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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION PROPOSAL & AWARD POLICY NEWSLETTER

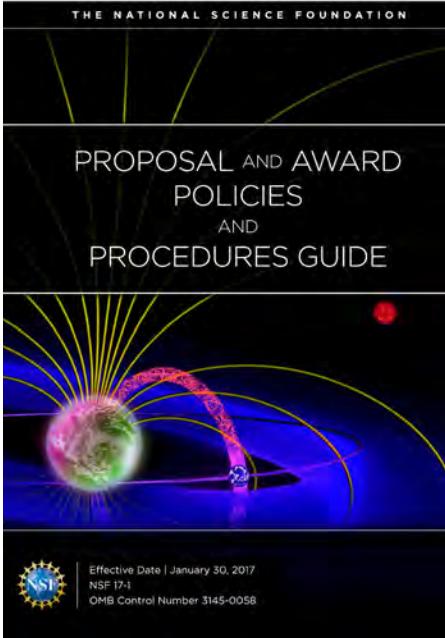


Announcing a New Proposal & Award Policy Newsletter

We are pleased to announce the release of the Proposal & Award Policy Newsletter, which is a product of the Policy Office in the Division of Institution and Award Support. This will be another communications vehicle to inform the community about upcoming changes and clarifications to policies and procedures that affect the research community as you prepare and submit proposals for funding, and as you manage your organization's NSF awards. Proposal and award policy is constantly shifting, and we hope this quarterly issuance will be yet another tool for you to learn about and disseminate the latest information NSF has to offer. ■



PAPPG Issuance and Implementation



As we do each year, NSF released a new **Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide** (PAPPG), which went into effect for proposals submitted, or due, on or after January 30, 2017. The PAPPG incorporates all of the guidance needed to prepare and submit proposals to NSF, as well as to manage awards received by the organization.

The schedule for developing, releasing and implementing new guidance is a year-round activity and one in

which the community plays a vital role. Each spring, NSF releases a draft PAPPG in the Federal Register for public comment. This gives the community an opportunity to see and respond to the proposed changes. Changes come from a variety of sources including Congress, the National Science Board (NSB), NSF Senior Management, and the research community. Each comment is addressed and resolved prior to releasing the full document in the fall. NSF always provides the community with a minimum of 90 days to review the guidance prior to its effective date. For example, the current version was released on October 25, 2016, and became effective on January 30, 2017.

Please be sure to review all of the changes each time a PAPPG is released. The 2017 document includes a number of significant changes, a subset of which are summarized here.

- Previously the PAPPG treated the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) and the Award Administration Guide (AAG) as separate documents.

- Cost sharing coverage has been enhanced to highlight the difference between voluntary committed and voluntary uncommitted cost sharing. Also specific attention has been called to state that the inclusion of indirect cost rates lower than negotiated rates is considered voluntary committed cost sharing.
- Greater clarity has been included on instructions for proposals submitted late (after 5:00 PM submitter's local time) due to natural or anthropogenic disasters.
- Environmental requirements have been supplemented with a standard post-submission Organizational Environmental Impacts Checklist and associated instructions that proposers may be asked to submit.
- A new section has been developed to describe the various types of proposals that may be submitted to NSF. In addition to regular research proposals, this section describes the specific requirements of other types

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Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animals

Significant updates to the PAPPG address proposals that include research on human subjects and vertebrate animals.

Human Subjects

There has long been a section in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) – **45 CFR 690.118** – that provides guidance for proposals that lack definite plans for human subjects research. NSF did not want to be in the position of requiring an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for a project that, at the time of submission, did not have definite plans for use of human subjects. Such proposals do not need to be reviewed by an IRB prior to an award being made. For projects that lack definite plans for the use of human subjects, their data or their specimens, pursuant to 45 CFR 690.118, NSF will accept a determination notice that establishes a limited time period under which the Principal Investigator (PI) may conduct preliminary or conceptual work that does not involve human subjects. Except for

research exempted or waived, no human subjects may be involved in any project supported by the award until the project has received approval by an IRB.

The NSF Division of Grants and Agreements will include an award clause identifying that any work with human subjects, including recruitment, may not be conducted prior to an IRB approval. The complete NSF policy regarding human subjects is contained in the **PAPPG, Chapter II.D.5.**

Vertebrate Animals

With regard to vertebrate animals, additional clarity has been added to the PAPPG regarding departures from the **Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals** (Guide). The revised language states that any project proposing the use of vertebrate animals for research or education must comply with the provision in the Public Health Service (PHS) Assurance for Institutional Commitment that requires the submitting organization to establish

and maintain a program for activities involving animals in accordance with the Guide. Taxon-specific guidelines may be used as supplemental references. Departures from the Guide must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and be based on scientific, veterinary, medical or animal welfare issues.

In 2015 NSF entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of Laboratory and Animal Welfare (OLAW) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) which allows NSF-funded projects using vertebrate animals to come under the purview of NIH/OLAW oversight, provides improved sharing of information between the agencies and includes partnerships on animal welfare related to outreach and education activities. The complete NSF policy regarding vertebrate animals is contained in the **PAPPG, Chapter II.D.4.** NSF has also published answers to **Frequently Asked Questions on the NSF – NIH/OLAW MOU.** ■



of proposals including RAPID, EAGER, Conference, Travel and other categories.

