



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
GRANTS CONFERENCE

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Hosted by Portland State University



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IT Modernization Initiatives at NSF

Agenda

Recent updates and accomplishments

- Notifications and Requests
- Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) 2016
 - FastLane
 - Research.gov
 - NSF Public Access
- Proposal Compliance Checking
- Usability

Research.gov – Looking ahead

- Usability
- Proposal Submission Modernization



Recent Updates and Accomplishments



Notifications and Requests

Available in Research.gov as of October 24, 2015

- Long-term disengagement of the Principal Investigator (PI)/Project Director (PD) or co-PI/co-PD (3+ months)
- Pre-award costs in excess of 90 days
- Significant changes in methods/procedures
- Significant changes/delays or events of unusual interest
- Changes in objectives or scope
- Reallocation of funds provided for participant support costs
- Change in person-months devoted to project
- Rearrangements/alterations in excess of \$25,000
- Withdrawal of PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD
- Conflicts of interest
- Salaries of administrative or clerical staff
- Travel costs for dependents
- Additional categories for participant support costs other than 2 CFR § 200.75
- Grantee-approved no-cost extension
- NSF-approved no-cost extension

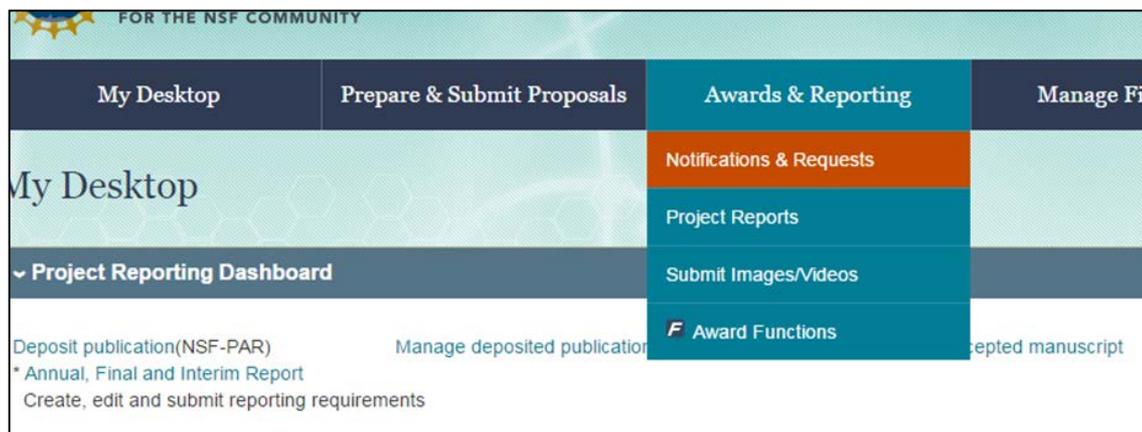
4



Notifications and Requests

The remaining notifications and requests will continue to reside in FastLane and will be migrated to Research.gov in the future

- Substitute PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD
- Subawarding, transferring or contracting out part of an NSF award
- PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD transfer from one organization to another
- Annual and final cost share notification by recipient



- Awardees must login via Research.gov to access Notification and Requests
- Notifications & Requests is available from the Research.gov Awards & Reporting menu



Notifications and Requests Features

- “**Prepare New**” or view Notifications & Requests needing action
- View all Notifications and Requests created in Research.gov or FastLane
- Click “Go to FastLane” to view Notifications and Requests created in FastLane without signing in again
- Find Notifications and Requests organized by type
- Redirect to FastLane for Notification and Requests not yet available in Research.gov

The screenshot displays the 'Notifications & Requests' interface. At the top, there is a 'Prepare New' button highlighted with a green box. Below it, a section titled 'Items Needing Action' shows a table with the following data:

Notification / Request Type	Status	Last Action Date	Actions
Salaries of Administrative or Clerical Staff	Forwarded to SPO	03/11/2015	Edit Submit
Subawarding, Transferring or Contracting Out Part of an NSF Award	Work in Progress	12/02/2014	Go to FastLane

