



# Office of Sponsored Projects Updates

Please Post/Distribute

Date: October 10, 2008

## Topic: Important News from the National Science Foundation



The National Science Foundation has recently announced important changes to the agency's grants policies. On October 1, 2008, NSF released a new **Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide**. New requirements described in the guide become effective January 1, 2009. The new document is available at [http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf09\\_1/index.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf09_1/index.jsp).

The document is comprised of two major components:

- Part I is comprised of NSF's proposal preparation and submission guidelines
- Part II is comprised of the documents used to guide, manage, and monitor the award and administration of grants and cooperative agreements

Important changes that impact NSF funded Faculty:

- **Salary Compensation:** Limits salary compensation for senior project personnel to no more than two months of their regular salary in any one year: The limit includes salary compensation received from all NSF funded awards.
  - Broadens the previous policy away from the concept of two **summer** months and allows senior project personnel to schedule work when appropriate throughout the year.
  - Any compensation for such personnel in excess of two months must be specifically justified in the proposal, and if approved by NSF, will be included in the award budget.
- **Project Description**, has had entirely new guidance added regarding mentoring activities. This was done to address the mentoring requirement of the America COMPETES Act.
  - Each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral researchers must include, as a separate section within the 15-page project description, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals.
  - Examples of such activities are provided and the mentoring plan will be evaluated during the merit review process, under the Broader Impacts criterion.
  - Proposals that do not include a separate section on mentoring activities within the Project Description will be returned without review.
  - OSP is working with other areas of the College to assess resources to meet these new requirements.

- NSF has switched to the *NSF ID* as the method for identifying FastLane users
  - All FastLane and Research.gov users now login with *NSF ID*
  - SSNs are no longer collected for FastLane and Grants.gov registration
  - During the transition period starting in December 2007: PIs could log in using either *NSF ID* and SSN
  - For questions about how to obtain NSF ID, contact OSP

The [Office of Sponsored Projects](#) will continue to provide guidance and updates on all of these changes. If you have any questions, please contact us.

For other important changes, please see attached sheet and refer to NSF website at [http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf09\\_1/gpg\\_index.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf09_1/gpg_index.jsp).



## GPG Summary of Significant Changes

---

**Overall Document** – Internal and external references and links have been updated as necessary, including a link to the new NSF merit review website. References to the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Terms and Conditions have been superseded by the Research Terms and Conditions. RTCs are applicable to all organizations that are subject to 2CFR Part 215 (OMB Circular A-110). Minor editorial changes have been made throughout the document to either clarify or enhance the intended meaning of a sentence or section.

**Chapter I – Section D.1, Letter of Intent**, has been supplemented to make it clear that Letters of Intent are not binding on the proposer. The Foundation realizes that changes may need to be made to the information or the plans outlined in the Letter of Intent, should a full proposal be submitted.

**Chapter I – Section D.3, Full Proposal**, has been clarified to state that proper scholarship and attribution is the responsibility of the authors of the proposal. All parts of the proposal should be prepared with equal care for this concern. Serious failure to adhere to this standard may result in a research misconduct finding. A definition of research misconduct has been added as a footnote.

**Chapter I – Section G.4, NSF ID**, is an entirely new section which explains that NSF IDs are being issued to PIs and proposers and are replacing the use of Social Security numbers in the NSF systems. The NSF ID is a unique numerical identifier assigned to FastLane users by NSF. The NSF ID will be used throughout FastLane as a login ID and identification verification. References to social security numbers in other parts of the *Grant Proposal Guide* have been replaced with information on the NSF ID.

**Chapter II – Section C.1e, Proposal Certifications**, has been expanded with regard to Nondiscrimination Certifications. Proposers are advised that these obligations also apply to subrecipients, subgrantees, and subcontractors under the award. Procedures that the proposer should follow to obtain the NSF Nondiscrimination Certification from their subrecipients are then discussed. Exhibit II-6 also has been updated accordingly.

**Chapter II – Section C.2d(i), Project Description**, has had entirely new guidance added regarding mentoring activities. This was done to address the mentoring requirement of the America COMPETES Act. Each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral researchers must include, as a separate section within the 15-page project description, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. Examples of such activities are provided and the mentoring plan will be evaluated during the merit review process, under the Broader Impacts criterion. Proposals that do not include a separate section on mentoring activities within the Project Description will be returned without review. The Proposal Preparation Checklist (Exhibit II-1) and Chapter IV.B. on Return without Review have been updated to reflect that.

**Chapter II – Section C.2g(i), Salaries and Wages**, has undergone a major revision of NSF's salary reimbursement policy. In general, the Foundation will now limit salary compensation for senior project personnel to no more than two months of their regular salary in any one year. This limit includes salary compensation received **from all NSF-funded grants**. This change moves away from the concept of summer salary and allows for reimbursement of two months of salary per year whenever appropriate during the year.

**Chapter II – Sections D.1 and 2, Grants for Rapid Response Research (RAPID) and Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER)** have replaced the Small Grants for Exploratory Research (SGER) program. RAPID is a funding mechanism to support quick-response research on natural or anthropogenic disasters and similar unanticipated events. Requests may be for up to \$200K and of one year duration. The EAGER mechanism supports high-risk, exploratory and potentially transformative research. Requests may be for up to \$300K and of up to two years duration. RAPID and EAGER proposals are only required to be reviewed internally at NSF; further submission information is contained in these sections.

**Chapter II – Section D.7, Proposals Involving Human Subjects**, has been updated to reflect that, for projects that will be performed outside of the United States and involve human subjects, evidence of IRB approval is required. If such approval is not provided, NSF may decline to support the project.

**Chapter II – Section D.13, Projects Requiring High-Performance Computing Resources, Large Amounts of Data Storage, or Advanced Visualization Resources** is an entirely new section of the GPG. For projects that require access to large amounts of computational, data storage or visualization resources in order to complete the work proposed, NSF provides the TeraGrid. It is a collection of very powerful supercomputers, a high-throughput computing environment, high-volume data storage facilities, and advanced visualization services, connected by a high-bandwidth private network. Further information on the TeraGrid and how to access it can be found by referring to this section and the accompanying link.

**Exhibit II-7 – Definitions of Categories of Personnel**, has had the (co) Principal Investigator definition clarified to state that NSF does not infer any distinction in scientific stature among multiple PIs, whether referred to as PI or co-PI. All of the senior personnel are equally responsible for the conduct of the project and submission of the requisite project reports.