# National Science Foundation
## Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Christina Richardson

# Purpose of the program

- "provides up to three years of support for the graduate education of individuals who have demonstrated their potential for significant achievements in science and engineering research. The GRFP supports over 100 sub disciplines, including social sciences and psychology as well as the hard sciences."
via www.nsfgrfp.org

# Benefits of the NSF GRFP

Total funding package of ~$138,000 over five years (3 years paid)
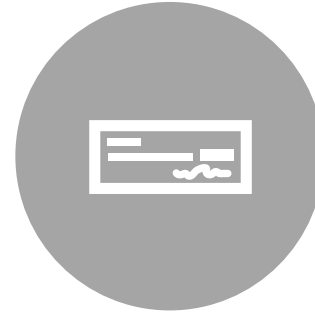
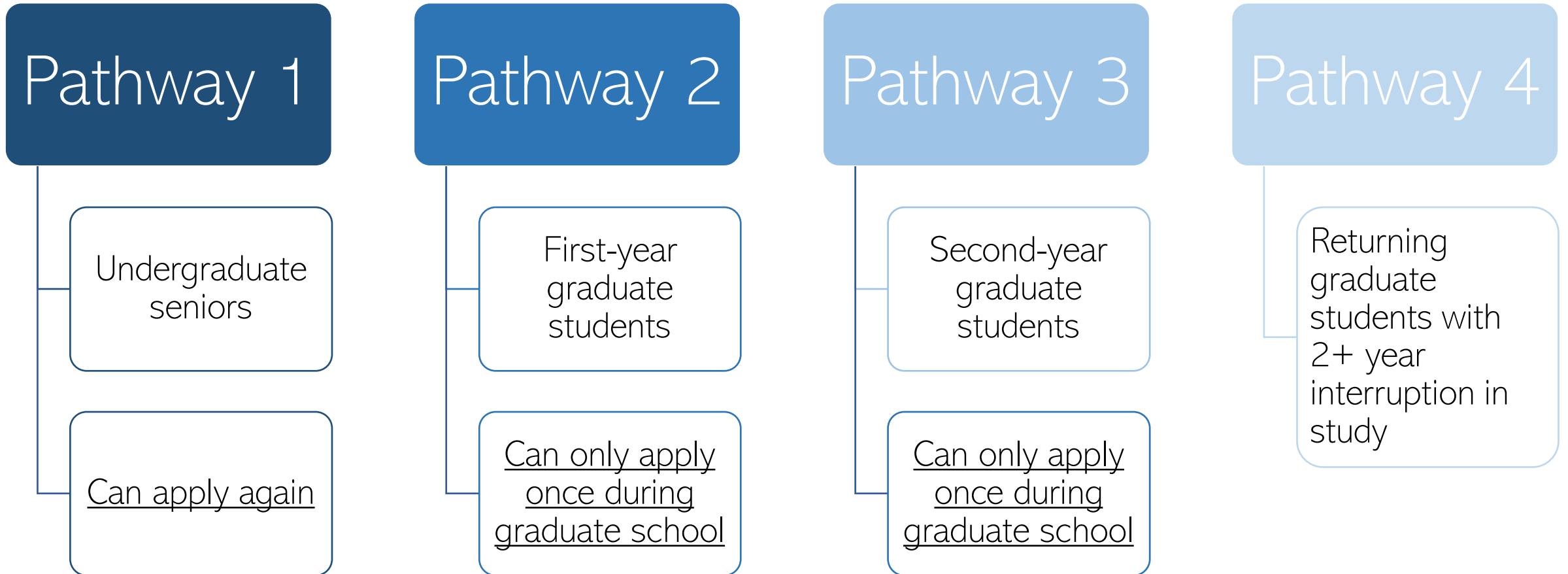3-years of support, at $34,000, during a five-year fellowship period

Cost-of-education allowance of $12,000 annually which typically covers tuition and fees

Internship opportunities (via GRIP and INTERN) exclusive to NSF GRFP

# Eligibility for NSF GRFP

| Pathway 1 | Pathway 2 | Pathway 3 | Pathway 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate seniors | First-year graduate students | Second-year graduate students | Returning graduate students with 2+ year interruption in study |
| Can apply again | Can only apply once during graduate school | Can only apply once during graduate school | |

