SPEAKERS

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TOPICS COVERED

• About NSF
• Proposal Preparation
• Merit Review
• Award and Administration
ABOUT NSF
“To promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense...”
NSF IN A NUTSHELL

• Independent Agency
• Supports basic research and education
• Uses grant mechanism
• Low overhead; highly automated
• Discipline-based structure
• Cross-disciplinary mechanisms
• Use of Rotators/IPAs
• National Science Board
HOW NSF IS ORGANIZED

National Science Board (NSB)

Director
Deputy Director

Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS)

Geosciences (GEO)

Engineering (ENG)

Computer & Information Science & Engineering (CISE)

Biological Sciences (BIO)

Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences (SBE)

Education & Human Resources (EHR)

Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA)

Information & Resource Management (IRM)

Office of the General Counsel

Office of Integrative Activities

Office of International Science & Engineering

Office of Legislative & Public Affairs

Office of Diversity & Inclusion

Office of the General Counsel

Office of Integrative Activities

Office of International Science & Engineering

Office of Legislative & Public Affairs

Office of Diversity & Inclusion
FY 2018 REQUEST: TOTAL R&D BY AGENCY

Total R&D = $118 billion

Budget Authority in Billions of Dollars
FIND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
FIND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NSF Funding & Research Community

SPECIAL NOTICES

NSF Strategic Plan for FY 2014-2018

New NSF Proposal & Award Policies and Procedures Guide Issued, Effective for Proposals Submitted or Due On or After February 24, 2014


EVENT CALENDAR

17 JUN NSF ADVANCE Program New Solicitation Webinars
19 JUN CDL - The Future of Computing - Mediated Research and Innovation
19 JUN The Future of Computing - Mediated Research and Innovation
NSF WEBSITE ORGANIZATION

Research Areas
- Biological Sciences
- Computer & Information Science & Engineering
- Cyberinfrastructure
- Education and Human Resources
- Engineering
- Environmental Research & Education
- Geosciences
- Integrative Activities
- International Science & Engineering
- Mathematical & Physical Sciences
- Polar Programs
- Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences

Funding & Awards
- **FUNDING INFO**
  - Search Funding Opportunities
  - Browse Funding Opportunities A-Z
  - Recent Funding Opportunities
  - How to Prepare a Funding Proposal
  - Grant Proposal Guide
  - Submit a Proposal to FastLane

Contact Us
- Staff Directory
- Organization List
- Visit NSF
- Work at NSF
- Do Business with NSF
- Press
- Inspector General Hotline
- How Do I…?

Learning Resources
- Film, TV, Exhibits & More!
- Slideshows & Photo Galleries
- Classroom Resources
- Funding for Research on Learning in Formal & Informal Settings

News & Discoveries
- Recent News
- Recent Discoveries
- Multimedia Gallery
- Special Reports

The National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22230, USA

Tel: (703) 292-5111
FIRS: (800) 877-8339
TDD: (800) 281-8749
OTHER WAYS TO FIND FUNDING

Use Grants.gov’s search feature
PROPOSAL PREPARATION
The Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) contains documents relating to NSF's proposal and award process. It has been designed for use by both our customer community and NSF staff and consists of two parts.

- Part I is NSF’s proposal preparation and submission guidelines
- Part II is NSF’s award and administration guidelines
WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL & AWARD POLICIES & PROCEDURES GUIDE?

- Provides guidance for preparation and submission of proposals to NSF
- Describes process – and criteria – by which proposals will be reviewed
- Outlines reasons why a proposal may not be accepted or returned without review
- Describes process for withdrawals, returns, and declinations
- Includes policies to guide, manage, and monitor the award and administration of grants and cooperative agreements
# TYPES OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Descriptions</th>
<th>Program Announcements</th>
<th>Program Solicitations</th>
<th>Dear Colleague Letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Proposals for a Program Description must follow the instructions in the PAPPG.</td>
<td>• Proposals for a Program Announcement must follow the instructions in the PAPPG.</td>
<td>• Proposals must follow the instructions in the Program Solicitation; the instructions in the PAPPG apply unless otherwise stated in the solicitation.</td>
<td>• Dear Colleague Letters are notifications of opportunities or special competitions for supplements to existing NSF awards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPES OF NSF PROPOSALS

- Research
- RAPID & EAGER
- RAISE
- GOALI
- Ideas Lab
- FASED
- Conferences
- Equipment
- Travel
- Facility/Center
- Fellowships
WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Goal of Program  Eligibility  Special proposal preparation and/or award requirements
Antarctic Research

