



# Navigating the National Science Foundation (NSF) Proposal Submission Process Part 1

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11/1/2021

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- Part 1: Background Information
  - NSF Website – ‘who we are, what we do, how we work’
  - General information
  - Submission Portals
  - Take-a-Way
- Part 2: Proposal Contents
  - Format Guidance
  - Common Proposal Requirements and Issues-Tab by Tab
  - Take-a-Way
- Part 3: After Submission
  - Other Actions
  - Review
  - Special Notes and Take-a-Way

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- Part 1: Background Information
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  - Submission Portals
  - Take-a-Way

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- [At a Glance | NSF - National Science Foundation](#) (Video)
  - Independent Federal Agency created by Congress to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense.
  - Average proposal is 3 years
  - NSF's goals -- discovery, learning, research infrastructure and stewardship
  - Another essential element in NSF's mission is support for science and engineering education, from pre-K through graduate school and beyond. The research we fund is thoroughly integrated with education to help ensure that there will always be plenty of skilled people available to work in new and emerging scientific, engineering and technological fields, and plenty of capable teachers to educate the next generation

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- 'Who we are'
  - Leadership is a Director and a 24-member National Science Board (6-year terms); all appointed by President – Director and Deputy Director are approved by Senate.
  - NSF is divided into the following seven directorates that support science and engineering research and education: Biological Sciences, Computer and Information Science and Engineering, Engineering, Geosciences, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences, and Education and Human Resources.
  - Each directorate is headed by an assistant director, and each is further subdivided into divisions like materials research, ocean sciences and behavioral and cognitive sciences.
  - Each division has program officers, most who serve on a rotating schedule of 2-3 years.

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- What we do
  - Supports basic research and people to create knowledge to transform the future
  - to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense...

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- How we do it
  - Proposals may be submitted to solicitations or as unsolicited proposals
  - Funding opportunities fall into three categories
    - Program descriptions
    - Program announcements
    - Program solicitations

# NSF Proposal Submission....

- NSF Submission Process - **General Comments**

- Most recent update to NSF guidance is NSF 22-1 effective 10/4/2021

In 2017 NSF replaced the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) **and** Award Administration Guide (AAG) with a combined document called the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)

- Must follow PAPPG unless specific solicitation deviates or written approval from NSF assistant directors/Office head or designee
- Be aware when writing your proposal that you will need to use the specific solicitation and general guidance; make sure most current versions used.
- Unsolicited proposals fall under PAPPG
- Who may submit—Organization is normally considered the submitter except on a few proposals that are paid to individuals like some fellowships
  - Organization must have DUNS/UIN and SAM registration – OU has all of these.



# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- NSF Submission Process - **Types of Proposals**
  - Letters of Intent (mainly COI/gauge interest at NSF)
    - Usually, can be submitted by PI but some require SRO/AOR submission
    - Some are required and some are requested
    - Some have hard deadlines
  - Preliminary/Pre-proposal (COI use and go/no go indication)
    - Usually require less proposal documents to be uploaded than a regular proposal (but there are some very complicated ones too)
    - May have a wide variety of special instructions
    - Often have a zero or \$2 budget entry
    - Require submission by SRO/AOR
    - Usually have hard deadline
    - Increasing trend
    - Some are very complicated and may have detailed budgets

**Pay close attention to solicitation! If required, you must do!**

## NSF Proposal Submissions....

- NSF Submission Process - **Types of Proposals**
  - Both an LOI and a Preliminary proposal
    - may be required or requested/recommended
    - May be invite or not invite (decision final)
    - May be encouraged or discouraged (decision advisory)
    - Collaborative submission by multiple organizations – usually only do one LOI or Preliminary for the whole proposal
  - Full Proposal (shows objectives and significance of research, qualifications of PI/team/organization, amount of funding, etc.)
    - Some require LOI or Preliminary to submit
    - Most are in done by PI in response to call for proposals from NSF
    - Standard proposal tabs for full proposal will be covered later in presentation series

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- Overview of NSF Submission Process - **Types of Proposals**
  - Special proposals—
    - Usually deviate from normal full proposal instructions
    - May be a stand-alone submission or some may be done as part of a regular full proposal submission or may be tied to a prior submission
    - Some have specific budget and time limits
    - Examples: Rapid Response Research Proposal (RAPID); Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER); Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE); Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI); Ideas Lab; Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED); Supplemental Funding; Conference Proposals; Equipment Proposals; Travel Proposals (recent change now allowed for domestic travel); Center Proposals; Research Infrastructure Proposal **SEVERAL CHANGES TO MANY OF THESE IN NSF 22-1**
    - Dear Colleague Letters (DCL) not considered a proposal and usually for information only but can contain proposal submission instructions

# NSF Proposal Submissions

Types of Proposals continued --- two new ones with NSF 22-1

**Planning Proposals [II.E.1]** — planning proposals are appropriate for the development of larger-scale proposals in specific areas in which NSF wishes to ensure a sufficiently robust competition in the future. PI must contact PO and include a copy of the permission to proceed email with the submission. Budget is 100k per year for 2 years.

