

# NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships (AAPF)

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## PROGRAM SOLICITATION

NSF 08-581

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*REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):*  
NSF 07-572

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**National Science Foundation**

Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences  
Division of Astronomical Sciences

**Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

October 08, 2008

Second Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

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This program solicitation has been revised to increase the annual award amount (see Section III on Award Information) and to clarify host institution eligibility (see Section IV on Eligibility Information).

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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### General Information

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**Program Title:**

NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships (AAPF)

**Synopsis of Program:**

NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships provide an opportunity for highly qualified, recent doctoral scientists to carry out an integrated program of independent research and education. Fellows may engage in observational, instrumental, theoretical, laboratory or archival data research in any area of astronomy or astrophysics, in combination with a coherent educational plan for the duration of the fellowship. The program supports researchers for a period of up to three years with fellowships that may be taken to eligible host institution(s) of their choice. The program is intended to recognize early-career investigators of significant potential and to provide them with experience in research and education that will establish them in positions of distinction and leadership in the community.

**Cognizant Program Officer(s):**

- Dana E. Lehr, 1030 S, telephone: (703) 292-7456, email: [dlehr@nsf.gov](mailto:dlehr@nsf.gov)

**Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):**

- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences

### Award Information

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**Anticipated Type of Award:** Fellowship

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 8 to 9

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$750,000 in FY2009, subject to availability of funds.

### Eligibility Information

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**Organization Limit:**

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships are awards to individuals; proposals are submitted directly by the fellowship candidate to NSF. Each candidate must identify one or more

sponsoring scientist(s) and host institution(s) at the time of proposal submission. Candidates may propose to hold the fellowship at:

- o U.S. institutions of higher education,
- o NSF-funded national centers, facilities or institutes such as the national observatories or the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics (KITP),
- o U.S. non-profit organizations with research and educational missions, and/or
- o International sites that are operated by U.S. organizations eligible for NSF funding, such as Cerro Tololo InterAmerican Observatory (CTIO) or Gemini South.

National centers, facilities or institutes funded by other federal agencies, such as NASA or the U.S. Department of Energy, are ineligible as host institutions for the NSF AAPF Program.

**PI Limit:**

Fellowships are awarded to individuals. The fellowship candidate submits his or her proposal directly to NSF. See the Additional Eligibility Information section for further information about eligibility limitations.

**Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:**

None Specified

**Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:**

Each candidate may submit only one fellowship proposal per year.

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

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**A. Proposal Preparation Instructions**

- **Letters of Intent:** Not Applicable
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not Applicable
- **Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** This solicitation contains information that supplements the standard NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Part I: Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information

**B. Budgetary Information**

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is not required under this solicitation.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:**

In lieu of indirect costs, a host institutional allowance of \$3,000 per year per applicant may be requested by the host institution as partial reimbursement of expenses incurred in support of the fellow.

- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

**C. Due Dates**

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

October 08, 2008

Second Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter

## Proposal Review Information Criteria

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**Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

## Award Administration Information

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**Award Conditions:** Standard NSF award conditions apply.

**Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

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NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships (AAPF) provide an opportunity for highly qualified, recent doctoral scientists to carry out an integrated program of independent research and education. Fellows may engage in observational, instrumental, theoretical, laboratory or archival data research in any area of astronomy or astrophysics, in combination with a coherent educational plan for the duration of the fellowship. The program supports researchers for a period of up to three years with fellowships that may be taken to eligible host institution(s) of their choice. The program is intended to recognize early-career investigators of significant potential and to provide them with experience in research and education that will establish them in positions of distinction and leadership in the community.

# II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships (AAPF) are available for the support of highly qualified, recent doctoral scientists to carry out an integrated program of research and education at the institution of their choice.

Fellows are expected to carry out a strong, coherent research program in any area of astronomy and/or astrophysics, including areas of observation, instrumentation, theory, archival data studies or laboratory astrophysics. Candidates are encouraged to approach the fellowships as opportunities to broaden their experience with research that moves beyond their previous research focus and that takes a broad view of integrating disciplines, extending technical approaches to problems, or expanding collaborations. Research that highlights the creative use of or is clearly related to NSF-funded facilities, institutes, or projects is particularly encouraged but not required. We encourage applicants to consider programs that focus on areas of research that are particularly facilitated or enabled by new ground-based capabilities in radio, optical/IR, or solar astrophysics, including the development of theory that guides their use or the interpretation of resulting data.

