

GPG Summary of Significant Changes

Overall Document

- Previously, the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG) was a standalone document. It has now been incorporated as Part I of the new NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG). An Introduction precedes Part I of the Guide and contains updated sections, including:
 - About the National Science Foundation;
 - Foreword;
 - Acronym list;
 - Definitions and NSF-Grantee Relationships;
 - Description of NSF Organizations; and
 - NSF Organizational Chart (including hypertext links)

Part I contains NSF's proposal preparation and submission guidelines and currently consists of the GPG. The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* will be incorporated in the PAPPG at a later date.

The NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) has also been incorporated into the Guide as Part II and has been renamed the *NSF Award & Administration Guide* (AAG). Previous GPM references in the text of the GPG have been updated with references to the applicable AAG section. In addition, a Subject Index has been added to the GPG, internal references and links have been updated as necessary, and minor editorial changes have been made throughout the document to either clarify or enhance the intended meaning of a sentence or section.

Chapter I - Pre-Submission Information

- **Section A, NSF Proposal Preparation and Submission Mechanisms**, has been revised to begin the GPG with a description of the two electronic mechanisms available to proposers in the preparation and submission of proposals to NSF – FastLane and Grants.gov. The title of Chapter I also has been changed to "Pre-Submission Information."
- **Section E, Categories of Proposers**, has been supplemented to clarify that the category "Universities and Colleges" is defined as institutions located and accredited in the US. The Federal Agencies category has also been supplemented to reflect that there are some unusual circumstances where other Federal agencies and FFRDCs may submit proposals directly to NSF. The cognizant NSF Program Officer makes the determination of whether the proposed project meets one of the list of exceptions provided in this section. Therefore, proposers who think their project may meet one of the exceptions should contact the cognizant Program Officer before preparing a proposal for submission.
- **Section F, When to Submit Proposals**, has been updated with a new section on Special Exceptions to NSF's Deadline Date Policy. Should a natural or anthropogenic disaster temporarily prevent submission to NSF, proposers may request flexibility in meeting the announced deadline date by obtaining prior approval from the cognizant NSF Program Officer.

Chapter II - Grant Administration

- **Section B.2, Proposal Margin and Spacing Requirements**, has entirely new guidance which specifies the four fonts that may be used when preparing an NSF proposal. The page formatting section also has been revised to state that a standard, single-column format should be used in the body of the proposal.
- **Section C.1.e, Proposal Certifications**, has been supplemented with additional proposal certifications. When the Authorized Organizational Representative electronically signs the

proposal, they are now also submitting the Certification regarding Nondiscrimination (GPG Exhibit II-6 contains the full text of this certification) and, where applicable, the Certification regarding Flood Hazard Insurance. A description of both certifications is contained in this section.

- **Section C.2.a, Cover Sheet**, has been revised to more closely follow the format of the Cover Sheet contained in FastLane and to provide explanatory information on each of the requested sections.
- **Section C.2.f, Biographical Sketch(es)**, has been clarified to emphasize that personal information should not be included on the Biographical Sketch or submitted with the proposal.
- **Section C.2.g, Budget**, has been reorganized so that coverage in the GPG discusses the budget and allowability of costs from a budget preparation perspective and the AAG discusses it from an allowability and administration perspective. The cost principles that govern each type of awardee are included in this section as well.
- **Section C.2.g(i) (a), Salaries and Wages**, has been clarified to show that individuals included on Lines A and B of the budget should be employees of the proposing organization. Compensation for consultants or subawardees, including salaries and wages, should not be included in that section of the budget. In addition, if it is anticipated that the proposer wants to provide salary compensation above the base salary (overload), that should be disclosed in the budget justification and must be approved in the NSF award notice. The salaries and wages policies contained in this section also apply to an independent institute or laboratory that employs college or university faculty on a part-time basis.
- **Section C.2.g(ii), Fringe Benefits**, has been supplemented with further information on calculation of fringe benefits for different classes of employees.
- **Section C.2.g(v), Participant Support Costs**, has been revised to show that for some educational projects conducted at local school districts, the participants are being trained as employees. If that is the case, the costs should be classified as participant support if a stipend or training allowance method is used.
- **Section C.2.g(vi) (a), Materials and Supplies**, includes a definition and states that, for items that represent a substantial amount of the proposed materials and supplies line item cost, a cost estimate should be included in the proposal.
- **Section C.2.g(viii), Indirect Costs**, has been supplemented with more detailed information on calculation and negotiation of applicable indirect cost rate(s), particularly for proposers that do not have a current negotiated rate agreement with a cognizant Federal agency. Further description is also included in the Exceptions to Basic Policy section.
- **Section C.2.g(xi), Cost Sharing**, has been substantially revised to reflect the National Science Board's (NSB) decision to eliminate NSF program-specific cost sharing. In accordance with this NSB policy, there is no expectation by the Foundation that proposals submitted for funding will include cost sharing. In addition, there also has been a change to the previous statutory (1%) cost sharing requirement. In accordance with prior Congressional requirements, NSF required that each grantee share in the cost of research projects resulting from unsolicited proposals. The appropriations providing funds to NSF no longer contain this language and therefore, the statutory cost sharing requirement of 1% is eliminated.
- **Section C.2.j, Special Information and Supplementary Documentation**, has been updated to expand information on the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Guidance also has been added on letters of support. Unless required by a specific program solicitation, letters of support should not be submitted with a proposal. If the solicitation does require them, the letters should be unique to the proposal submitted and cannot be altered without the author's explicit prior approval. Proposals that do not comply with these instructions may be returned without review.
- **Sections D.5 and D.6, Proposals Involving Vertebrate Animals and Proposals Involving Human Subjects**, have been reorganized and the format synthesized with the requirements for human subjects and vertebrate animals contained in the SF 424 R&R form.
- **Section D.7, Proposals for Conferences, Symposia and Workshops**, has been updated to reflect that costs associated with these types of proposal must be specifically and clearly identified in the proposed scope of work and budget and approved by NSF.
- **Section D.10, Support for Development of NSF Centers**, is an entirely new section that describes NSF's support of various individual Centers and Centers programs. Proposers that

would like to learn more about current or future NSF Centers are encouraged to contact the appropriate disciplinary Program Officer.

- **Section D.11, Support for Development of Major Facilities and Equipment**, is another new section of the GPG that discusses NSF support for major research equipment and facilities construction. NSF depends on the research communities to provide input for the planning, development, and implementation of Large Facility Projects.
- **Exhibits II-1 through II-7**, previously been located as appendices at the end of the *Grant Proposal Guide*. Since they relate to preparation of a proposal, they have been included as exhibits to Chapter II.

Chapter III - NSF Proposal Processing and Review

- **Section B, Selection of Reviewers**, an entirely new section that provides a description of the guidelines NSF uses for the selection of reviewers for proposals submitted to the Foundation.

Chapter IV - Non-Award Decisions and Transactions

- **Section D, Reconsideration**, has been expanded and, in order to maintain coverage of pre-award information in the GPG, the reconsideration information previously contained in the Grant Policy Manual has been moved to the GPG. When reconsideration by the cognizant Assistant Director/Office Head is requested, the timeframe to furnish the results of the reconsideration to the proposer has been revised to 45 days. GPG Chapter IV has also been renamed "Non-Award Decisions and Transactions."

Chapter V - Renewal Proposals

- **Section B, Accomplishment-Based Renewal**, has been updated to show that accomplishment-based renewals are special types of renewal proposals that are appropriate only in certain circumstances. Investigators should contact the cognizant Program Officer before developing a proposal using this format.