

Department of Energy Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plans

What is a PIER Plan?

Beginning in FY 2023, all DOE Office of Science Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) require applicants to include a Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plan as an appendix to their proposal narrative. PIER Plans should describe the activities and strategies applicants will incorporate to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in their research projects. PIER Plans will be evaluated as part of the merit review process and will be used to inform funding decisions.

What should be included in the PIER Plan?

PIER Plans are included as an appendix to the proposal, and are limited to **3 pages, with 1-inch margins, with 11-point font**, unless otherwise specified by the solicitation. It does *not* count towards the overall page count of the main proposal narrative.

DOE does not give prescriptive instructions on how to organize the PIER plan, but the FY 2023 SC Solicitation ([SC-FOA-0002844](#)) gives the following description of what a PIER plan should include:

“All applications must provide a Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plan as an appendix to the research proposal narrative. The PIER plan should describe the activities and strategies of the applicant to promote equity and inclusion as an intrinsic element to advancing scientific excellence in the research project within the context of the proposing institution and any associated research group(s). Plans may include, but are not limited to: strategies of your institution (and collaborating institutions, if applicable) for enhanced recruitment of undergraduate students, graduate students, and early-stage investigators (postdoctoral researchers, and others), including individuals from diverse backgrounds and groups historically underrepresented in the research community; strategies for creating and sustaining a positive, inclusive, safe, and professional research and training environment that fosters a sense of belonging among all research personnel; and/or training, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. Plans may incorporate or build upon existing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion efforts of the project key personnel or applicant institution(s), but should not be a re-statement of standard institutional policies or broad principles. The complexity and detail of a PIER is expected to increase with the size of the research team and the number of personnel to be supported.”

Some solicitations may include additional guidance language for PIER Plans tailored to the scope and objectives of the solicitation and history of the programmatic activities. Likewise, the guiding reviewer questions may include additional questions related to the scope and history of the associated programmatic activities.

How will PIER Plans be reviewed?

The PIER Plan will be evaluated in the peer review process. The guiding reviewer questions for the criterion, Quality and Efficacy of the Plan for Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research, include the following:

- Is the proposed Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plan suitable for the size and complexity of the proposed project and an integral component of the proposed project?
- To what extent is the PIER Plan likely to lead to participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including individuals historically underrepresented in the research community?
- What aspects of the PIER Plan are likely to contribute to the goal of creating and maintaining an equitable, inclusive, encouraging, and professional training and research environment and supporting a sense of belonging among project personnel?

- How does the proposed Plan include intentional mentorship and are the associated mentoring resources reasonable and appropriate?

More Information from DOE:

Additional information can be found on the DOE [PIER Plan website](#), the [PIER Plan FAQ](#), and a recent [PIER Plan Webinar recording](#). DOE's definitions of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Underrepresented can be found on DOE's [DEI Q&A page](#).

For additional assistance with your DOE PIER plan, contact Maria Napoli (napoli@research.ucsb.edu) or Danielle Chandler (chandler@research.ucsb.edu) at UCSB's [Strategic Research Initiatives Office](#).

UCSB DEI Resources

Below is a collection of DEI-related information and resources at UCSB that may assist you in formulating your DOE PIER Plan and/or finding partners in supporting diversity and inclusion in your lab.

UC Santa Barbara from a DEI Lens:

UCSB is a designated Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and Native American Pacific Islander Institution (AANAPISI). UCSB was the first in the Association of American Universities (AAU) to reach HSI status, and in 2022, 28% of its ~23,000 undergraduates identify as Chicano/Latino. Additionally, 34% of current undergraduates are first-generation college students. In national rankings, UCSB recently placed #14 on the "Best Ethnic Diversity" ranking among public universities. U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges 2023 Guidebook ranked UCSB #15 among all national universities for Social Mobility, and #14 for Veterans. UCSB also placed #2 in the New York Times' College Access Index, measuring the share of students receiving Pell grants; the graduation rate of students on Pell grants; and the net cost, after financial aid, that a college or university charged low- and middle-income students.

UCSB Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI)

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion ([ODEI](#)) serves as a focal point for efforts and initiatives around diversity, equity and inclusion at UCSB. The ODEI has a mission to build a truly diverse and inclusive campus that fosters an environment where each member is empowered to bring their unique differences, points of view, and contributions to the University; where they will experience acceptance, respect, inclusion and the support needed to achieve their full academic, personal, and professional potential. The ODEI maintains a repository of [DEI Resources](#) and hosts a [DEI Workshops](#) series.

