Fellowship Panel – Writing Resources (Notes)

- Julie Muretta & Mike Roddewig (Panel Facilitators)

- Successful writing
  - Selling yourself on paper (don’t lie but sell yourself!)
  - Intellectual Merit & Broader Impact (NSF-GRFP)
    - Knowing what those mean is very important.
    - Why is your research relevant? (why should the taxpayers pay you? .... Think about this!)
    - What is the broader impact? - what are some ways that your research activities will affect other scientific communities. This an intentionally open-ended question.
    - Collaboration - is collaboration a significant component to your research and what will you, specifically, contribute to this collaboration.
  - Read the solicitation and announcement carefully to make sure you are doing what they are looking for in funding proposals.
  - Finding other Fellows and ask to look at their proposals. This will help you think about the structure of your own proposal.

- Reviewers – finding a reviewer besides your PI. It is ok to contact program officers, other fellows, look inside your institution and outside of the institution.
  - Graduate school may have resources.

- Writing the personal statement. (Do not give a chronological resume).
  - Why do you care about doing research? In terms of professional goals.
○ How did you get to your current position (research, employment, education)?

○ Previous research experience and how it has affected your goals.

○ Do not be afraid to sell yourself in this part of the application as well. Tie this to your research statement in some ‘tiny’ way.

• Organizations & Institutions

○ General writing process:
  ▪ Impacts are a common theme in writing fellowships. How does your research impact broader communities (not just the scientific community)?
  ▪ Answer the questions that are you asked. Use evidence to strengthen your response.
  ▪ What is the problem? The organization wants to know what is the problem and how you propose to make a contribution in solving and/or understanding that problem.

○ Pay attention to due dates, page limits, formatting
  ▪ If you do not strictly adhere to the requirements. IT WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT REVIEW!

○ Nationwide Grants vs. State Grants
  ▪ Consider your audience. You are speaking directly to them in your writing statement.
  ▪ Consider the dollar amount of the award and align that with the feasibility of your research goals. (Will the agency’s award allow you to do your work?)

○ Crucial to point out potential caveats in your work this will demonstrate to your reader that you have a clear understanding of the problem.
- Point out primary and secondary goals and understand the difference between the two.

- Are you developing something new? If so, why is your approach better or different?

- **International Fellowships**
  - Extremely difficult
    - You must make the case (argument) that your work cannot be done anywhere in the US and that there is a sense of urgency in your needing this funding and travel.

- **Previous Research**
  - Does your previous research have applicability to what you are applying for?
    - If not, what skills did you learn and how will your approach be different?

- **Proposed Timelines:**
  - Consider the obstacles and how will you address them as they arise.
  - Due Diligence in defining your research goals.

- **Look at the statistics on the awards**
  - What field? (how many proposals do they get)
  - How many awards are offered?
  - What areas are receiving the most funding?

- **Dealing with rejection**
  - Think about the comments from the reviewers. Especially if you are rejected.
  - What are the problems? How can you improve your work and resubmit for the next cycle?
  - Do you need to make significant changes?