An inset window titled 'Prepare New' is shown on the left, detailing the steps for creating a new notification or request. Step 1, 'Select type of change', includes radio button options: All, Budget Activities, No-Cost Extensions, Changes in Objectives, Scope, or Methodology and other Significant Changes, Changes in PI/PD and co-PI/co-PD (selected), and Other. Step 2, 'Select notification / request', features a dropdown menu with options: Long-Term Disengagement of the PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD, Withdrawal of PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD, PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD Transfer from One Organization to Another, and Substitute PI/PD or co-PI/co-PD. A 'Go' button is located at the bottom right of the inset.

PAPPG Changes Effective January 25, 2016

Deadline submission

- Proposals must be submitted by 5 p.m. local submitter's time which is based on time zone field

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) Submission

- NSF will no longer provide a 5-day grace period between the submission of a document to NSF and receiving an AOR signature
- Organizations should ensure a designee with AOR permissions is available to submit proposals before their respective deadlines through the FastLane Research Administration's Account Management module
- NSF is consolidating the permissions related to research administration into three roles: Authorized Organization Representative, Sponsored Projects Officer, and View Only. These three roles will be consistently implemented across Research.gov and FastLane services

Project Reports

- The Final Project Report and Project Outcomes Report will be required from organizations no later than 120 days following expiration of the grant

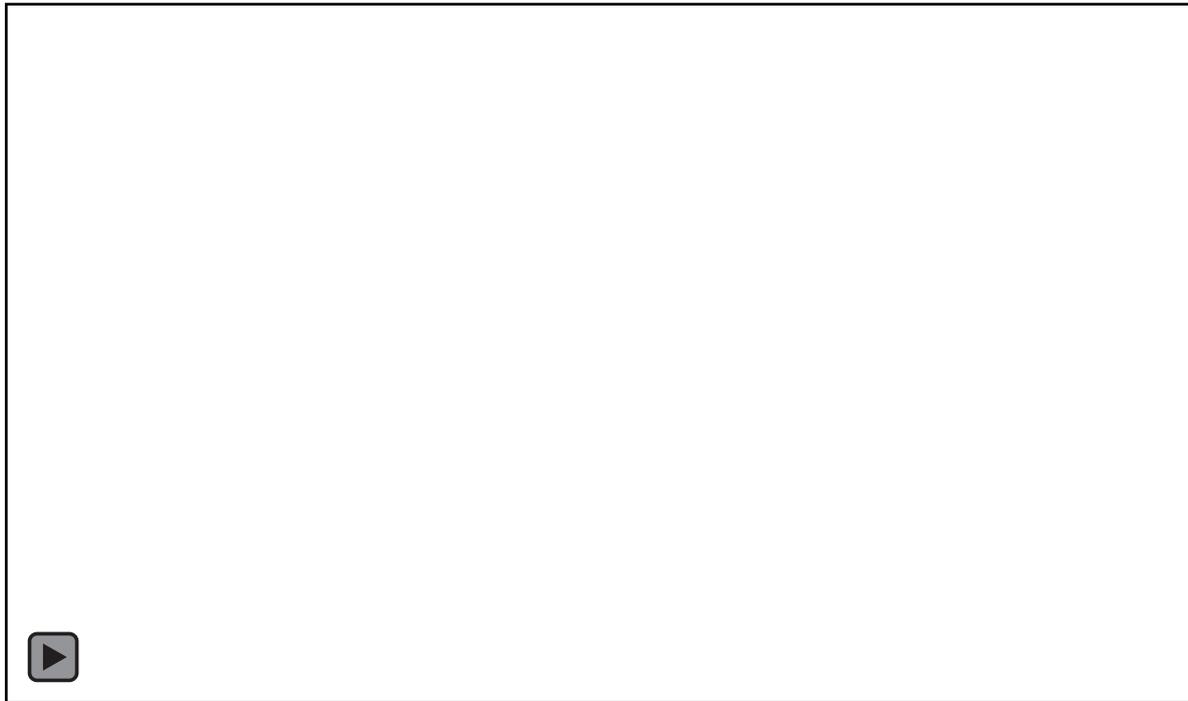
Other New proposal preparation policies



PAPPG Changes Effective January 25, 2016

Public Access

- Launched NSF's first repository: December 2015
- Effective date of Public Access policy: January 2016