- Two new proposal types were added – Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry

(GOALI), and Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE).

- Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animals – See the next article for specifics changes that affect the

proposals related to human subjects and vertebrate animals.

These and other changes are described in the Summary of Significant Changes at the beginning of the PAPPG. ■

New Types of NSF Proposals

Two new types of proposals have been incorporated into the latest version of the PAPPG.

Take Note!

Proposal types identified in the PAPPG are standardized and may not be changed as part of a solicitation. This is important for the proposing community as automated compliance checks are performed on proposals prior to submission based on the type of proposal being submitted.

RAISE

Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Research and Engineering (RAISE) is a new proposal-type that may be recognized as a follow on to the NSF INSPIRE pilot program. RAISE is meant to support bold, interdisciplinary ideas that meet all three of the following criteria:

- Scientific advances lie in great part outside the scope of a single program or discipline, such that substantial funding support from more than one program or discipline is necessary.
- Lines of research promise transformational advances.
- Prospective discoveries reside at the interfaces of disciplinary boundaries that may not be recognized through traditional review or co-review.

- RAISE proposals are internally reviewed, may have budgets of up to \$1 million and a duration of up to five years. In addition, each RAISE proposal must include email documentation from at least two NSF Program Officers confirming approval to submit a RAISE proposal. (Upload it under “RAISE – Program Officer Concurrency Emails” in the Supplementary Documentation section of FastLane.)

Additional details regarding RAISE are contained in the PAPPG, **Chapter II.E.3.**

GOALI

The Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI) is not new to NSF, however, it is new as a type of proposal outlined in the PAPPG. Previously, GOALI proposals were submitted to NSF via a Program Solicitation.

GOALI seeks to stimulate collaboration between academic research institutions and industry. Under this proposal type, academic scientists and engineers request funding either in conjunction with a regular proposal submitted to a standing NSF program, or as a supplemental funding request to an existing NSF-funded award. GOALI proposals must be submitted to an active NSF funding opportunity and must be submitted

in accordance with the deadlines specified therein. A proposer interested in submitting a GOALI proposal or a GOALI supplemental funding request to an existing NSF-funded award must contact the cognizant NSF Program Officer listed in the relevant funding opportunity prior to submission. Special interest is focused on affording opportunities for:

- Interdisciplinary university-industry teams to conduct collaborative research projects, in which the industry research participant provides critical research expertise, without which the likelihood for success of the project would be diminished;
- Faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and students to conduct research and gain experience in an industrial setting; and
- Industrial scientists and engineers to bring industry’s perspective and integrative skills to academe.

FastLane will check to ensure that at least one industrial co-PI must be listed on the Cover Sheet at the time of submission although the industrial participant cannot use or receive any NSF funds.

GOALI proposals should now follow the guidance contained in the **PAPPG, Chapter II.E.4.** ■

Outreach Events

The Policy Office ended 2016 with another successful NSF Grants Conference. For those of you who missed it, there are several NSF outreach opportunities for you to take advantage of in 2017.

Spring 2017 NSF Grants Conference in Louisville, Kentucky

The next NSF Grants Conference will be held in Louisville, Kentucky on Monday, June 5 – Tuesday, June 6, 2017, and is hosted by the Kentucky EPSCoR program. Like its predecessors, the event is designed especially for new faculty, researchers and administrators who want to gain key insights into a wide range of current issues at NSF such as: the state of current funding; new and current policies and procedures; and pertinent administrative issues. NSF program officers representing each NSF directorate will be on hand to provide up-to-date information about specific funding opportunities and to answer attendee questions.

Registration will open on Thursday, March 30, 2017. The registration fee will be \$300 and we expect to include up to 350 participants. For more information and to receive email updates about this and other NSF outreach activities and events, add yourself to our contact list by going to nsfgrantsconferences.com and clicking “Get Notified.”

National Council of University Research Administrator (NCURA) and Society of Research Administrators (SRA) International Spring Meetings

An NSF Policy Office representative will be speaking in-person or virtually at a number of upcoming

NCURA and SRA meetings. Typically, the NSF Update presentation at these regional meetings will include updates to NSF policies, procedures and other award administration topics. Please check their respective websites for further details regarding NSF participation.

Fall 2016 NSF Grants Conference Recap

On Nov. 14-15, 2016, 300 attendees came to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to hear NSF speakers discuss topics related to proposal preparation, merit review, award management and provide information unique to each NSF directorate. An additional 2,000 people registered to view the sessions through a live webcast.

This event sold out in under three hours.

The presenters covered myriad subjects relevant to the research community including: types of NSF funding opportunities, proposal preparation, award management, the merit review process, and the Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program. Individual directorates also briefed their areas in separate breakouts.

One of the attendees said: “They give us very good information [on preparing] our proposals and [explain how they] will get reviewed.” On demand recordings of the conference are available for viewing at: <http://webcast.nsfgrantsconferences.com/archives.html>. ■



“We’ve always received rave reviews [about] these conferences. That’s why we’ve been doing them for 20 years, and that’s why they sell out so quickly,”

— Martha Rubenstein,
Chief Financial Officer and Head
for the Office of Budget,
Finance and Award Management



Contact Information and Important Links

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

Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)

FAQs on Proposal Preparation & Award Administration

NSF Grants Conference

Presentations from Recent Events