

Proposal & Award Policy Newsletter

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Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) Released

NSF received final approval from the Office of Management and Budget on the proposed changes to the PAPPG and it was released to the community on November 2, 2018. NSF provides the community a minimum of ninety days to review the changes before they go into effect. This allows organizations to familiarize themselves with the changes as well as to make any necessary changes to internal policies to comply with NSF guidance. The revised PAPPG (NSF 19-1) will be effective for proposals submitted or due, or awards made, on or after January 28, 2019.

Awards issued prior to January 28, 2019, will continue to follow the terms and conditions associated with the individual award. Should changes be made to existing awards after this effective date (such as a continuing grant increment, supplemental funding and/or a no-cost extension), new terms and conditions that reference the 2019 PAPPG will be included in the award. A number of the significant changes are summarized below and a full accounting of the changes is provided at the beginning of the PAPPG.

Research.gov On-Screen Instructions vs. NSF Policy

Since April 2018, NSF has begun accepting research, non-collaborative proposals via [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov) – NSF’s modernization of FastLane. Proposers may notice that on-screen instructions in Research.gov differ from guidance provided in the PAPPG. While there are no policy changes implemented via [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov), on-screen

A webcast on the changes to the PAPPG will be held on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 at 2:00 P.M. EST. Register at <https://nsfgrantsconferences.com>.

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Contact

Contact the Policy Office via e-mail at policy@nsf.gov; or by phone at 703.292.8243

Links

**Proposal & Award Policies
& Procedures Guide (PAPPG)**
**FAQs on Proposal Preparation
& Award Administration**

**NSF Grants Conference
Presentations from Recent
Events**

This issue showcases images from Education and Human Resources – one of the many areas funded by NSF. SOURCE: <https://nsf.gov/news/mmg>.

NSF Policy on Harassment Finalized

NSF will not tolerate sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault within the agency, at awardee organizations, field sites, or anywhere NSF-funded science and education are conducted. The 3,000 U.S. institutions of higher education and other organizations that receive NSF funds are responsible for fully investigating complaints and for compliance with federal non-discrimination laws, regulations, and executive orders. As announced in [Important Notice 144](#), NSF has taken steps to help ensure research environments are free from sexual harassment. Additionally, NSF is bolstering its policies, guidelines, and communications so that organizations funded by NSF clearly understand expectations and requirements.

NSF is working to make certain that recipients of grants and cooperative agreements respond promptly and appropriately to instances of sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault. A community effort is essential to eliminate sexual and other forms of harassment in science and to build scientific workspaces where people can learn, grow, and thrive.

As announced in the Federal Register on September 21, 2018, a new award term and condition has been finalized that will require awardee organizations to notify NSF of any findings/determinations of sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault regarding an NSF funded PI or co-PI. The award term also requires the awardee to notify NSF if the PI or co-PI is placed on administrative leave or if the awardee has imposed any administrative action on the PI or any co-PI relating to any finding/determination or an investigation of an alleged violation of awardee policies or codes of conduct, statutes, regula-

tions, or executive orders relating to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault. Finally, the award term and condition specifies the procedures that will be followed by NSF upon receipt of a notification.

The term and condition will apply to all new awards and funding amendments to existing awards issued on or after October 22, 2018.

In addition to the award term and condition, the newly revised PAPPG (NSF 19-1), which is effective for proposals submitted or due on or after January 28, 2019, has been updated in the following four areas:

- New coverage has been added to the conference proposal section to require proposers to have a policy or code-of-conduct that addresses sexual and other forms of harassment and that includes clear and accessible means of reporting violations of the policy or code-of-conduct. This policy must be disseminated to conference participants prior to attendance at the conference as well as made available at the conference itself;
- Two new notification requirements have been added

to the listing of required grantee notifications to NSF in accordance with the new term and condition. These notifications will be submitted using the [Organizational Notification of Harassment Form](#) that will be available on the Office of Diversity and Inclusion website.

- The Change in PI coverage now has “Changes in PI at the Initiation of the Grantee Organization,” as well as “Changes in PI at the Initiation of NSF;” and
- Non-Discrimination Statutes and Regulations coverage has been expanded to include a new paragraph that addresses the “NSF Policy on Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment,” as well as a reference to the new grant condition that implements the new policy.