# How many people apply?
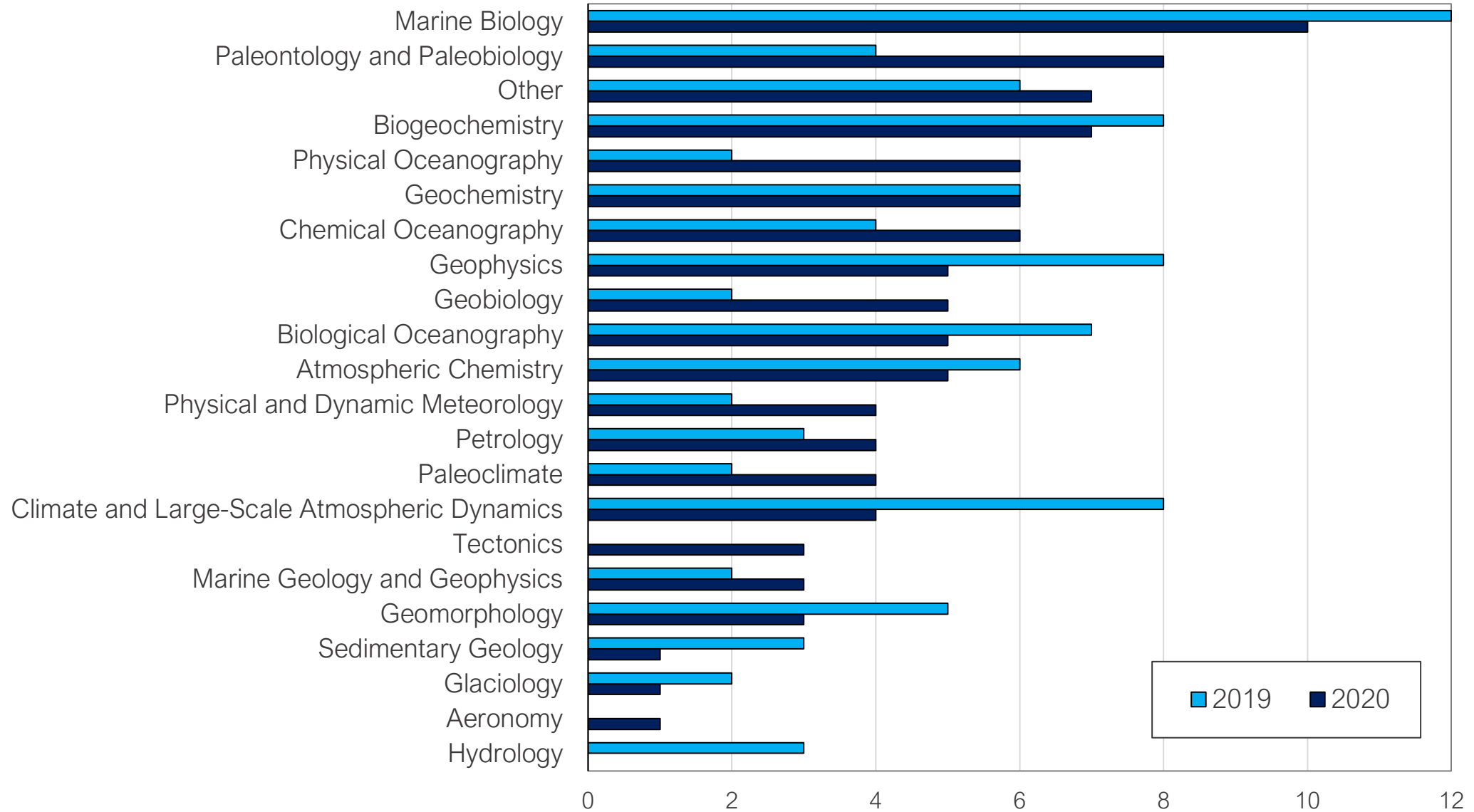
Generally, over 12,000+ people apply

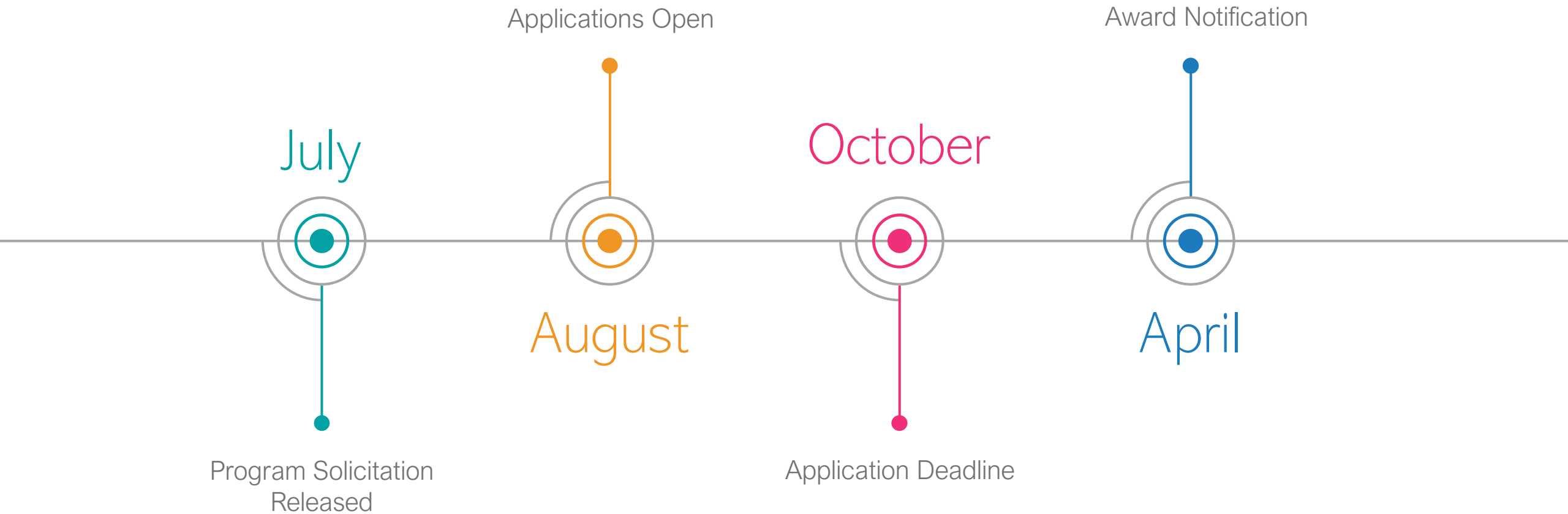In 2020, 2,045 award offers and 98 were in a geoscience-specific field of study

In 2019, 2,052 award offers and 95 were in a geoscience-specific field of study

Geosciences awards by sub-discipline

# Timeline

Applications Open

Award Notification

July

October

August

April

Program Solicitation
Released

Application Deadline

# Key components of the application

## Two statements

- Personal Statement, Relevant Background, and Future Goals (3-pg limit)
- Research Statement (2-pg limit)

## Merit review criteria

- Broader Impacts – "the potential to benefit society…"
- Intellectual Merit - "the potential to advance knowledge"
- Application must include separate headings for each

## Letters of recommendation

- Two required, three recommended

# Advice for a successful application

<u>Tell an interesting story</u> (reviewers read <u>A LOT</u> of statements, find a way to tell a narrative of your life that stands out!)

<u>Start early and solicit comments and critiques</u> from a range of audiences and experience levels