**Career-Life Balance (CLB) Supplemental Funding Requests [II.E.8]** — in support of dependent care and other family considerations to keep project efforts on-going; available for research awards, postdoctoral fellowship awards, and Graduate Research Fellowship Program awardees.

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- Overview of NSF Submission Process – **Deadlines**
  - Deadline if date given is 5 pm local
  - Deadline – no acceptance after the deadline date; no exceptions except unusual circumstances (NSF closed, natural/anthropogenic disaster, organization unable to submit)
  - If a deadline falls on a weekend or holiday it is extended to following business day
  - Submission window – end date is the same as a deadline date
  - Target – proposal is accepted after deadline, but it may miss a review panel or meeting (consequential funding impact) (recommend consider target same as Deadline)
  - Collaborative submission by multiple organizations must be submitted by all organizations before deadline by each locality or entire proposal is rejected.
  - Some Divisions in NSF are going to no-deadline submissions (open window/rolling deadline) which means you can submit throughout the year – requires close communication with the program officer or you may miss a review panel.

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- NSF Proposal Submission Portals
  - Grants.gov (rarely used)
  - Fastlane (has been primary but is phasing out)
  - Research.gov (replacing Fastlane)

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- Grants.gov submissions for NSF
  - Not all NSF proposals can be submitted via grants.gov but most can (Collaborative, updates, and revisions must be done through Fastlane).
  - OU has a grants.gov log in; PI still needs Fastlane account set up.
  - Budget and subcontract budget is much harder to load.
  - Checklist form must be completed.
  - Be very careful with compatible adobe versions, file names and name length, and file extensions.
  - Types of files needed are same as Fastlane (Summary, description, etc.).
  - Access to submitted proposal cannot be done through grants.gov; submission will actually post into Fastlane.
  - **At OU we consider all NSF submissions as going in via Fastlane or Research.gov unless the PI tells us otherwise well in advance and has permission from ORS.**

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- PI Starts Proposal in Fastlane or Research.gov
  - PI needs NSF ID number, password, affiliation with organization (**only one id**)
  - Organizations usually have a point of contact for limited Fastlane assistance such as affiliation and account set up (OU has link on the Proposal Submission section of ORS website)
  - All other Co-PIs (4) will also need an NSF ID and password – the PI will use that ID (or their email) to add the Co-PIs to the Cover Sheet (they must set their id up and affiliate with their organization if they are not OU Norman – not using OUs links)
- In Fastlane go under Proposal Functions, create your proposal
- In Rgov 'Prepare New Proposal' will step you through all the entries until you get to the page with all the tabs to load files.



# NSF Proposal Submissions....

- SRO Access/PINs
  - PI allows SRO Access (this means ORS can see it)
    - Options are Read, Edit, and Submit
    - Read and Edit are minimum if ORS is to help you
      - Different SRO offices will do different levels of assistance and the level of assistance possible may vary depending on deadlines and timing
    - Recommend do all three at one time but it is the PI's option
    - PI will receive warnings and errors if items need to be loaded when you give access—just hit 'proceed'
    - PI will still have access with SRO
- Assignment of Pin (if needed)
  - PI needs to assign pin
    - Pin needed for collaborative proposal from multiple organization
    - Useful if you want Senior Personnel or other people to review items loaded (with the proposal number and pin anyone in the world with Fastlane account can log in to see what you have loaded).

## NSF Proposal Submissions....

- Research.gov is replacing Fastlane
- Essentially it is Fastlane part 2 – many of the features are the same or similar but there is improved file handling and error checking
- Reporting has been done in Research.gov for a couple of years now.
- Most submissions can now be done in either Fastlane or Research.gov but some must be done in Rgov.
- In the past we recommended using Fastlane as much as possible while bugs were being worked out of the Research.gov website. You need to start considering using Research.gov.

NSF has announced the end of Fastlane in Dec 2022.



