline

will benefit not Dr. YYY and our university but also the broader scientific community.

Sincerely;

Name and title