Diversity Resources for UCSB Graduate Students

UC Santa Barbara is deeply committed to recruiting and supporting a diverse graduate student body and to developing scholarship, leadership, and professionalism of graduate students from all backgrounds. UCSB's Graduate Division maintains a repository of [DEI Resources for Graduate Students](#). Additionally, each department at UCSB has a designated departmental [Diversity Officer](#).

STEM-focused Diverse Student Organizations

UCSB hosts many STEM organizations with the mission of increasing diversity and providing community for students. These include: Graduate Students for Diversity in Science ([GSDS](#)), Women in Science and Engineering ([WiSE](#)), Society of Women Engineers ([SWE](#)), National Society of Black Engineers ([NSBE](#)) (UCSB Chapter), UCSB Black Graduate Student Association ([BGSAA](#)), Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science ([SACNAS](#)) (UCSB Chapter), Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers ([Los Ingenieros](#)), Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers ([SASE](#)) (UCSB Chapter), Asian Pacific Islander Alliance ([APIA](#)), UCSB Asian Pacific Islander Graduate Student Alliance ([APIGSA](#)), American Indian Science & Engineering Society ([AISES](#)), American Indian Student Association ([AISA](#)), American Indian & Indigenous Gardens Alliance ([AIIGA](#)), American Indian Graduate Student Alliance ([AIGSA](#)), International Student Association ([ISA](#)), Out in STEM ([oSTEM](#)) (UCSB Chapter), Queer Asian and Pacific Islanders ([QAPI](#)), Queer & Trans Graduate Student Union ([QTSU](#)).

Potential Programming Partners

The **Center for Science and Engineering Partnerships (CSEP)** serves as a campus-wide hub for the development, implementation and evaluation of projects that address the state and national needs of broadening participation in STEM, at the K-12, undergraduate and graduate/postdoctoral levels.

The **Center for Innovative Teaching, Research and Learning (CITRAL)** is a research hub that promotes and supports inclusive teaching and learning.

The **Opening New Doors to Accelerating Success (ONDAS) Student Center** offers tutoring, mentoring and professional development workshops for first year students (freshmen and transfer) in core STEM classes. ONDAS also organizes a year-long faculty professional development seminar, which include Table Talk dinners that sustained engagement between students and faculty members.

Summer Sessions: Summer Research Academies (SRA) offer a dynamic, 4-week summer experience that introduces qualified high school students to the research enterprise through project-based, directed research in STEM, Humanities, and Social Sciences fields.

Summer Sessions: Research Mentorship Program (RMP) is a 6-week summer program that pairs high-school students with a mentor (graduate student, postdoc, or faculty) to work on a research project in the mentor's lab.

The **Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (UCSB-AGEP)** program supports pedagogical training and career mentoring to prepare senior doctoral students for teaching-focused careers, with a goal of creating a more diverse STEM faculty workforce.

The **Early Undergraduate Research Experience and Knowledge Acquisition (EUREKA) Program** introduces first-year STEM students to the broader science community on campus, provides mentorship, networking, and career exploration, and provides support for academic-year internships in research labs. The **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)** provides support to primarily low-income and first-generation undergraduates through academic programs, advising, mentorship, student support referrals, and social/cultural programming.

The **McNair Scholars Program** prepares qualified undergraduates for entrance to a PhD program in all fields of study, with the goal of increasing the number of first-generation, low-income and/or underrepresented students in PhD programs.

The **Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA)** program, housed in the UCSB Office of Education Partnerships, offers academic support and mentoring to low-income and/or first-generation students, as well as students from groups historically underrepresented in colleges and universities.

The **Future Leaders in Advanced Materials (FLAM)** program is an internship program for undergraduates sponsored by the Materials Research Laboratory.

The **Summer Institute in Mathematics and Science (SIMS)** program is a 3-week academic preparation and research training program for incoming first-year students intending to enroll at UCSB directly from high school.

The **University of California Leadership Excellence through Advanced DegreeS (UC LEADS)** program supports upper-division undergraduate students in a two-year program of scientific research and graduate school preparation guided by individual Faculty Mentors.

The **California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP) Program** provides a 10-week intensive research experience for underrepresented undergraduates interested in a STEM careers, where participants work in a UCSB laboratory with a graduate student or postdoctoral researcher mentor.

The **College of Creative Studies (CCS) Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF)** program hosts 10-week-long summer fellowships in support of undergraduate experiential learning at CCS.