Proposal Compliance Checking

Over past three years, NSF has ramped up pre-submission automated proposal compliance checking. Goals are to increase competitive fairness and reduce burden on both NSF programs and the research community.

Results depend on the funding opportunity and/or mechanism chosen by submitter.

- Deadline Checks – (since Jan 2016) a warning in the last 24 hours before the deadline, and an error when past the deadline. So far, 99.5% of proposals submitted on time.
- Section Exists Checks – checks on 11 sections
- Page Count Checks – lengths are checked for five sections
- Budget Checks – eight checks on rules such as caps on amounts, duration, and amounts matching.
- Other Checks – five checks related to international travel and human or animal use rules.

http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/autocheck/compliancechecks_jan16.pdf



Usability

- Recent changes:
 - Live Help service (technical support chat) for project reporting and at login
 - Unmasked NSF ID at login
 - Relocated Program Officer comments to increase visibility
 - Clarified language on form fields
 - “Clean up” – Standardize layout, language and navigation



Feedback and Questions



Research.gov –Looking Ahead

12



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Usability

- Upcoming focus areas
 - Decrease session timeouts and prevent data loss
 - Password Self Service
 - Expand InCommon network
 - Continue updates for Public Access implementation



Proposal Submission Modernization Outreach

- NSF hosted two webinars to brief the research community
- ~600 researchers and Sponsored Project Office (SPO) staff attended
- Robust discussions with excellent, specific feedback and new ideas
 - Desire to minimize the burden of uploading proposal components
 - Efforts to clarify proposal requirements received praise
 - Tailored interfaces that reflect solicitation requirements received constructive feedback



Proposal Submission Modernization Survey

- NSF sent a survey in June 2015 to 116,638 researchers and administrative staff
- 16,000+ responses received
- NSF analyzed responses to guide the planning and design of future systems
- Survey goals:
 - Gauge PI/SPO experience with the current proposal process
 - Gather feedback on the improvements suggested in the first round of outreach



Proposal Submission Survey Findings

- Goal: Gauge experience with the proposal process
 - More than 75% indicated that FastLane meets expectations
 - 40% reported that FastLane webpage layout is unintuitive
 - Around 10% of SPOs and 25% of PIs believe proposal preparation results in unreasonable burden
- Goal: Gather feedback on suggested improvements
 - Widely cited enhancements that could reduce burden included data pre-population and revision of the format of the solicitation
 - Nearly 80% indicated that expanded automatic compliance checking would be valuable
 - Less than 20% indicated that expanded use of preliminary proposals or additional help functionality would mitigate workload

16



Proposal Submission Modernization Development

- NSF kicked off the IT project to modernize proposal preparation and submission
- Planning multi-year effort to improve existing functionality and migrate from FastLane to Research.gov
- Planning to use an iterative approach that will allow:
 - NSF to roll out features as they are developed
 - Incorporation of feedback from user community
 - Smooth transition for FastLane users



Feedback and Questions



Additional Resources

- Listserv to get updates on events and enhancements to Research.gov and/or FastLane: mailto:system_updates-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov
- NSF Public Access
 - https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/public_access/
 - NSF's Public Access Plan
 - FAQs Now Available:
<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2016/nsf16009/nsf16009.jsp?org=LIB>
 - About Page and Tutorial https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=research_node_display&_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/AboutPublicAccess.html
- Compliance Checks
http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/autocheck/compliancechecks_jan16.pdf