PROGRAM SOLICITATION
NSF 17-543

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):
NSF 16-541

National Science Foundation
Directorate for Geosciences
Division of Polar Programs

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter’s local time):
May 23, 2017
SAMPLE COVER PAGE OF A SOLICITATION

Number of awards funded by the program per year

Funds available to the program per year

Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Standard Grant or Continuing Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: 50

Anticipated Funding Amount: $55,000,000

The Antarctic Sciences Section anticipates committing approximately $55M as either standard or continuing awards made in response to this solicitation contingent on the availability of funds.
Eligibility information for Organizations/PIs
TYPES OF DUE DATES

Proposals may be submitted at any time.

NO DEADLINES

1. **Target dates**: dates after which proposals will still be accepted, although they may miss a particular panel or committee meeting.

2. **Deadline dates**: dates after which proposals will not be accepted or will be returned without review by NSF. The deadline date will be waived only in extenuating circumstances. Such a deviation only may be authorized in accordance with Chapter II.A.
TYPES OF DUE DATES (CONT’D)

PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

TARGET DATES

Talk to the program office if you think you might miss the date.

Proposers should allow adequate time for processing of proposals (see Chapter I.H for further information). Many NSF programs accept proposals at any time. Other programs, however, establish due dates for submission of proposals. The following types of due dates are utilized by NSF:

1. **Target dates**: dates after which proposals will still be accepted, although they may miss a particular panel or committee meeting.

2. **Deadline dates**: dates after which proposals will not be accepted or will be returned without review by NSF. The deadline date will be waived only in extenuating circumstances. Such a deviation only may be authorized in accordance with Chapter II.A.
DEADLINE DATES

Proposals will not be accepted after this date and time (5pm submitter’s local time).

F. When to Submit Proposals

Proposers should allow adequate time for processing of proposals (see Chapter 1.H for further information). Many NSF programs accept proposals at any time. Other programs, however, establish due dates for submission of proposals. The following types of due dates are utilized by NSF:

1. Target dates: dates after which proposals will still be accepted, although they may miss a particular panel or committee meeting.

2. Deadline dates: dates after which proposals will not be accepted or will be returned without review by NSF. The deadline date will be waived only in extenuating circumstances. Such a deviation only may be authorized in accordance with Chapter 11.A.
TYPES OF DUE DATES (CONT’D)

SUBMISSION WINDOWS

Proposals will not be accepted after this date and time (5pm submitter’s local time)

3. Submission windows: designated periods of time during which proposals will be accepted for review by NSF. It is NSF’s policy that the end date of a submission window converts to, and is subject to, the same policies as a deadline date.
TYPES OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

LETTERS OF INTENT

Enables better management of reviewers and panelists
TYPES OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS
Sometimes required, sometimes optional
Proposals that do not contain the following required sections may not be accepted by FastLane:

- Project Summary
- Project Description
- References Cited
- Biographical Sketch(es)
- Budget
- Budget Justification
- Current and Pending Support
- Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources
- Data Management Plan
- Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan (if applicable)
SINGLE COPY DOCUMENTS

• Some proposal documents are for “NSF Use Only” and are not provided to reviewers
  ▪ Authorization to deviate from proposal preparation requirements
  ▪ List of suggested reviewers to include or not to include
  ▪ Proprietary or privileged information
  ▪ Proposal certifications
  ▪ Collaborators and Other Affiliations Information
**Cover Sheet** *(Required)*

Many of the boxes on the cover sheet are electronically pre-filled as part of the Fastlane login process.

*Example from FastLane*
SECTIONS OF AN NSF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

**Project Summary** *(Required)*
Text boxes must contain an Overview and Statements on Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. Proposals that do not separately address the Overview and both Merit Review criteria in text boxes will not be accepted by FastLane. Project summaries with special characters must be uploaded as a PDF document.
SECTIONS OF AN NSF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Project Description *(Required)*
Proposers should address what they want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful.

A separate section within the narrative must include a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities.

Text from the PAPPG

The Project Description must contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a section labeled “Broader Impacts”. This section should provide a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities. Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to the achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the US; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, including preservation, documentation, and sharing of data, samples, physical collections, curriculum materials and other related research and education products should be described in the Special Information and Supplementary Documentation section of the proposal (see Chapter II.C.2) for additional instructions for preparation of this section).

