

## Best Practices for Writing and Formatting Highlights

### Writing Highlights for a Technical Audience

- Provide clear and concise text at the level of the *Scientific American* magazine with no use of disciplinary jargon.

### Writing Highlights for a Non-technical Audience

- Provide text that is a summary of your research and understandable by the general public.
- No use of disciplinary jargon.
- Consult with your institution's Public Information Officer (PIO).

### Writing Highlights in General

- Title and lead-in sentence should engage the reader.
- Describe the problem or issue that motivated the research and how your approach to researching the problem or issue is unique.
- Describe the result(s) of your research and its impact on current scientific knowledge.
- Describe why your research result(s) is significant and how it will benefit society.
- Describe the broader impacts of your research project. Information regarding the merit review criterion of broader impacts is available at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/broaderimpacts.pdf>.
- Indicate approximately the year in which the results were obtained.

### Formatting Highlights

- Highlights should be submitted using three Microsoft PowerPoint slides. Two slides should describe the intellectual merit of the research project at a technical and non-technical level, respectively, and one slide should describe the broader impacts of the research project.
- Provide an interesting title, consistent with the desired audience. (Catchy titles are encouraged for non-technical audiences.)
- Provide name of Principal Investigator (PI), name(s) of Co-PIs, relevant institution(s) and award number.
- Use compelling image(s) with caption(s) to explain the activity. Images should be large enough to easily see all details. Provide appropriate credits for each image.
- Include citations resulting from the research.
- Use of animations and audio and video clips are encouraged.
- If using abbreviations, first spell out the text and then use the abbreviation. For example, the text "Partial Differential Equations" may be provided first as Partial Differential Equations (PDEs) and thereafter as PDEs.
- For the main highlight text, use a minimum font size of 12.
- For the image and citation text, use a minimum font size of 10.

### Submitting Highlights

- Highlights may be submitted throughout the year. They may also be submitted in response to a Program Officer's request or upon special request by the Division of Chemistry.

- Since submitted highlights may be posted on a public web site, scientific results should be peer reviewed by a scholarly journal prior to submission.
- Unless instructed otherwise, highlights should be emailed by the PI or PIO to [chemhighlights@nsf.gov](mailto:chemhighlights@nsf.gov).
- For each submitted highlight, PIs should complete the Multimedia Permission and Use of Copyrighted Material Form including the title of their highlight. The permission form is available at <http://www.nsf.gov/mps/che/nuggets/form1515.doc>. Email the completed form to [chemhighlights@nsf.gov](mailto:chemhighlights@nsf.gov).

**Example Highlight – includes three slides**

[http://www.nsf.gov/mps/che/nuggets/highlight\\_examples.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/mps/che/nuggets/highlight_examples.pdf)

Updated: December 2008