Finally, NSF and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) also developed a [harassment website](#) which includes pertinent policies, laws, regulations, FAQs and promising practices for organizations. For any questions, comments or concerns regarding harassment, please contact ODI at programcomplaints@nsf.gov or 703. 292.8020. ■

NSF is Developing a New Award Notice

As NSF develops a new backend award system, we are taking the opportunity to standardize, streamline and simplify the award notices that are automatically delivered to funded organizations. By taking advantage of new technology, NSF can deliver notices that are easy to read and less prone to problems as technology changes. The enhancements will further ensure that NSF is compliant with the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* and other policies. Addition-

ally, NSF will now be able to copy PIs and co-PIs on all award notices sent to funded organizations.

NSF has been rolling out these new award notices to the community incrementally beginning in March 2018 for notices of No-Cost Extensions. In November 2018, NSF will roll out the new award notice for incremental and supplemental funding as well as creativity extensions and forward funded increments. Notices for new awards are scheduled for March 2019. ■

Research.gov Proposal Submission Update

Enhancements have been made to [Research.gov's](#) proposal submission capabilities. This past April, [Research.gov](#) launched the ability to prepare and submit non-collaborative research proposals. As modernization efforts continue, [Research.gov](#) has recently added new capabilities to these efforts.

Effective September 24, 2018, [Research.gov's](#) proposal preparation and submission site was enhanced to allow additional flexible options for PDF uploads. These include:

- Support for PDFs generated from LaTeX source documents in addition to existing support for PDFs from Microsoft Word, Google Docs, and Open Office for document compliance checks.
- Compliance checks for fonts and font sizes as follows:

- Arial (not Arial Narrow), Courier New, Palatino, Palatino Linotype, or Helvetica at a font size of 10 points or larger;
- Times New Roman at a font size of 10 points or larger;
- Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 10 points or larger; and
- Other fonts not specified above, such as Cambria Math, may be used for mathematical formulas, equations, or when inserting Greek letters or special characters.

Note that while some of the above font sizes differ from the guidance provided in the [Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#), proposals following the on-screen guidance in [Research.gov](#) will not be prevented from submission.

The proposal preparation and submission site is being developed incremen-

tally and as capabilities are migrated from FastLane to [Research.gov](#), the system features will expand until [Research.gov](#) eventually replaces FastLane for proposal preparation and submission.

To stay up-to-date on future enhancements and events, sign up to our listserv by sending an e-mail to system_updates-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov. ■

Webcasts Available to the Research Community

Did you know that the NSF Policy Office posts videos of its Fall NSF Grants Conference webcasts to [NSFGrantsConferences.com](#) for use by the research community? The recordings are available on the site's Resource Center.



Subscribe!

Want to subscribe to this newsletter? There are a couple of ways to do this.

NSF Update

The NSF Update mechanism allows you to choose to be notified on many types of information about NSF programs, policies and events. To do this, navigate to <https://www.nsf.gov>, and click on the envelope icon in the “Follow Us” section of the website. After entering your e-mail address, you can select all the various topics you’re interested in learning about. **To receive this newsletter, check the boxes for Newsletters/ Journals and Publications: Policies and Procedures.**

Grants Conference and Events Website

You may also sign up to be notified about this newsletter and future policy outreach opportunities on the NSF Grants Conference website. To do this, navigate to <https://nsfgrantsconferences.com> and click “Get Notified.”

We hope you continue to enjoy this newsletter and share it with your colleagues!



NSF Grants Conference Webcast

NSF live-streamed the plenary sessions of the NSF Grants Conference held in New Orleans, Louisiana on November 8-9. The conference and the webcast are especially beneficial for new faculty, researchers and administrators who want to gain key insight into a wide range of current issues at NSF including the state of current funding; new and current policies and procedures; and pertinent administrative issues.

NSF will make the recorded sessions available for on-demand viewing in the coming weeks and will be posted on the conference website at <https://nsfgrantsconferences.com>.

Below is a description of the sessions that will be available.

NSF – An Introduction and Overview: Learn about NSF’s purpose, mandate, organizational structure, program and budget highlights (including current budget status), trends, areas of special emphasis, and other special initiatives.

Types of Funding Opportunities: NSF research proposals are not the only mechanism used to provide funding. You’ll learn about the various mechanisms NSF uses to fund proposals such as RAPID, EAGER, RAISE, Ideas Labs, and Conferences, to name a few. They’re not all the same!

