

# How to Work with Program Officers

**Thursday, April 19, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.**

**TUC 400C**

# Today's Speakers/Panelists

**Charles R. Doarn**, NASA Research Professor, Family and Community Medicine and Director of Telemedicine, Special Assistant to the NASA Chief Health and Medical Officer

**Alex Lentsch**, CoM Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs & Development and Professor and Vice Chair for Research in Surgery, Former chairman of the NIH Hepatobiliary Pathophysiology Study Section

**Teri J. Murphy**, Professor, Engineering Education, Former NSF IPA of the Division of Undergraduate Education

# Agenda

Welcome/Brief Introductions (Reed)

IPA Panel Question and Answer Session (Doarn, Lentsch,  
and Murphy)

# Learning objectives

- Gain valuable insight into the funding potential of your ideas
- Hear from persons who have been in the funding role from various agencies (NASA, NIH, NSF)
- Answer specific questions about your RFP and funding processes/procedures
- Gain tools to engage audiences to care about research

# Activity

Introduce yourself with name, college and general research area.

Add: Why have/would you call/contact a Program Officer? What is your target agency currently?

# Notes

- Making sure what you want to do aligns with “the” RFP or mission

# Prior to a Meeting

- Make contact early (at least months in advance of due date)
- Do not make a cold call
- Email a one-page summary and request a phone call or in-person appointment
- Read RFP, Agency Mission

# During the meeting (phone or in-person)

- Do not assume your one-pager has been read
- Take the Officer on a tour of the one-page summary you sent in advance
- Consider a skeletal budget
- Ask specific questions



# After the meeting (phone or in-person)

- Follow up!
- Can just be a thank you for your time email
- OR can let the program officer know your decision and the impact the conversation had on that decision

# Key Questions from a Program Officer

- What is the problem?
- How do you propose to solve/research it?
- Why now?
- Why you (and this team)?
- Why is this worthy of this specific pot of money?

# Pitch Basics by Elissa Yancey

- Make it about people (**you** are a person)
- Highlight what is surprising, exciting, difficult, upsetting, mysterious?
- Your **process** can be compelling. . .and illuminating
- Lose/adapt your jargon (audience dependent—you're at a family dinner, your kid's school, with a colleague, etc.)
- Remember to tell a story: have a beginning, middle and end; or ABT = and (momentum), but (conflict), therefore (resolution)



Thank you!

Questions?

Help us improve!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TTYPO>

**Have a great Summer full of  
Happy Researching!!**