Fellows are expected to include educational activities in their fellowship plans, and candidates must each present a substantive, coherent program of educational activities as part of his/her proposal. Examples of such activities include teaching or co-teaching one course each year at the host institution or an academic institution with ties to their host institution, developing educational materials, or engaging in a significant program of outreach or public education. As a rough guideline, fellows should plan to dedicate no less than 10% and no more than 25% of their time towards their educational activities; candidates should identify the anticipated time commitment for their proposed activities. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the proposed educational activities with their prospective host institution prior to proposal submission to ensure that their educational plan is consistent with opportunities and plans at the institution.

Candidates may propose to hold the fellowship at U.S. institutions of higher education, NSF-funded national centers, facilities or institutes such as the national observatories or the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics, and/or U.S. non-profit organizations with research and educational missions. Fellowship tenure is also allowed at international sites that are operated by U.S. organizations eligible for NSF funding, such as Cerro Tololo InterAmerican Observatory or Gemini South. Fellows are expected to be fully integrated into the educational and research activities of their host institution.

The fellowship candidate must present a coherent research and educational plan throughout the proposed duration of the fellowship. However, the applicant may propose to take the fellowship to more than one host institution. Changes of institution may be sequential, which permits moving from one institution to another during the duration of the fellowship. Holding the fellowship at two institutions simultaneously, for example at an NSF-funded national center and a nearby university, is also possible. In the event of proposing to hold the fellowship at more than one institution simultaneously, a primary host institution must be designated by the applicant to receive the institutional allowance. In any case, the justification of the choice of institution(s) must be made clearly and compellingly as related to the proposed research and education plans, the professional development of the fellow, and the activities of the host institution(s).

# III. AWARD INFORMATION

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Support may be requested for periods of up to 3 years at a level of \$83,000 per year. NSF anticipates up to 9 awards annually, subject to availability of funds. Fellowships cannot be renewed. Interruptions in tenure, such as parental leave or other leaves of absence, or extensions without additional cost to NSF of up to 12 months are permitted with program approval.

The annual fellowship amount of \$83,000 consists of four components:

- an annual stipend of \$58,000, paid directly to the fellow on a monthly schedule.
- an annual research allowance of \$12,000, provided to the fellow for expenses directly related to the conduct of the proposed research and education activities, such as materials and supplies, equipment, computing resources, travel, publication charges, and subscription fees.
- an annual host institutional allowance of \$3,000, paid to the host institution upon request for expenses incurred in support of the fellow, such as office space, general purpose supplies and use of equipment, facilities and other institutional resources.
- an annual benefits allowance of \$10,000, paid to either the fellow or the host institution in support of fringe benefits, including health insurance provided through either a group plan offered by the host organization or an individual plan secured by the fellow, dental and/or vision insurance, disability insurance, retirement, dependent care, and moving expenses.

No additional appointment or fellowship may be held during the period of the fellowship. No other remuneration from any source may be accepted during the period of the fellowship without permission of the program officer. For more information on allowable costs, see the relevant section of Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions below.

Successful applicants will be notified on or about 1 February following the proposal submission deadline. Those applicants selected to receive fellowships will be contacted by NSF and asked to provide additional information, such as completing acceptance forms and starting certificates, before starting their fellowships. Successful applicants who have not completed the PhD at the time of application must provide certification of the receipt of the PhD before receiving funds from their fellowship award. Fellowship tenure must begin on or before October 1 of the award year. Normally fellowships will be held at institutions specified in the proposal, but under certain circumstances and with suitable justification, fellows may transfer during the tenure of the fellowship to a new institution upon approval by NSF.

## IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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### Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships are awards to individuals; proposals are submitted directly by the fellowship candidate to NSF. Each candidate must identify one or more sponsoring scientist(s) and host institution(s) at the time of proposal submission. Candidates may propose to hold the fellowship at:
  - U.S. institutions of higher education,
  - NSF-funded national centers, facilities or institutes such as the national observatories or the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics (KITP),
  - U.S. non-profit organizations with research and educational missions, and/or
  - International sites that are operated by U.S. organizations eligible for NSF funding, such as Cerro Tololo InterAmerican Observatory (CTIO) or Gemini South.

National centers, facilities or institutes funded by other federal agencies, such as NASA or the U.S. Department of Energy, are ineligible as host institutions for the NSF AAPF Program.

### PI Limit:

Fellowships are awarded to individuals. The fellowship candidate submits his or her proposal directly to NSF. See the Additional Eligibility Information section for further information about eligibility limitations.

### Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

None Specified

### Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:

Each candidate may submit only one fellowship proposal per year.

### Additional Eligibility Info:

An individual is eligible to submit a proposal to the NSF AAPF Program if all of the following criteria are met:

- The candidate is a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States.
- The candidate has earned the doctoral degree in an appropriate scientific field within five (5) years prior to the proposal deadline or will complete the doctoral degree by October 1 of the award year.
- The candidate has not participated in postdoctoral training for a combined full-time-equivalent duration of more than three (3) years prior to the proposal deadline.

Any individual who has not yet received the doctoral degree at the time of application must, in the event of being selected for an award, present evidence of having completed all academic requirements before beginning the fellowship at the host institution. Fellowship tenure must begin on or before October 1 of the award year.

## V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

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**Full Proposal Instructions:** Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the guidelines specified in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg). Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-PUBS (7827) or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

Only one proposal is permitted per individual. A full proposal consists of many parts and requires input from the fellowship candidate, the proposed sponsoring scientist(s), and the proposed host institution(s). Candidates are advised to begin the proposal well in advance of the submission deadline and to submit as early as possible. Partially completed proposals may be saved for future completion and submission. The submission of incomplete or late proposals is not permitted.

**Before starting proposal preparation, the applicant must be registered as an individual awardee.** To register as a new individual in FastLane go to: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/N1CheckROB>. **Fellowship proposals must be submitted by the fellowship candidate, not by the candidates's current or proposed institutional Sponsored Projects Office (SPO).** The candidate serves as his/her own SPO and Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) for the purposes of any research administration functions in FastLane.

**Proposals must include all of the following items.** In cases where requirements given in this document differ from those given in the Grant Proposal Guide, this solicitation takes precedence.

**Detailed instructions for submitting a proposal to the NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships Program**

are available from the [FastLane homepage](#) by clicking on the link for [Postdoctoral Fellowships and Other Programs](#).

- NSF Cover Page.
- Information about Principal Investigators/Project Directors.
- Table of Contents. This form will be automatically generated by FastLane.
- Project Summary, not more than one page in length, describing the candidate's research and education plan. The project summary must also identify:
  - the proposed sponsoring scientist(s) and
  - the proposed host institution(s).

**Proposals for which the Project Summary does not clearly address in separate statements both NSF merit review criteria will be returned without review.** See the Grant Proposal Guide instructions.

- Project Description, not to exceed ten (10) single-spaced pages, which must include the following information:
  - a coherent plan for research and education, articulated to a level of detail suitable to an NSF grant proposal;
  - a detailed justification for the choice of the host institution(s) that identifies collaborating scientist(s) and educational mentor(s), relates the proposed work to current research and educational efforts at the host institution(s), and describes available facilities and resources and the suitability of the host institution(s);
  - a description of the candidate's long-term career goals and the role of this postdoctoral experience in achieving them.
- References Cited. See the Grant Proposal Guide for format.
- Biographical Sketch, not to exceed two (2) pages. See the Grant Proposal Guide for format. **The Biographical Sketch must clearly include all information necessary to certify the candidate's eligibility, including identification of U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status, as well as all components described in the Grant Proposal Guide.**
- NSF Budget Page. The stipend and research allowance should be entered in Participant Support Costs (Section F on the FastLane budget). Enter the \$58,000 stipend in F.1 and the \$12,000 research allowance in F.4. The \$3,000 host institutional allowance and \$10,000 benefit allowance should be entered in Other Direct Costs; enter these allowances as a sum total of \$13,000 in G.6. An annual budget page must be submitted for each of up to three years of fellowship support. A budget justification is not required for fellowship applicants.
- Current and Pending Support. Include current and planned applications to other fellowship programs.
- Letter(s) of Commitment, as described below, to be submitted as Supplementary Documentation. The signed letter(s) should be scanned into Portable Document Format (PDF) and uploaded as supplementary documentation. No other supplementary documentation or appendices are permitted.

The candidate must include a letter of commitment from each prospective host institution, signed by both the department chair (or equivalent) and the proposed sponsoring scientist. Should the applicant propose to hold the fellowship concurrently or sequentially at more than one institution during the three-year tenure, letters of commitment must be provided for all institutions involved.

The letter(s) should certify:

- that the applicant's proposal has been read and approved by the proposed scientific mentor(s),
- that adequate facilities and support will be provided for the fellow to accommodate the proposed research and/or education activities,
- that the fellow's plan for teaching and/or education is aligned with the institution's educational plans and goals, including a description of how any proposed course or seminar will complement existing curricula, and
- that the fellow will be fully integrated into the educational and research activities of the host institution.

