

Table 4. Examples of Government and Private Sponsor Mission Statements

Sponsor	Mission Statement	What it Really Means
National Science Foundation (NSF)	"Expand knowledge in science, engineering, and learning; Advance the capability of the Nation to meet current and future challenges; enhance NSF's performance of its mission."	NSF is primarily interested in advancing basic science and the STEM workforce. The impact needs to be about the underlying mechanism, not a disease state.
National Institutes of Health (NIH)	"To seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and heavier of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability."	NIH is primarily interested in understanding and promoting both normal health and disease states.
Department of Defense (DOD)	"To provide the military force needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country."	Any DOD proposal needs to explicitly state the benefit to military intelligence, health, materials, etc.
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)	"To provide leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues..."	USDA is an often overlooked and misunderstood. While traditional agriculture is certainly a focus, there are many programs on nutrition, food safety, food security, and obesity, as well as a robust education and training program.
National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)	"To give Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capabilities."	NEA projects must be designed to make a difference in the community or field, whether it be improving quality of life through arts or reaching an underserved population.
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	"Lead an innovative and sustainable program of exploration with commercial and international partners to enable human expansion across the solar system and bring new knowledge and opportunities back to earth."	NASA interests range broadly, from understanding space radiation, to understanding biological changes in astronauts following spaceflight, to applying space technologies to terrestrial applications. The program announcements very clearly specify the current interest.
The Welch Foundation	"The Welch Foundation, based in Houston, Texas, is one of the United States' largest private funding sources for basic chemical research."	This foundation is focused on fundamental chemistry; do not submit an applied chemistry proposal.

W. M. Keck Foundation	"The W.M. Keck Foundation seeks to generate far-reaching benefits for humanity by supporting pioneering discoveries in science, engineering and medicine, and organizations that enrich the lives of children, youth, and families."	This foundation is focused on high-risk, high reward research that has the potential to make a substantial impact.
American Heart Association	"To save and improve lives from heart disease and stroke"	This foundation is obvious: all projects tie to cardiac function or disease. Special emphasis is placed on their Strategically Focused Research Networks on Prevention, Hypertension, Disparities, Women, Heart Failure, Obesity, Children, and Vascular Disease.
Ford Foundation	"To reduce poverty and injustice, strengthen democratic values, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement."	This foundation supports high-risk projects and people that have the potential to have a strong societal impact.