



**Name:** Matthew D. Kane, PhD

**Position:** Program Director

**Affiliation:** U.S. National Science  
Foundation (NSF)

**Location:** Alexandria, VA, USA

**Pronouns:** He/Him

Please briefly describe your current role in your position

*I manage the proposal review process and grant oversight for programs at the National Science Foundation.*

What is your terminal and/or current position in academia?

*PhD*

How did you hear about your current position? Was it a career option that you were aware about during your educational process?

*I was recruited at an ASM conference.*

How did you end up working at your current affiliation?

*I applied, interviewed and was selected.*

How long have you been working at your current affiliation?

*24 years*

What type of position is your current job?

*Hybrid (In-person & Remote)*

Is your role more a managerial or individual contributor role?

*Manager*

What are your day to day tasks that you perform in your position?

*Attend meetings, respond to emails and phone calls, complete analyses and paperwork.*

What do you like best about your job?

*Facilitating the discoveries of my scientific colleagues.*

What do you dislike about your job?

*Having to decline for funding many excellent proposals.*

If your job is outside of academia, what is similar and what is different about your current job and your terminal position in academia?

*The work environment is similar to research in academia except we only interact with faculty, not with students.*

How did your microbial ecology education prepare you for your current position?

*I was trained broadly in microbiology, ecology and evolutionary biology, and in critical thinking.*



# ISME

## Career Choices for Microbial Ecologists



What skills do you wish you learned during your educational process that would better prepare you for your current role (e.g. machine learning, management skills, etc.)?

*Personnel management.*

Do you have any recommendation and/or tips for early career microbial ecologists looking for jobs similar to yours?

*This job is best for individuals who have very broad interests in biology and who enjoy interacting with people a lot.*