(ii) Page Limitations and Inclusion of Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) within the Project Description

Brevity will assist reviewers and Foundation staff in dealing effectively with proposals. Therefore, the Project Description (including Results from Prior NSF Support, which is limited to five pages) may not exceed 15 pages. Visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are included in the 15-page limitation. PIs are cautioned that the Project Description must be self-contained and that URLs must not be used because: 1) the information could circumvent page limitations; 2) the reviewers are under no obligation to view the sites; and 3) the sites could be altered or deleted between the time of submission and the time of review.

Conformance to the 15-page limit will be strictly enforced and may not be exceeded unless a deviation has been specifically authorized. (Chapter II.A contains information on deviations.)

(iii) Results from Prior NSF Support

The purpose of this section is to assist reviewers in assessing the quality of prior work conducted with current or prior NSF funding. If any PI or co-PI identified on the proposal has received NSF support with a start date in the past five years (including any current funding and no cost extensions), information on the award is required for each PI and co-PI, regardless of whether the support was directly related to the proposal or not. In cases where the PI or any co-PI has received more than one award (excluding amendments to existing awards), they need only report on the one award that is most closely related to the proposal. Support includes not just salary support, but any funding awarded by NSF. NSF awards such as standard or continuing grants, Graduate Research Fellowships, Major Research Instrumentation, conference, equipment, travel, and center awards, etc., are subject to this requirement.

The following information must be provided:
(a) the NSF award number, amount and period of support
(b) the title of the project;
SECTIONS OF AN NSF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

References Cited *(Required)*
Reference information is required, and proposers must follow accepted scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials.
**Biographical Sketches** *(Required)*

Biographical sketches are required for all senior project personnel and must not exceed two pages in length, per individual.

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1. **Biographical Sketch(es)**

   (i) **Senior Personnel**

   A biographical sketch (limited to two pages) is required for each individual identified as senior personnel. (See Exhibit II-7 for the definitions of Senior Personnel.) Proposers may elect to use third-party solutions, such as NIH's SciENv, to develop and maintain their biographical sketch. However, proposers are advised that they are still responsible for ensuring that biographical sketches created using third-party solutions are compliant with NSF proposal preparation requirements.

   The following information must be provided in the order and format specified below. Inclusion of additional information beyond that specified below may result in the proposal being returned without review.

   Do not submit any personal information in the biographical sketch. This includes items such as: home address, home telephone, fax, or cell phone numbers; home e-mail address; driver's license number; marital status; personal hobbies; and the like. Such personal information is not appropriate for the biographical sketch and is not relevant to the merits of the proposal. NSF is not responsible or in any way liable for the release of such material. (See also Chapter III.H).

   (a) **Professional Preparation**

   A list of the individual's undergraduate and graduate education and postdoctoral training (including location) as indicated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Institution(s)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Degree &amp; Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Institution(s)</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Degree &amp; Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Institution(s)</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Inclusive Dates (Years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   (b) **Appointments**

   A list, in reverse chronological order, of all the individual's academic/professional appointments beginning with the current appointment.

   (c) **Products**

   A list of: (i) up to five products most closely related to the proposed project; and (ii) up to five other significant products, whether or not related to the proposed project. Acceptable products must be citable and accessible including but not limited to publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights. Unacceptable products are unpublished documents not yet submitted for publication, invited lectures, and additional lists of products. Only the list of ten will be used in the review of the proposal.

   Each product must include full citation information including (where applicable and practicable) names of all authors, date of publication or release, title, title of enclosing work such as journal or book, volume, issue, pages, website and URL, or other Persistent Identifier.

   If only publications are included, the heading "Publications" may be used for this section of the Biographical Sketch.

   (d) **Synergistic Activities**

   A list of up to five examples that demonstrate the broader impact of the individual's professional and scholarly activities that focuses on the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as its creation.
SECTIONS OF AN NSF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

**Budget (Required)**
Each proposal must contain a budget for each year of support requested. The budget justification should be no more than three pages for all years of the project combined.

Proposals containing subaward(s) must include a separate budget justification of no more than three pages for each subaward.
BUDGETARY GUIDELINES

Amounts should be:

- Realistic and reasonable
- Well-justified and should establish need
- Consistent with program guidelines

Eligible costs consist of:

- Personnel
- Equipment
- Travel
- Participant support
- Other direct costs (e.g., sub-awards, consultant services, computer services, and publications costs)

Information regarding budgetary guidelines can be found in PAPPG as well as NSF program solicitations.
NSF COST SHARING POLICY

• Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited in solicited & unsolicited proposals.
  - To be considered voluntary committed cost sharing, the cost sharing must meet all of the standards of 2 CFR § 215.23, to include identification of cost sharing on the NSF budget.
  - Line M will be “grayed out” in FastLane.