FastLane is an interactive real-time system used to conduct NSF business over the Internet. FastLane is for official NSF use only. [More About fastlane...](#)

**FastLane User Support**  
(7 AM to 9 PM Eastern Time • M-F)  
**1-800-673-6188**

### Quick Link

- ▶ [Special Exceptions to the NSF Deadline Date Policy Due to Natural or Anthropogenic Events](#)
- ▶ [Registration Information](#)
- ▶ [Award Search and Funding Trends](#)
- ▶ [FastLane FAQs \(Opens new Browser Window\)](#)
- ▶ [Grants.gov FAQ \(Opens new Browser Window\)](#)
- ▶ [DEMONSTRATION SITE](#)

### System Use Notification

This is a National Science Foundation (NSF) Federal Government computer system. Any system activity may be monitored and any information stored within the system may be retrieved and used by authorized personnel for law enforcement, management, routine system operations, or other purposes. By using this computer system, you are consenting to such monitoring and information

### Advisories

**03/22/21 - Now available in Research.gov: FASED, Equipment, and Travel proposal types, plus proposal withdrawal functionality. New FAQs, video tutorial, and how-to guide section added. [Click here for details.](#)**

### Quick Links

- ▶ [Help for Proposal Preparation](#)
- ▶ [Frequently Asked Questions About FastLane Proposal Preparation](#)
- ▶ [Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide](#)
- ▶ [Deadlines and Target Dates](#)
- ▶ [Lookup NSF ID](#)

## Proposals, Awards and Status

### Research.gov Proposal Preparation System

Research.gov's new proposal preparation system is now available for preparing and submitting full research non-collaborative proposals. Please use the link below to access the new system:

[Research.gov Proposal Preparation](#)

Log in for the following permission-based functions:

- ▶ Proposal Functions
  - Letters of Intent
  - Proposal Preparation
  - Proposal Status - Disabled in FastLane. Sign in to [Research.gov](#)
  - Display Reference Status
  - Revise Submitted Proposal Budget
  - Proposal File Update
- ▶ Award and Reporting Functions
  - Notifications and Requests
  - Continuation Funding Status
  - View/Print Award Documents
  - Project Reports System - Disabled in FastLane. Sign in to [Research.gov](#)
  - Supplemental Funding Request
- ▶ Change PI Information

### PI/Co-PI Log In

Single Sign On is now available for Principal Investigators (PIs) to utilize both FastLane and Research.gov

[Sign In to FastLane/Research.gov](#)

[Forgot Password?](#)  
[Lookup NSF ID](#)

### Other Authorized Users (OAU) Log In

#### Log In by Proposal ID

OAU Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
OAU NSF ID:	<input type="text"/>
<a href="#">Privacy Act</a>	
OAU Password:	<input type="password"/>
Proposal ID:	<input type="text"/>
Proposal PIN:	<input type="text"/>
Select One:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Proposal Preparation

## Forms for Temp. Proposal #7818075

test 2

### Form Preparation

To prepare a form, click on the appropriate button below.

Form	Saved	Form	Saved
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Cover Sheet	08/19/20	<input type="button" value="GO"/> Project Summary	
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Table of Contents	N/A	<input type="button" value="GO"/> Project Description	
<input type="button" value="GO"/> References Cited		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Biographical Sketches	
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Budgets (Including Justification)		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Current and Pending Support	
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources			
		<b>Supplementary Documents</b>	
		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Data Management Plan	
		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Mentoring Plan <sup>1</sup>	
		<input type="button" value="GO"/> GOALI - Industrial PI Confirmation Letter	
		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Project Summary with Special Characters	
		<input type="button" value="GO"/> RAPID, EAGER, RAISE - Program Officer	
		Concurrence Emails	
		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Other Supplementary Docs	
<b>Single Copy Documents</b>		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Add/Delete Non Co-PI Senior Personnel	N/A
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Collaborators and Other Affiliations		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Change PI	
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Deviation Authorization(if applicable)		<input type="button" value="GO"/> Link Collaborative Proposals	
<input type="button" value="GO"/> List of Suggested Reviewers (optional)	N/A		
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Additional Single Copy Documents			
<input type="button" value="GO"/> Nature of Natural or Anthropogenic Event			



[My Desktop](#)

[Prepare & Submit Proposals](#)

[Awards & Reporting](#)

[Manage Financials](#)

[Administration](#)

**Attention:**

Research.gov now supports preparation and submission of several proposal types. View the [Research.gov Proposal Submission Capabilities](#) for details.

## Proposal Preparation

### What would you like to work on?

#### Prepare New Proposal

By answering a few questions, NSF will customize the process and compliance rules.

[Prepare Proposal](#)

**i** What information will need to be provided?

**v** [Video: How to Initiate a Proposal](#)

#### In Progress Proposals

Continue working on a previously prepared proposal, that has not yet been submitted to NSF.