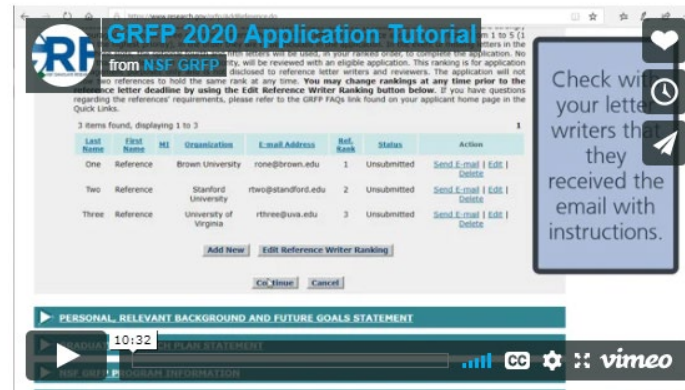
<u>Provide explicit examples that point to why YOU should be funded</u> (e.g., remember they "fund the person, not the project"; are you qualified? is your project well-reasoned?)

# ⃝! Pitfalls to avoid

- <u>Show, don't say</u> – for example, instead of "I am a passionate scientist" or "I have always been interested in X", <u>provide a compelling example</u> demonstrated by volunteer, research, or life experiences

- <u>Do not undervalue the importance of the Broader Impacts section</u> and be prepared to provide past and future examples

- <u>Poor writing style, structure, and content</u> – follow directions, be concise, proofread, and structure your statements so that they are easy to read

# Useful websites for more information

- [https://www.nsfgrfp.org/](https://www.nsfgrfp.org/)
  Official website for deadlines, application tips, tutorials and more…





- [https://www.alexhunterlang.com/nsf-fellowship](https://www.alexhunterlang.com/nsf-fellowship)
  [http://www.malloryladd.com/nsf-grfp-advice.html](http://www.malloryladd.com/nsf-grfp-advice.html)
  Examples of successful applications (and advice)