• Organizations may, at their own discretion, continue to contribute any amount of voluntary uncommitted cost sharing to NSF-sponsored projects.
Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources *(Required)*
This section of the proposal is used to assess the adequacy of the organizational resources available to perform the effort proposed.

**Instructions:** Upload an aggregated description of the internal and external resources (both physical and personnel) that the organization and its collaborators will provide to the project, should it be funded. Describe only those resources that are directly applicable. The description should be narrative in nature and must not include any quantifiable financial information. If there are no Facilities, Equipment, or Other Resources identified, a statement to that effect should be indicated in this section and uploaded into FastLane. See PAPPG II.C.2.i for more information.

.Upload File
Current and Pending Support
*(Required)*
This section of the proposal calls for information on all current and pending support for ongoing projects and proposals.

Example from FastLane
Special Information and Supplementary Documentation

This segment should alert NSF officials to unusual circumstances that require special handling; more information can be found in the PAPPG, Chapter II.C.2.j.

Text from the PAPPG

j. Special Information and Supplementary Documentation

Except as specified below, special information and supplementary documentation must be included as part of the Project Description (or part of the budget justification), if it is relevant to determining the quality of the proposed work. Information submitted in the following areas is not considered part of the 15-page Project Description limitation. This Special Information and Supplementary Documentation section also is not considered an appendix. Specific guidance on the need for additional documentation may be obtained from the organization’s SPO or in the references cited below.

- Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan. Each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral researchers must upload under "Mentoring Plan" in the supplementary documentation section of FastLane, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. In no more than one page, the mentoring plan must describe the mentoring that will be provided to all postdoctoral researchers supported by the project, regardless of whether they reside at the submitting organization, any subrecipient organization, or at any organization participating in a simultaneously submitted collaborative proposal. Proposers are advised that the mentoring plan must not be used to circumvent the 15-page Project Description limitation. See Chapter II.D.5 for additional information on collaborative proposals. Mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers supported on the project will be evaluated under the Broader Impacts review criterion.

Examples of mentoring activities include, but are not limited to: career counseling; training in preparation of grant proposals, publications and presentations; guidance on ways to improve teaching and mentoring skills; guidance on how to effectively collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas; and training in responsible professional practices.

- Plans for data management and sharing of the products of research. Proposals must include a document of no more than two pages uploaded under "Data Management Plan" in the supplementary documentation section of FastLane. This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results (see Chapter XI.D.4), and may include:

1. the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;

2. the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where

3. the schedule for dissemination and sharing of the data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials produced in the course of the project.
SPECIAL INFORMATION AND SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTATION

- Letters of Collaboration
- Post-doctoral Mentoring Plans
- Data Management Plans
MENTORING FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

• Proposals that include funding to support postdoctoral researchers must include a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals.

• Proposed mentoring activities will be evaluated as part of the merit review process, under NSF’s Broader Impacts merit review criterion.
MENTORING FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

- Proposals that identify a postdoc on the budget but do not include a maximum one-page mentoring plan as a supplementary document will be prevented from submission in FastLane.

- For collaborative proposals, the lead organization must submit a mentoring plan for all postdoctoral researchers supported under the entire collaborative project.
MENTORING FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

• Mentoring activities may include:
  ▪ Providing career counseling, training in the preparation of grant proposals, or training in responsible professional practices
  ▪ Developing publications and presentations
  ▪ Offering guidance on techniques to improve teaching and mentoring skills
  ▪ Providing counseling on how to effectively collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas
DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS

- All proposals are required to include, as a supplementary doc, a Data Management Plan of up to two pages.
- Plan should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on dissemination and sharing of research results.
- A valid Data Management Plan may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed, as long as a clear justification is provided.
- Plan will be reviewed as part of the Intellectual Merit and/or Broader Impacts of the proposal.
DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Dissemination and Sharing of Research Results

NSF DATA SHARING POLICY

Investigators are expected to share with other researchers, at no more than incremental cost and within a reasonable time, the primary data, datasets, physical collections and other supporting materials created or generated in the course of work under NSF grants. These are to include scientific data, unique research materials, and other materials created for NSF-funded research. See NSF Administration Guide (NSF, Chapter 1.3.A). For more information see www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp

NSF DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Proposals submitted or due on or after January 18, 2011, must include a supplement or document of no more than two pages labeled “Data Management Plan.” This supplement should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results. See Grant Proposal Guide (GPG, Chapter II.D.2) for full policy implementation.