[Work on an In Progress Proposal](#)

#### Submitted Proposals

View, download, or perform a Proposal File Update/Budget Revision on proposals that have previously been submitted to NSF.

[View/Update Submitted Proposals](#)

**i** [Proposal File Update \(PFU\) / Budget Revision](#)

**i** [Proposal Withdrawal](#)

# Proposal - 33861

**Proposal Title:** test 123 [Edit](#)

**Funding Opportunity:** [NSF 20-1](#) - Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide - PAPPG

**Where to Apply:** Directorate For Engineering (ENG) - Div Of Chem, Bioeng, Env, & Transp Sys (CBET), CFS-Combustion & Fire Systems

**Proposal Type:** Research

**Submission Type:** Full Proposal

**Collaborative Type:** Not Collaborative

Due Date: Accepted Anytime

[Date Types](#)

Proposal Actions	Proposal Sections	Last Updated	Compliance Status <a href="#">[Key]</a>
<a href="#">Share Proposal with SPO/AOR</a> ⓘ	<b>Required</b>		
<a href="#">Manage Personnel and Subaward Organizations</a>	Cover Sheet		Form not checked
<a href="#">Print Proposal</a>	Project Summary		Document unavailable for check
<a href="#">Delete Proposal</a>	Project Description		Document unavailable for check
	References Cited		Document unavailable for check
	Budget(s)		Form not checked
	Budget Justification(s)		Document unavailable for check
	Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources		Document unavailable for check
<b>Proposal Details</b>	Senior Personnel Documents ⓘ		Document(s) unavailable for check
<b>Proposal Status:</b> Not Shared with SPO/AOR	Data Management Plan		Document unavailable for check

### **Proposal Status:**

Not Shared with SPO/AOR

### **Helpful Links**

[View submitted proposals](#)

[Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#)

[Proposal Preparation and Submission FAQs](#)

[Video: How to Upload a Collaborators and Other Affiliations Document](#)

[Video: How to Submit a Proposal](#)

Senior Personnel Documents <b>i</b>		Document(s) unavailable for check
Data Management Plan		Document unavailable for check
Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan <b>i</b> <i>Conditionally required</i>		Document unavailable for check
<b>Optional</b>		
Other Personnel Biographical Information <b>i</b>		Document unavailable for check
Other Supplementary Documents		Document unavailable for check
List of Suggested Reviewers (Single Copy Document <b>i</b> )		Document unavailable for check
List of Reviewers Not to Include (Single Copy Document <b>i</b> )		Document unavailable for check
Deviation Authorization <b>i</b> (Single Copy Document <b>i</b> )		Document unavailable for check
Additional Single Copy Documents <b>i</b>		Document unavailable for check



# NSF Proposal Submissions....

## Organizational/Internal Considerations

- At OU completion of the routing is what gives the PI and ORS the permission to submit any proposal
- Be cognizant of submitting accurate subcontract and consultant information – is what you are submitting officially approved?
- Who has what level of access/authority in Fastlane/Rgov for submission, reports, agreements, etc. (at OU submission and agreements are done by ORS, most technical reports are done by the PI but some may be submitted by ORS, most financial reports are done by ReFS)
- Who is responsible for loading what parts of a Fastlane/Rgov submission? (At OU the PI is responsible for loading all the parts except the Budget tab; however, the PDS may assist with loading other files developed by the PI as they are able [a lot depends on timing of request and workload])

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

## Limited Competition (solicitation limits numbers of submissions)

- If an organizational limit is specified in the solicitation, it is normal for there to be some form of internal competition (and set deadlines for this competition)
- The solicitation may prescribe limits on how many proposals can be submitted by the organization (including subcontracts), by the PI, or by the PI as a CoPI.
- At OU, internal competitions are conducted by ORS.
- Participation in subcontracts may also impact the organizational limits so be aware.
- If an organization (or PI) submits more than the allowed amount of proposals it can cause ALL proposals to be rejected or they may accept the first one(s) received (it is usually the PO's choice).

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

## Take-a-Way

- If you are a PI, decide your Division(s) of interest
- When Director changes some programs will change
- Program Officer changes can also change focus of funding
  - Communicate/Get to know your Program Officer
  - If you aren't sure about submitting to a solicitation, send a 1-page paper on your research
  - Ask about budget or direction questions (Don't ask them questions ORS can answer)

# NSF Proposal Submissions....

## Take-a-Way

- Consider Broader Impacts (and include funding in the budget)
- Consider Education components, if possible
- Check new PAPPG when it posts for comments (usually in the fall)
- Start learning Research.gov
- Do ORCID and SciENCv registrations



NSF Proposal Submissions....

**QUESTIONS?**