

Grant Policy Q&A & FAQs

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Ask Early, Ask Often!!

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What Do You Want To Know???

Grants.gov
Indirect costs
Change in objective or scope
participant support costs
PI Transfers
Equipment
Audits
Return without review
reconsideration
Budget changes
Proposal preparation

Human subjects
Award Monitoring
Foreign flag air carrier
program income
Subawards
Preaward Costs
New grantees
Allowability of Costs
project reports
travel
NSF FastLane

Collaborative proposals
Academic year salary
Proposal resubmission
No-cost extensions
withdrawals
Notifications & Requests
subawards
Proposal File Updates
rebudgeting
Cost Sharing

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

➔ **Is there a limitation on payments to consultants under NSF awards?**

The Appropriation Act applicable to NSF for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 does not contain a limitation on payments to consultants under NSF awards and therefore, this constraint has been eliminated for FY 2006 appropriated funds. Payments, however, should be comparable to the normal or customary fees charged and received by the consultant for comparable services, especially on non-government contracts and grants.

➔ **How will this change be implemented?**

All new NSF grants and funding amendments to existing NSF grants will begin referencing and will be subject to the NSF Grant General Conditions (GC-1), dated 03/15/06. Also, all new NSF cooperative agreements and funding amendments to existing cooperative agreements will begin referencing and will be subject to the Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (FATC), dated 03/15/06. Note, however, that all funds awarded prior to the incorporation of the revised conditions dated 03/15/06 are still subject to the consultant rate of pay limitation until all of those funds are expended.

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

➤ **What are NSF's Grants.gov ramp-up plans for fiscal year 2006?**

NSF will be posting 75% of the agency's funding opportunities to Grants.gov APPLY in FY 06. Submission through Grants.gov may be required for some of these funding opportunities. FastLane is still an option because Grants.gov does not currently have the means to accept collaborative proposals or proposals with subaward budgets. NSF is working with Grants.gov in order to accept proposals with subaward budgets by second quarter 2006. Grants.gov has not announced when the collaborative proposal functionality will be available.

Applicants should carefully read NSF's Grants.gov Application Guide for agency-specific instructions. Of note are the instructions for the file attachments that must be in PDF in order for the proposal to be inserted into FastLane for review.

NSF Grants.gov Application Guide:

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/docs/grantsgovguide.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

- ➔ We received an award from NSF which did not require cost sharing. We now would like to receive a supplement to this award, however, the NSF program officer is asking us to cost share 50 percent. Is this allowed?

No, this is not allowed. The new cost sharing policy, as approved by the NSB, eliminated program specific cost sharing. Previously issued program solicitations that specified a cost sharing requirement remain valid.

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

- ➔ **The GPG was revised to remove tuition remission as one of the examples of other direct costs. Does this mean that tuition remission is no longer an allowable expense on NSF grants?**

Tuition remission is generally treated as part of an organization's fringe benefit rate or as a direct cost. NSF's policy is that colleges and universities should budget tuition remission consistent with its established indirect cost rate methodology and negotiated rate agreement. If tuition remission is budgeted as a direct cost, it should be listed in the "Other" category of the Budget under "Other Direct Costs."

- ➔ **If we submit a proposal which includes a co-PI from a foreign institution, are we allowed to submit a collaborative proposal, or will we need to issue a separate subaward?**

Given that NSF rarely makes awards directly to foreign institutions, NSF advises use of the collaborative procedure whereby you submit as the prime organization and have a subaward with the foreign institution.

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

- ➔ **Can a proposer submit the same proposal to different organizations within NSF for simultaneous review?**

Only one submission should be provided to NSF even if review by multiple programs is envisioned. You may indicate on the Cover Sheet which NSF organizational unit(s) you believe would be most appropriate for proposal review. However, NSF will determine which program will evaluate each proposal. The submission of duplicate or substantially similar proposals concurrently for review by more than one program without prior NSF approval may result in the return of the redundant proposal(s).

- ➔ **My proposal to NSF was declined. May I re-submit it?**

A declined proposal may be resubmitted, but only after it has undergone substantial revision. Resubmittals that have not clearly taken into account the major comments or concerns resulting from the prior NSF review may be returned without review. NSF will treat the revised proposal as a new proposal, subject to the standard review procedures.

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

➔ **Does NSF pay academic year support?**

Compensation for doing research is often included as part of a faculty member's regular salary and in those cases, academic year salary would not be appropriate. If, however, a faculty member has a teaching appointment, it may be appropriate to request academic year support. The caveat is that some NSF Divisions/Directorates have more restrictive policies with regard to academic year support than others. Therefore, the best thing to do is to check with the cognizant Program Officer to discuss the issue.

➔ **Can the expenses for acquiring a visa for foreign collaborators – speaker, visiting scientist – be paid from an NSF grant?**

Visa fees are not normally an allowable direct cost expenditure to a grant.

Frequently Asked Questions & Frequently Given Answers

- ➔ **One of our PIs purchased airfare tickets for a group of researchers that are located outside the US to attend a conference at our university. The tickets are not on a US flag carrier. Can we still be reimbursed for this expense?**

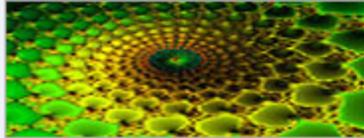
Any air transportation to, from, between, or within a country other than the U.S. of persons or property, the expense of which will be assisted by NSF funding, must be performed by or under a code-sharing arrangement with a U.S.-flag air carrier if service provided by such a carrier is available. Exceptions are noted in Grant General Conditions (GC-1).

- ➔ **May I use Universal Resource Locators (URLs) within the Project Description of our proposal?**

PIs are advised that the project description must be self-contained and are cautioned that URLs (Internet addresses) that provide information related to the proposal should not be used because 1) the information could circumvent page limitations, 2) the reviewers are under no obligation to view the sites, and 3) the sites could be altered or abolished between the time of submission and the time of review.



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Policy Office

HEAD: Jean Feldman

[Policy Office Overview:](#)

The Policy Office is responsible for developing, implementing and issuing proposal and award policy for the programs of the National Science Foundation and is available to assist you with questions involving policy related issues. Questions related to specific awards should be directed to the [Division of Grants and Agreements](#).

Grants & Cooperative Agreements:

- [NSF's Response to the Community Regarding Hurricane Katrina](#)
- [Policy & Guidance](#) (including the [Grant Proposal Guide \(GPG\)](#), and [Grant Policy Manual \(GPM\)](#))
- [Examples of Activities that Demonstrate Broader Impacts](#)
- [FAQs: Proposal Preparation and Award Administration](#)
 - Current Maximum Daily Consultant Rate of Pay - \$537.00 (January 1, 2005)
 - [Archived Consultant Rates](#)
- [FAQs regarding Electronic Signatures](#)
- [Revision of the NSF Cost Sharing Policy](#)
- [Grants.gov](#)
 - [NSF FY 2006 Grants.gov Implementation Strategy](#)
 - [Listing of FY 2006 NSF Programs Authorizing or Requiring Use of Grants.gov](#) - February 1, 2006
 - [Grants.gov Application Guide](#) - January 6, 2006