REQUIREMENTS BY DIRECTORATE, OFFICE, DIVISION, PROGRAM, OR OTHER NSF UNIT

Links to data management requirements and plans relevant to specific Directorates, Offices, Divisions, Programs, or other NSF units are provided below. If guidance specific to the program is not provided, then the requirements established in Grant Proposal Guide (GPG, Chapter II.D.2) apply.

Please note that if specific program solicitation provides guidance on preparation of data management plans, such guidance must be followed.

- Biological Sciences Directorate (BIO)
  - Disclosure Guidance
- Computer & Information Science & Engineering (CISE)
  - Disclosure Guidance
- Education & Human Resources Directorate (EHR)
  - Disclosure Guidance
- Engineering Directorate (ENG)
  - Disclosure Guidance
- Geosciences Directorate (GEO)
  - Disclosure Guidance

www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp
MERIT REVIEW
PROPOSAL REVIEW AND PROCESSING
PROGRAM OFFICER REVIEW

• Upon receipt at NSF, proposals are routed to the PI-designated program office.

• NSF staff conducts a preliminary review to ensure they are:
  ▪ Complete;
  ▪ Timely; and
  ▪ Conform to proposal preparation requirements.

• NSF may not accept a proposal or may return it without review if it does not meet the requirements above.

• If the proposal is outside the scope of the program, the program officer usually tries his/her best to transfer it to the most appropriate program for evaluation.
The PAPPG contains detailed guidelines on proposal preparation and a description of the Merit Review Criteria:

The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF’s mission “to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes.” NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.
PROPOSALS NOT ACCEPTED OR RETURNED WITHOUT REVIEW

If it does not contain all of the required sections, as described in PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.

- Per the PAPPG Project Summary Requirement:
  - Must include an overview and separate statements on Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts.

- Per the PAPPG Project Description Requirement:
  - Must contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a section labeled “Broader Impacts of the Proposed Work.”
  - Must include results from prior NSF support with start date in the past 5 years.

- Per the PAPPG Data Management Plan Requirement:
  - Must be included as a supplementary document.

- Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Requirement (if applicable):
  - Proposals that include postdoctoral researchers must include a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals.
OTHER REASONS FOR RETURN OF PROPOSALS WITHOUT REVIEW

• It is inappropriate for funding by the National Science Foundation.

• It is submitted with insufficient lead time before the activity is scheduled to begin.

• It is a full proposal that was submitted by a proposer that has received a “not invited” response to the submission of a preliminary proposal.

• It is a duplicate of, or substantially similar to, a proposal already under consideration by NSF from the same submitter.
OTHER REASONS FOR RETURN OF PROPOSALS WITHOUT REVIEW

• It does not meet NSF proposal preparation requirements, such as page limitations, formatting instructions, and electronic submission, as specified in the PAPPG or program solicitation.

• It is not responsive to the PAPPG or program announcement/solicitation.

• It does not meet an announced proposal deadline date (and time, where specified).

• It was previously reviewed and declined and has not been substantially revised.

• It duplicates another proposal that was already awarded.
Reviewers provide feedback to NSF based on the Review Criteria and the Review Elements

Review Criteria and Elements are available as reviewers provide feedback

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to:
   a. advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
   b. benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or institution to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home institution or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

In the context of the five review elements, please evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal with respect to intellectual merit.

In the context of the five review elements, please evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal with respect to broader impacts.

Please evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal with respect to any additional solicitation-specific review criteria, if applicable.

This are the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal with respect to
PROPOSAL REVIEW AND PROCESSING
TYPES OF REVIEWS

• Ad hoc: Proposals sent out for review
  ▪ *Ad hoc* reviewers usually have specific expertise in a field related to the proposal.
  ▪ Some proposals may undergo *ad hoc* review only.

• Panel: Face-to-face sessions conducted by reviewers mainly at NSF but also in other settings
  ▪ Panel reviewers usually have a broader scientific knowledge.
  ▪ Some proposals may undergo only a panel review.
  ▪ Some proposals may undergo reviews by multiple panels (especially for those proposals with crosscutting themes).
TYPES OF REVIEWS

• Combination: Some proposals may undergo supplemental ad hoc reviews before or after a panel review.

