Best Practices for Designing and Implementing NSF S-STEM Scholarship Projects

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This Birds-of-a-Feather session is for anyone interested in the NSF Scholarships in STEM (S-STEM) program, including current and former Principal Investigators (PIs) and those planning to apply. The S-STEM program funds scholarships and student support activities to support low-income, academically talented students in STEM. Any institution of higher education may apply for S-STEM funding, and a variety of projects are supported by the program. Designing and implementing a successful S-STEM project poses many challenges. The goal of this session is to catalyze a community of practice for S-STEM PIs. It will provide an opportunity to discuss lessons learned and best practices for writing S-STEM proposals, navigating the logistics of project implementation, and ensuring students have the support they need to be successful. Specific topics to be discussed include the following: (1) Understanding the solicitation requirements and common proposal mistakes; (2) Scholar recruitment and data-driven approaches for selection; (3) Cohort building including design of cohort-based activities for students from different majors or class years and strategies for integrating new students into an existing cohort; and (4) Remediation strategies including proactive interventions and peer support. The session leaders will introduce each topic; participants will then be invited to join a breakout group discussion of one of the topics. Lastly, participants will be invited to continue discussing S-STEM after SIGCSE by joining a Slack workspace dedicated to S-STEM best practices and lessons.