Proposal Preparation: NSF Program Officers review how and when to prepare a proposal, including discussion of what constitutes a project and a proposal of high quality. Presenters discuss do’s and don’ts, recent procedural changes, as well as the various sources of NSF funding opportunities.

NSF Merit Review Process: NSF Program Officers discuss the philosophy of merit review and how it works, as well as *ad hoc* and multi-tiered reviews. Presenters also cover the role of the Program Officer, timing of proposal submissions, reviewer selection, release of reviewer com-

ments, and conflict-of-interest issues related to merit review.

Award Management: Learn about award requirements and conditions, and the responsibilities of those involved in the award process—principal investigators, grantee organizations, Program Officers, research administrators, and agency grants officials.

NSF Policy Update: Understand the new policies and procedures that affect your organization.

Overview of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG): OIG staff discuss the roles and responsibilities of the OIG, as well as issues arising from current audits and investigations.

Overview of the Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE): Staff discuss the OISE role in coordinating activities as well as how to incorporate international components in NSF proposals.

NSF-Wide Programs: *Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program, Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) and Facilitating Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) Research Opportunity Awards (ROA).* Each directorate participates in these three popular NSF-Wide programs. Learn more about the program requirements and eligibility information for CAREER, REU and RUI/ROA.

NSF IT Modernization/Research.gov: [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov) is the modernization of FastLane, providing the next generation of grants management capabilities for the research community. The modernization includes moving legacy FastLane capabilities to a new, modern portal platform. Come to this panel discussion to learn about these and future changes, ask questions about NSF’s plans for electronic research administration, and share what you think the priorities should be so NSF can best serve the research community. ■



Continued from page 1 — PAPPG

instructions may alter some processes outlined in the PAPPG. Proposers should know that on-screen instructions should be followed.

Expanded Use of Dear Colleague Letters

Dear Colleague Letters (DCLs) have always been a mechanism to provide important information to the community, alert the community to changes in policy at the directorate level and provide information about supplemental funding requests for existing awards. NSF has expanded the use of DCLs over the past year to announce NSF's interest in receiving proposals in specified topical areas via the use of the following types of proposals: Rapid Response Research (RAPID); Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER); Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE); and Conference.

Unaffiliated Individuals

NSF has revised the eligibility section of the PAPPG to state that unless specifically authorized in an NSF solicitation (i.e. postdoctoral fellowship), unaffiliated individuals are ineligible to receive direct funding from NSF.

NSF's Research Misconduct Policy

NSF's existing policy on the responsible conduct of research has been updated to state NSF's responsibility regarding allegations of research misconduct. NSF will not tolerate research misconduct in proposing or performing research funded by

NSF, in reviewing research proposals submitted to NSF, or in reporting research results funded by NSF. Upon findings of research misconduct, NSF will take appropriate action against individuals or organizations.

International Branch Campuses of U.S. Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and Foreign Organizations

While changes were made to the current PAPPG regarding the justification for funding either an international branch campus of a U.S. IHE or a foreign organization, the new PAPPG provides additional guidance for proposers that this justification must be included in the Project Description. In addition, FastLane and Research.gov will also include a checkbox on the Cover Sheet to identify that the proposal includes funding for either international branch campuses of U.S. IHEs and/or foreign organizations. This information will be provided to reviewers as well as to the NSF Office of International Science and Engineering.

Synergistic Activities

The NSF Biographical Sketch requires that the PI and co-PI include professional and scholarly activities that focus on the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as its creation. This section has been revised to specify that a list should include up to five distinct examples. Proposers should not include broad categories with many examples in each category.

Participant Support

The participant support section of the PAPPG has been updated to clarify when an individual should be classified as a participant or a speaker at a conference. While speakers and trainers generally are not considered participants and should not be included in the participant support section of the budget, if the primary purpose of the individual's attendance is learning and receiving training as a participant, then the costs may be included under participant support. This section also has been updated to clarify that participant support costs may not be budgeted to cover room rental fees, catering costs, supplies, etc., related to an NSF-sponsored conference. Human subject payments should be included on line G6 of the NSF budget under "Other Direct Costs", and any applicable indirect costs should be calculated on the payments in accordance with the organization's federally negotiated indirect cost rate.

Resubmission

As a number of NSF Directorates have moved to "no deadlines" for their core programs, the PAPPG has been updated to establish that NSF programs that accept proposals at any time may have guidelines in which a declined proposal is ineligible for resubmission for a specified period of time. This will permit proposers to take the reviewer comments into consideration prior to resubmitting the proposal. ■