• Internal: Review by NSF Program Officers only
  ▪ Examples of internally reviewed proposals:
    • Proposals submitted to Rapid Response Research Grants (RAPID)
    • Proposals submitted to Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER)
    • Proposals submitted to Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE)
    • Proposals for conferences under $50,000
HOW ARE REVIEWERS SELECTED?

• Types of Reviewers Recruited:
  ▪ Reviewers with specific content expertise
  ▪ Reviewers with general science or education expertise

• Sources of Reviewers:
  ▪ Program Officer’s knowledge of the research area
  ▪ References listed in proposal
  ▪ Recent professional society programs
  ▪ Computer searches of S&E journal articles related to the proposal
  ▪ Former reviewers
  ▪ Reviewer recommendations included in proposal or sent by email

• A proposal must have at least three reviews or reviewers
HOW DO I BECOME A REVIEWER?

• Contact the NSF Program Officer(s) of the program(s) that fit your expertise:
  ▪ Introduce yourself and your research experience.
  ▪ Tell them you want to become a reviewer for their program.
  ▪ Ask them when the next panel will be held.
  ▪ Offer to send a 2-page CV with current contact information.
  ▪ Stay in touch if you don’t hear back right away.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REVIEWER?

- Review all proposal material and consider:
  - The two NSF merit review criteria and any program specific criteria.
  - The adequacy of the proposed project plan including the budget, resources, and timeline.
  - The priorities of the scientific field and of the NSF program.
  - The potential risks and benefits of the project.

- Make independent written comments on the quality of the proposal content.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REVIEW PANEL?

- Discuss the merits of the proposal with the other panelists
- Write a summary based on that discussion
- Provide some indication of the relative merits of different proposals considered
WHY SERVE ON AN NSF PANEL?

• Gain first-hand knowledge of the merit review process
• Learn about common problems with proposals
• Discover proposal writing strategies
• Meet colleagues and NSF Program Officers managing the programs related to your research
MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN THE REVIEW PROCESS

• The primary purpose is to remove or limit the influence of ties to an applicant organization or investigator that could affect reviewer advice.

• The secondary purpose is to preserve the trust of the scientific community, Congress, and the general public in the integrity, effectiveness, and evenhandedness of NSF’s merit review process.
AFFILIATIONS WITH PROPOSER ORGANIZATIONS

• Examples:
  ▪ Current employment at the organization
  ▪ Other association with the organization, such as being a consultant
  ▪ Being considered for employment or any formal or informal reemployment arrangement at the organization
  ▪ Any office, governing board membership, or relevant committee membership at the organization
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH INVESTIGATOR OR PROJECT DIRECTOR

• Examples:
  ▪ Known family or marriage relationship
  ▪ Business partner
  ▪ Past or present thesis advisor or thesis student
  ▪ Collaboration on a project or book, article, or paper within the last 48 months
  ▪ Co-edited a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings within the last 24 months
PROPOSAL REVIEW AND PROCESSING
FUNDING DECISIONS

• The merit review panel provides:
  ▪ Review of the proposal and a recommendation on funding.
  ▪ Feedback (strengths and weaknesses) to the proposers.

• NSF Program Officers make funding recommendations guided by program goals and portfolio considerations.

• NSF Division Directors either concur or reject the Program Officers’ funding recommendations.
FEEDBACK FROM MERIT REVIEW

• Reviewer ratings (such as: E, V, G, F, P)
• Analysis of how well proposal addresses both review criteria: Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts
• Proposal strengths and weaknesses
• Reasons for a declination (if applicable)

If you have any questions, contact the cognizant Program Officer
DOCUMENTATION FROM MERIT REVIEW

- Verbatim copies of individual reviews, excluding reviewer identities
- Panel Summary or Summaries (if panel review was used)
- Context Statement (usually)
- PO to PI comments (formal or informal, written, email or verbal) as necessary to explain a decision
EXAMPLES OF REASONS FOR DECLINE

• The proposal was not considered to be competitive based on the merit review criteria and the program office concurred.

• The proposal had flaws or issues identified by the review process and the program officer concurred.

• The program funds were not adequate to fund all competitive proposals.
REVISIONS AND RESUBMISSIONS

• Points to consider:
  ▪ Do the reviewers and the NSF Program Officer identify significant strengths in your proposal?
  ▪ Can you address the weaknesses that reviewers and the Program Officer identified?
  ▪ Are there other ways you or your colleagues think you can strengthen a resubmission?

