

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released version 14-1 of their Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). This guide provides instructions for preparing and submitting proposals.

Below are some, but not all, of the clarifications that you may find helpful. See the GPG for the complete list: http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf14001/gpg_index.jsp

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Craig



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Proposal Content Type Items

Sections of the Proposal

- The guide now contains a list of required sections for a full proposal submitted via FastLane.
 - Clarifies that if the submission instructions do not require a section to be provided, the proposer should insert text or upload a document in that section of the proposal that states, "Not Applicable."

Project Summary

- Clarifies that a Project Summary containing special characters that is submitted as a PDF file in the Supplementary Documentation section must be formatted with separate headings for the overview, statement on intellectual merit, and statement on broader impacts.

Results from Prior NSF Support

- Clarifies that in the summary of results of the completed work, the accomplishments related to Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact activities must be separately described under two distinct headings.

Unfunded [Substantial] Collaborations

- Revised to explain that any substantial collaboration with individuals not included in the budget should be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal and documented in a letter of commitment from each collaborator.

Results from Prior NSF Support

- Clarifies that in cases where the PI or co-PI has received more than one award (excluding amendments) they need only report on the one award most closely related to the proposal.

Current and Pending Support

- In FastLane, if Current and Pending Support information for all senior personnel are uploaded in a single PDF file associated with the PI, the proposer should insert text or upload a document that states, "Not Applicable" for any co-PI or Senior Person.
 - Clarifies that if Current and Pending Support information is not required per the solicitation, the proposer should insert text or upload a document in this section of the proposal that states, "Not Applicable."

Biographical Sketch(es)

- Updated to state that inclusion of information beyond that specified may result in the proposal being returned without review.
- In FastLane, if biographical sketches for all senior personnel are uploaded in a single PDF file associated with the PI, the proposer should insert text or upload a document that states, "Not Applicable" for any co-PI or Senior Person.
 - **Products Section**
 - Clarifies that if only publications are included, the heading "Publications" may be used for this section of the Biographical Sketch.
 - Clarifies that if a biographical sketch is not required, the proposer should insert text or upload a document in this section of the proposal that states, "Not Applicable."

Proposals for Conferences, Symposia and Workshops, and Chapter II.D.9, Proposals to Support International Travel

- Clarifies that if any section is not required, the proposer should insert text or upload a document in that section of the proposal that states, "Not Applicable."

Submission of a collaborative proposal from multiple organizations

- Clarifies the required sections of the proposal for completion by the lead organizations versus non-lead organizations.

Format of the Proposal

- Clarifies that upon entering the proposal preparation module in FastLane, the PI will be prompted to select whether or not the proposal is a collaborative proposal and the type of proposal being developed.

Proposal Certification related to Conflict of Interest

- Updated to state that if research proceeds without the imposition of conditions or restrictions when a conflict of interest exists, this must be disclosed to NSF via use of the Notifications and Requests Module in FastLane.

Proposals for Equipment

- Revised to explain what information should be included in different sections of the proposal.

Proposals for Conferences, Symposia and Workshops

- Clarifies that these types of proposals should include a description of plans to identify resources for child care and other types of family care at the conference site to allow individuals with family care responsibilities to attend.

Proposal Preparation Checklist

- Updated to include the Grant Proposal Guide revisions.

Budget type items

Participant Support Costs

- Clarifies that indirect costs are not allowed on participant support costs and the type of costs that colleges and universities may include in this category.

Consultant Services

- Clarifies that all consultant costs should be fully disclosed and explained in the accompanying budget justification.

Meetings and Conferences

- Clarifies that gifts, souvenirs, t-shirts and other memorabilia are not typically considered allowable costs to an NSF grant.

Relocation Costs

- Provides guidance regarding when visa costs are allowable.

Cost Sharing

- Clarifies that for purposes of budget preparation, the *cumulative cost sharing* amount must be entered on Line M of the first year's budget. Should an award be made, the cost sharing commitment, as specified on the first year's approved budget, must be met prior to award expiration.
 - **Note:** only a limited number of programs require cost share and the inclusion in the proposal of [voluntary](#) committed cost share is prohibited. If applicable, the PI can include statements about available resources in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal. More information can be found on [OSP's website](#).

NSF Prior Approval

- Clarifies that all costs should be fully disclosed in the budget justification.
 - See AAG Chapter [V.A.3.b](#)
http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf14001/aag_5.jsp

Solicitation That Doesn't Require a Budget

- Clarifies that when a program solicitation does not require a budget and there is no budgetary information to justify, the budget justification should say "Not Applicable." When using Fastlane, the PI should either type in "Not Applicable" or upload a document stating such.

Budget Reminders

Budget Revisions to Proposals Made During the Review Process

- As stated in the [guideline](#): negotiating budgets generally involves discussing a lower or higher amount of total support for the proposed project. The NSF Program Officer may suggest reducing or eliminating costs for specific budget items that are clearly unnecessary or unreasonable for the activities to be undertaken, especially when the review process supports such changes; however, *this would generally not include faculty salaries, salary rates, fringe benefits, or tuition*.
 - Note: indirect cost rates are not subject to negotiation.
 - The NSF Program Officer may discuss with PIs the "bottom line" award amount, i.e., the total NSF funding that will be recommended for a project.
 - NSF Program Officers may not renegotiate cost sharing or other organizational commitments.
 - When such discussions result in a *budget reduction of 10% or more* from the amount originally proposed, *a corresponding reduction should be made in the scope of the project*.
 - Proposers must use the FastLane Revised Proposal Budget Module to submit this information.
 - A revised proposal budget also must include a *Budget Impact Statement* that describes the impact of the budget reduction on the scope of the project.

Indirect Costs on Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Funding

- NSF Policy reminder that indirect costs (F&A) are not allowed on [REU Site or REU Supplement](#) budgets.