1. **Departmental Letter** *(a proposal submitted without this Letter will be returned without review)* NSF encourages organizations to value and reward the integration of research and education and the effective mentoring of its early-career faculty in their department. This integration of research and education requires close collaboration between the CAREER Principal Investigator (PI) and his/her organization throughout the duration of the award. To demonstrate the department’s support of the career development plan of the PI, the proposal must include one (and only one) letter from the PI's department head (or equivalent organizational official). In cases of joint appointments, the letter should be signed by both department heads. The letter, which will be included as part of the consideration of the overall merits of the proposal, should demonstrate an understanding of, and a commitment to, the effective integration of research and education as a primary objective of the CAREER award.

The Departmental Letter should be no more than 2 pages in length and include the department head's name and title below the signature. The letter should contain the following elements:

- A statement to the effect that the PI is eligible for the CAREER program. For non-tenure-track faculty, the Departmental Letter must affirm that the investigator's appointment is at an early-career level equivalent to pre-tenure status, pursuant to the eligibility criteria specified above. Further, for non-tenure-track faculty, the Departmental Letter must clearly and convincingly demonstrate how the faculty member satisfies all the requirements of tenure-track equivalency as defined in the eligibility criteria specified in this solicitation.
- An indication that the PI's proposed CAREER research and education activities are supported by and advance the educational and research goals of the department and the organization, and that the department is committed to the support and professional development of the PI; and
- A description of a) the relationship between the CAREER project, the PI's career goals and job responsibilities, and the mission of his/her department/organization, and b) the ways in which the department head (or equivalent) will ensure the appropriate mentoring of the PI, in the context of the PI's career development and his/her efforts to integrate research and education throughout the period of the award and beyond.