Again, if you have questions, contact the cognizant Program Officer.
NSF RECONSIDERATION PROCESS

Explanation from Program Officer and/or Division Director

Written request for reconsideration to Assistant Director within 90 days of the decision

Request from organization to Deputy Director of NSF
POSSIBLE CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING A COMPETITIVE PROPOSAL

- Addresses all review criteria
- Likely high impact
- Broadening participation
- Educational impact
- Impact on organization /state
- Special programmatic considerations (e.g. CAREER/RUI/EPSCoR)
- Other support for PI
- “Launching” versus “Maintaining”
- Portfolio balance
PROPOSAL REVIEW AND PROCESSING
ISSUANCE OF THE AWARD

• NSF’s Division of Grants and Agreements (DGA) reviews the recommendation from the program office for business, financial, and policy implications.

• NSF’s grants and agreements officers make the official award as long as:
  - The organization has an adequate grants management capacity.
  - The PI/Co-PIs do not have overdue annual or final reports.
  - There are no other outstanding issues with the organization or the PI.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go to NSF’s Home Page (www.nsf.gov)
AWARD MANAGEMENT
NSF AWARD PROCESS - OVERVIEW

Proposal Preparation/Submission

Program Review

Recommend?

YES

Submit to DGA for Review

3 Branches

EHR & MPS Specialist Admin Review

GEO, SBE, BIO & OISE Specialist Admin Review

ENG, CISE & OIA Specialist Admin Review

Award?

YES

Award Notice

Grants Officer Approval

NO

Declination Letter

From the Program Office

NO

Declination Letter

From DGA

YES

YES
HOW MANY AWARD ACTIONS DOES DGA PROCESS EACH YEAR?

DGA Typically Approves:

- ~12,000 New Awards
- ~5,000 Supplements/Continuing Grant Increments
- ~5,000 Non-funded actions
DGA reviews the proposal to ensure budgetary and administrative conditions are in accordance with the solicitation.

**Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animals**

- All NSF projects involving human subjects must conform with the Common Rule (45 CFR 690).
- Before an award can be made, all projects involving human subjects must either have an IRB approval or exemption.
- All NSF projects involving vertebrate animals must comply with the Animal Welfare Act and related regulations.
- Before an award can be made, all projects involving vertebrate animals must have an IACUC approval.
- What about awards lacking definite plans for use of human subjects?
PROPOSAL BUDGETS

Budget Line F, Participant Support Costs

- Know the definition of participant support. Be aware of NSF’s policy with respect to participant support and watch out for unallowable entertainment and indirect costs.

Budget Line G, Other Direct Costs

- Subawards (G.5) Be sure that sub-recipient budgets and budget justifications are included as part of the proposal budget.
- Other (G.6) Itemize other direct costs clearly in the budget justification and beware of unallowable costs.
Budget Line I, Indirect Costs

• Charge in accordance with your most recent federally negotiated rate agreement.

• In most cases, a supplement should use the rate used for the original award.

Budget Justification

• The amounts for each budget line item requested must be documented and justified.

• Amounts budgeted must be consistent with the proposing organization's policies and procedures and cost accounting practices used in accumulating and reporting costs.
TYPICAL AREAS OF QUESTIONS FOR DGA

Conference Proposals and Participant Support Costs

• Definitions of budget line items
• Allowable costs

Addition of Sub-Awards and Sub-Recipient Monitoring

• Submit request through FastLane; must have DUNS number and be registered in FastLane
• Monitoring requirements outlined in 2 CFR 200

Award Close-Out and Mandatory Cost-Share Requirements

• Most awards automatically closed
• If special terms & conditions in award, need requirements fulfilled, reports submitted, manual close-out
## POST AWARD NOTIFICATIONS AND REQUESTS

