

NSF CHECKLIST
Effective 01/04/2010

*****Please check specific program solicitation for accurate proposal submissions, or additional materials required. Check **NEW** items for major changes this year.**

General:

- If a proposal has been previously declined and is being resubmitted, proposal must be revised to take into account the major comments from the prior NSF review.
- Proposed work must be appropriate for funding by NSF, and cannot be a duplicate of, or substantially similar to, a proposal already under consideration by NSF from the same submitter.

Proposal Format

- 1" Margins (minimum requirement).
- No personal information allowed.
- Must use one of the following fonts: Arial, Courier New, Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger. Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger. Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger.
- No more than 6 lines of type within a vertical space of 1 inch.
- Each document must be paginated before uploading.
- Avoid 2-column format if at all possible
- If using a Windows-based Mac computer, please convert your files to .pdf using Acrobat Distiller before uploading into FastLane. Allowing FastLane to convert Word documents for you is causing major compliance issues with font size. It looks compliant on screen, but is not compliant when printed out.

Single Copy Documents

- Submission of information about Principal Investigators/Project Directors (except for the required information regarding current or previous Federal research support and the name(s) of the PI/co-PI) is voluntary.
- Authorization to Deviate from NSF Proposal Preparation Requirements (if applicable).
- List of Suggested Reviewers, or Reviewers Not to Include (optional).
- Proprietary or Privileged Information Statement (if applicable).
- Proposal Certifications (submitted by the Authorized Organizational Representative within 5 working days following electronic submission of the proposal). (See *GPG Chapter II.C.1.e* for a complete listing of proposal certifications).
- *SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities* (if applicable). (One copy only, scanned as a single copy document.)

Cover page

- Program Announcement number if applicable; if proposal is unsolicited, select "Grant Proposal Guide" with division, program, etc. (can choose more than one).
- Deadline or target date (choose "No Closing Date" if not program specific).
- Related preliminary proposal number entered (if applicable).
- Title of Project
- Start date/number of months in duration
- Check Appropriate Box(es), and provide requisite information, if the proposal includes any of the items identified. Note in particular that proposals which include use of human subjects or vertebrate animals require additional information to be submitted with these types of proposals.
- PIs/Co-PIs (no more than 5 total including PI)

Summary – One page

- Self-contained description of activity written in third-person which includes statement of objectives and methods employed
- **Two separate statements within summary must include:**
- Intellectual merit of proposed research
- Broader impacts resulting from proposed activity

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Project Description

- Self-contained general plan of work including broader impacts
- 15 page limit
- Results of prior NSF support – limit of 5 pages within 15 page total
- URLs that provide information necessary to review should not be used

References Cited

- No page limits
- Must include all authors in order in which they appear in publications (No *et al.*)
- Bibliographic citations only, no parenthetical information allowed

Biosketch

- Limit 2 pages per person (for each PI, co-PI and/or other senior personnel)
- No personal information allowed
- Must be in the following order:
 1. Education – earliest to most recent
 2. Appointments – reverse chronological order beginning with present
 3. Publications – 5 most relevant, then 5 others (Patents, copyrights, or systems developed may be substituted). Additional lists of publications, lectures, etc., must not be included.
 4. Synergistic Activities – list of up to 5 examples that show broader impact
 5. Collaborators and Co-Editors
 - i. Collaborators and co-authors on projects, books, articles, reports, abstracts, or papers must be in alphabetic order (include organizational affiliation) within last 48 months; if none, list none. Also include current or past co-editors of journals, compendiums, or conference proceedings during the last 24 months.
 - ii. Grad/Postdoc Advisors – list current affiliations
 - iii. Thesis Advisor/Postgrad Sponsor – list over the past 5 years

Budget/Justification

- For preparation, need start/end dates of project
- Faculty salary – no more than 2 months salary allowed per year under GPG basic guidelines with the exception of certain specific program solicitations. Salary calculation is 2/8s.
- Grad Assistants – percentage of effort and length of time
- Professionals/Technicians –
- Undergraduates/wage payroll – need hourly rate and number of hours
- Justification – no more than 3 pages allowed
 1. Breakout of large expenses in categories, ie: materials/supplies travel, equipment, etc.
 2. Include budget notes for fringe benefits and F&A rates

Current and pending support

- Must include all current project support regardless of source
- Proposed project (this proposal) and all other projects requiring percentage of time of PI and other senior personnel must be included even if no salary support
- Total amount of award and person-months per year devoted to project must be shown regardless of source of support
- Concurrent submission to other organizations will not prejudice NSF review except for the Biological Sciences Directorate

Supplementary Documentation

Except as specified below, special information and supplementary documentation must be included as part of the Project Description (or part of the budget justification), if it is relevant to determining the quality of the proposed work. Information submitted in the following areas is not considered part of the 15-page Project Description limitation. This Special Information and Supplementary Documentation section also is not considered an appendix. Specific guidance on the need for additional documentation may be obtained from the Office of Research Administration and Finance or in the references cited below.

- **NEW****** Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan. Each proposal that requests funding to support **postdoctoral researchers** must include, as a supplementary document, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. In no more than one page, the mentoring plan must describe the mentoring that will be provided to all postdoctoral researchers supported by the project, irrespective of whether they reside at the submitting organization, any subawardee organization, or at any organization participating in a simultaneously submitted collaborative project. Proposers are advised that the mentoring plan may not be used to circumvent the 15-page project description limitation. See *GPG Chapter II.D.4* for additional information on collaborative proposals

NEW**** Examples of mentoring activities include, but are not limited to: career counseling; training in preparation of grant proposals, publications, and presentations; guidance on ways to improve teaching and mentoring skills; guidance on how to effectively collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas; and training in responsible professional practices. The proposed mentoring activities will be evaluated as part of the merit review process under the Foundation's broader impacts merit review criterion. Proposals that include funding to support postdoctoral researchers, and, do not include the requisite mentoring plan will be returned without review (see *GPG Chapter IV.B.*)

- Letters of commitment for documentation of significant collaborative arrangements
- Additional budget justification, ie: price quotes
- Environmental impact statements (NEPA)
- Documentation of research involving human subjects, vertebrate animals, etc.
- Rationale for performance of all or part of the project off-campus or away from organizational headquarters
- Research in Antarctic and Greenland (Polar Programs)
- Work in foreign countries that require non-residents to obtain official approval need to advise NSF that permission has been obtained or requested
- Research involving field experiments with genetically engineered organisms
- Research in locations, or eligible to be designated or registered historic places
- Projects involving technology utilization/transfer activities that require management plans or special reports/final products
- Special components in new proposals or supplement requests identified in specific program solicitations (ie: REU, RUI)

Appendices

- May not be included unless a deviation has been authorized by the Program Director

Facilities

- Used to assess adequacy of resources available
- Description of resources that are directly applicable

When to Submit Proposals

NEW**** These target dates, deadlines, and submission windows are published in specific program descriptions, program announcements, and solicitations that can be obtained from the NSF Clearinghouse at pubs@nsf.gov or electronically through the NSF website. Unless otherwise stated in a program announcement or solicitation, proposals must be received by the specified date. If the deadline date falls on a weekend, it will be extended to the following Monday; if the date falls on a **Federal** holiday, it will be extended to the following business day. Unless otherwise specified in a program solicitation that has an identified deadline date, proposals must be received by 5 p.m. submitter's local time on the established deadline date.

This checklist is not intended to be an all-inclusive repetition of the required proposal contents and associated proposal preparation guidelines. It is, however, meant to highlight certain critical items so they will not be overlooked when the proposal is prepared. Check your specific program announcement for any deviation from the standard guidelines.