The letter(s) should also include a discussion of:

- the role the proposed scientific and/or education mentor(s) will play in the professional development of the fellow, and
- the opportunities for training and research at the host institution that will be of particular benefit to the fellow.

The NSF AAPF program relies on reviewed research and education proposals rather than applications. **Letters of recommendation will not be considered. A letter of commitment should not reflect a letter of recommendation and should make no subjective judgments regarding either the candidate or the proposed research and education plan.**

Proposers are reminded to identify the program solicitation number (NSF 08-581) in the program solicitation block on the NSF Cover Sheet For Proposal to the National Science Foundation. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

## B. Budgetary Information

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**Cost Sharing:** Cost sharing is not required under this solicitation.

### **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:**

In lieu of indirect costs, a host institutional allowance of \$3,000 per year per applicant may be requested by the host institution as partial reimbursement of expenses incurred in support of the fellow.

**Other Budgetary Limitations:** Award amounts are \$83,000 annually.

**Budget Preparation Instructions:** The stipend and research allowance should be entered in Participant Support Costs (Section F on the FastLane budget). Enter the \$58,000 stipend in F.1 and the \$12,000 research allowance in F.4. The \$3,000 host institutional allowance and \$10,000 benefits allowance should be entered in Other Direct Costs; enter these allowances as a sum total of \$13,000 in G.6. An annual budget page must be submitted for each of up to three years of fellowship support. A budget justification

is not required for fellowship applicants.

## C. Due Dates

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- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

October 08, 2008

Second Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter

## D. FastLane Requirements

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### For Proposals Submitted Via FastLane:

Detailed technical instructions regarding the technical aspects of preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov). The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

**Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets.** Fellowship proposals must be submitted by the fellowship candidate, not by the candidates's current or proposed institutional Sponsored Projects Office (SPO). The candidate serves as his/her own SPO and Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) for the purposes of any research administration functions in FastLane. The AOR (fellowship candidate) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the Grant Proposal Guide for a listing of the certifications). The AOR (fellowship candidate) must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>.

## VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

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Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program where they will be reviewed if they meet NSF proposal preparation requirements. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal.

### A. NSF Merit Review Criteria

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All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board (NSB)-approved merit review criteria: intellectual merit and the broader impacts of the proposed effort. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two NSB-approved merit review criteria are listed below. The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which the reviewer is qualified to make judgements.

#### **What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?**

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

#### **What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?**

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts are available electronically on the NSF website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/broaderimpacts.pdf>.

NSF staff also will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

#### **Integration of Research and Education**

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

#### **Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities**

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

#### **Additional Review Criteria:**

In addition to the above criteria, the following factors will be used in the evaluation process:

- Qualifications of the applicant and his/her potential for continued professional growth and leadership in the field;
- Qualifications and suitability of the proposed host institution(s) and the scientific and educational collaborations proposed; and
- Prospective benefits to the applicant, the scientific discipline, and the activities of the host institution(s).

## B. Review and Selection Process

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Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

## VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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### A. Notification of the Award

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Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

### B. Award Conditions

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An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1); \* or Research Terms and Conditions \* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

\*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award\\_conditions.jsp?org=NSF](http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF). Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the NSF *Award & Administration Guide* (AAG) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=aag](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag).

### C. Reporting Requirements

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For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require more frequent project reports). Within 90 days after expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final project reports, or the project outcomes report will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through FastLane, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on activities and findings, project participants (individual and organizational) publications; and, other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system. Submission of the report via FastLane constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

## VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

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General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Dana E. Lehr, 1030 S, telephone: (703) 292-7456, email: [dlehr@nsf.gov](mailto:dlehr@nsf.gov)

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov).
- Kim S. Elliott, Computer Specialist, 1053 S, telephone: (703) 292-4894, email: [kelliott@nsf.gov](mailto:kelliott@nsf.gov)

## IX. OTHER INFORMATION

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The NSF Website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this Website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, National Science Foundation Update is a free e-mail subscription service designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF Regional Grants Conferences. Subscribers are informed through e-mail when new publications are issued that match their identified interests. Users can subscribe to this service by clicking the "Get NSF Updates by Email" link on the [NSF web site](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this new mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <http://www.grants.gov>.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 40,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

*Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities* provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II, Section D.2 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

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