### Consolidated List of Notifications and Requests (not all-inclusive)

**Type of Grantee Notification = Awardee Authority**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Submitted By</th>
<th>Who Reviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grantee-Approved No-Cost Extension</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Changes in Methods or Procedures</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Changes, Delays or Events of Unusual Interest</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual and Final Cost Share Notification by Recipient</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts of Interest that cannot be satisfactorily managed, imposition of conditions or restrictions when a conflict of interest exists</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>OGC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type of Grantee Request = NSF Approval Required**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Submitted By</th>
<th>Who Reviews and Recommends?</th>
<th>Who Approves?</th>
<th>Amendment or Notice?*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subawarding, Transferring or Contracting Out Part of an NSF Award</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First NSF-Approved No-Cost Extension</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second NSF-Approved No-Cost Extension</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Objectives or Scope</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-Term Disengagement of the PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Person-Months Devoted to the Project</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition of co-PI/co-PD</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal of PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute (Change) PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD Transfer from One Organization to Another</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment, -Old Organization, no notice, check research.gov, -New Organization, amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-award Costs in Excess of 90 Days</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries of Administrative or Clerical Staff</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Costs for Dependents</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rearrangements/Alterations (Construction)</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reallocation of Funds for Participant Support Costs</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional categories of participant support costs other than those described in 2 CFR § 200.75</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change to cost sharing commitments reflected on Line M of the NSF award budget**</td>
<td>**AOR, via email</td>
<td>Program Officer/DGA</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for Supplemental Support</td>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Program Officer</td>
<td>DGA</td>
<td>Amendment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

- *You will always be notified when the award is amendment. Program Officer's have the option to send or not send approval notices. Check research.gov for the status of your request.
- **Requests to change cost share commitments must be emailed. Best practice is to email both the NSF Program Officer and the DGA Portfolio Manager.
NO COST EXTENSIONS

• Awards with $0 balances cannot be extended.
• Awards cannot be extended just to use up remaining funds.
• Submit Grantee-Approved NCEs at least 10 days prior to the award end date.
• Submit the NSF-Approved NCEs at least 45 days prior to the award end date.
• Research.gov will automatically determine what type of NCE is appropriate based upon eligibility.
• NSF-Approved NCE’s may be submitted “late,” but you will need to explain why.
AWARD TRANSFERS

- Grants are awarded to the Organization, not the PI
- If the PI is moving to a new Organization, the transferring organization typically has the options below:
  1. Nominate new PI: The request will be reviewed by the NSF Program Officer, and sent to DGA for final review/approval.
  2. Request to sub-award
  3. Agree to transfer
  4. Terminate: Contact DGA and the NSF Program Officer immediately. There is no module for requesting termination of an award.

These and other possible alternatives should be discussed with the DGA Grants Officer.
PROJECT REPORTS

Project Outcomes Report (POR) for the General Public

- Due 120 days after the end date.
- Not approved by the NSF Program Officer.

General Information about Project Reports

- The NSF sends “reminder” notices for all reports – when they are due and when they become overdue.
- The report requirements for an award are available to the PI and all Co-PIs via Research.gov.
- The SRO also can run a report to show reports for their awards that are due and overdue.
- The PI and all Co-PIs may submit the reports.
- The SRO does not have access to submit the reports.
- When in doubt, contact your Program Officer, or the Research.gov Help Desk.
OVERDUE PROJECT REPORTS

Consequences

- No future funding
- No administrative actions
- Can impact other PI’s awards

Annual and Final Project Reports

- Must be approved by the NSF Program Officer
- Annual reports are due 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period
- Final reports are due 120 days after the end date of the award
NSF MONITORING ACTIVITIES

- Programmatic Site Visits
- Division of Institution & Award Support (DIAS) contracted desk reviews
- DIAS Advanced Monitoring Site Visit Program in conjunction with the Division of Grants & Agreements (DGA)
- Division of Financial Management (DFM) baseline monitoring including active payment monitoring and post award financial activity reviews
- Office of Inspector General (OIG) audits
Awardee Responsibilities – Keys to Success

• Comply with all relevant federal regulations and national policy requirements.
• Adhere to the terms and conditions of an NSF award.
• Read your award notice carefully! It may include project or award-specific requirements, such as:
  ▪ Funding restrictions
  ▪ Special reporting requirements
  ▪ Special terms and conditions or other instructions
• Manage funds prudently:
  ▪ Allowable
  ▪ Allocable
  ▪ Reasonable
  ▪ Necessary
AWARDEE RESPONSIBILITIES – KEYS TO SUCCESS (CONT’D)

• Establishing appropriate policies and procedures (written), oversight, and internal controls.
• Train staff so they understand their roles and responsibilities.
• Be consistent!
• Maintain timely and effective lines of communication. Know who to contact for relevant information. In general...

PI:  *Your NSF Program Officer for technical/scientific questions
   *Your Sponsored Research Office (SRO) for administrative questions

SRO: *DGA Portfolio Manager for award specific questions. Always include the award number in any email or communications to assist us with responding to your inquiry.

*NSF Policy Office with general grant policy questions and proposal solicitation issues
FOR MORE INFORMATION
ASK EARLY, ASK OFTEN!

policy@nsf.gov