



National Science Foundation  
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN

# Policy Update

June 23-24, 2014  
Denver, CO

Hosted by **Colorado  
State**  
University



# Panelists

## **Jean Feldman**

Head, Policy Office, Division of Institution & Award Support,  
Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management

## **Susan Mason**

Group Leader, Office of Legislative & Public Affairs,  
Division of Legislative Affairs



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# Ask Early, Ask Often!



# Topics

- **NSF Uniform Guidance Implementation**
  - **PAPPG Sections Significantly Revised**
- **Other Proposed Policy Changes**
- **Transparency & Accountability**
- **Q&A**



# OMB Consolidates Administrative Circulars

- What is it?
  - Biggest change to research administration in over fifty years
  - Consolidates eight administrative circulars into one
- How will it affect institutions
  - Affects new awards and funding increments on or after December 26, 2014
  - Affects many areas from sub-recipient monitoring to indirect cost rates to voluntary committed cost sharing



## Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards “Uniform Guidance” Implementation: Key Dates

- OMB published Uniform Guidance on **December 26, 2013**
- Agencies are required to submit implementation plans, policies and procedures on **June 26, 2014**
- Guidance will apply to awards and funding increments on existing award made on or after **December 26, 2014**
- Visit [cfo.gov/cofar/](http://cfo.gov/cofar/) for the latest information.



# Uniform Guidance Implementation: NSF Implementation

- NSF submitted request to use policy document in lieu of regulation to implement the Uniform Guidance
- This request was approved by OMB on April 23, 2014
- NSF posted notice of intent to revise the PAPPG in the Federal Register on May 8, 2014
- Comments from the external community accepted until cob **July 8, 2014**
  - Uniform Guidance related changes highlighted in yellow
  - References to relevant sections of the uniform guidance are provided
  - Policy Changes highlighted in blue
- Deviations from the Uniform Guidance requested in only two areas:
  - Limitation to two months salary compensation for faculty; and
  - Alternative to use of the Federal Financial Report (i.e., ACM\$)



# Sections of the PAPPG Significantly Revised to Comply with the Uniform Guidance

- Definitional Changes
- Budget Preparation Instructions
  - Administrative and Clerical Salaries & Wages Policy
  - Subawards
  - Visa Costs
  - Indirect Cost Coverage
- Risk Management Framework
- Composition of an NSF Award
- Grantee Notifications & Request for Approval from NSF
- Allowability of Cost Coverage
- Standard Terms and Conditions



# Proposed Policy-Related Changes in PAPPG

- NSF's electronic capabilities modernization status
- NSF closure in the event of inclement weather
- Definition of Travel for Budget Preparation Purposes
- Participant Support Prior Approvals
- New Proposal Mechanism: Ideas Labs
- Dual Use Research of Concern
- Change to Cost Sharing Notification Requirements
- NSF's Abstracts and Titles
- Process to Appeal NSF's Decision to Decline a Proposal for Financial or Administrative Reasons



# Uniform Guidance Implementation: NSF Implementation

- Draft PAPPG
  - [http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/papp/papp15\\_1/fedregdraft/nsf15\\_1draft.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/papp/papp15_1/fedregdraft/nsf15_1draft.pdf)
- Federal Register Notice:
  - <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-05-09/pdf/2014-10685.pdf>
- Direct Questions to: [policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov)



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**For More Information**

**Ask Early, Ask Often!**

**[nsf.gov/staff](https://www.nsf.gov/staff)**

**[nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp)**

**[nsf.gov/about/career\\_opps/rotators/index.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/about/career_opps/rotators/index.jsp)**

# Transparency and Accountability

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PRESIDENTS OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND HEADS OF  
OTHER NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION A WARDEE ORGANIZATIONS**

**Subject: Transparency and Accountability at NSF**

As a public agency, the National Science Foundation builds and sustains trust for our mission through the transparency of our processes and the accountability of our organization. Periodically, as a learning organization committed to continuous improvement, we review our processes to ensure that they continue to engender this trust. A recent review by NSF senior leadership in consultation with the National Science Board affirmed our fundamental principles and identified opportunities for improvements in two areas to enhance our public stewardship.

One area is our accountability for ensuring that our investment decisions support the national interest, defined by NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; to secure the national defense..." To strengthen this alignment, our directorates and offices are examining process improvements for defining research priorities and objectives at all levels of the organization and at all stages of merit review. As a result, the community should benefit from greater understanding and knowledge of the priorities and objectives of our research programs. We would certainly welcome the community's thoughts and suggestions in this regard.

A second area is communications regarding our investment decisions. In the current fiscal environment, it is more important than ever to justify the expenditure of public funding. We believe we can enhance our public communications of what we are funding and why it is important. The immediate focus will be on improving our research abstracts, ensuring these primary sources of public information clearly articulate the broader context and funding justification. While our program officers are responsible for preparing abstracts, this often involves input from principal investigators, and so we will be directly engaging the community in this effort. Of course, one of the most effective outreach mechanisms for improved communication is through our community, and we look forward to working with you as we identify other mechanisms to strengthen our public message.

From an implementation perspective, our efforts may result in the adoption of new policies and improved processes, which we will share with the community. We expect that, over time, this increased focus on transparency and accountability will improve our processes, strengthen our research programs, enhance our communications and advance the national interest.

Thank you for your continuing support for NSF and the nation's science and engineering research and education enterprise.

Cora Marrett  
Acting Director

**National Science Foundation**  
**Office of the Director**  
**Arlington, VA 22230**

**Notice No. 136**  
**2014**

**March 28,**

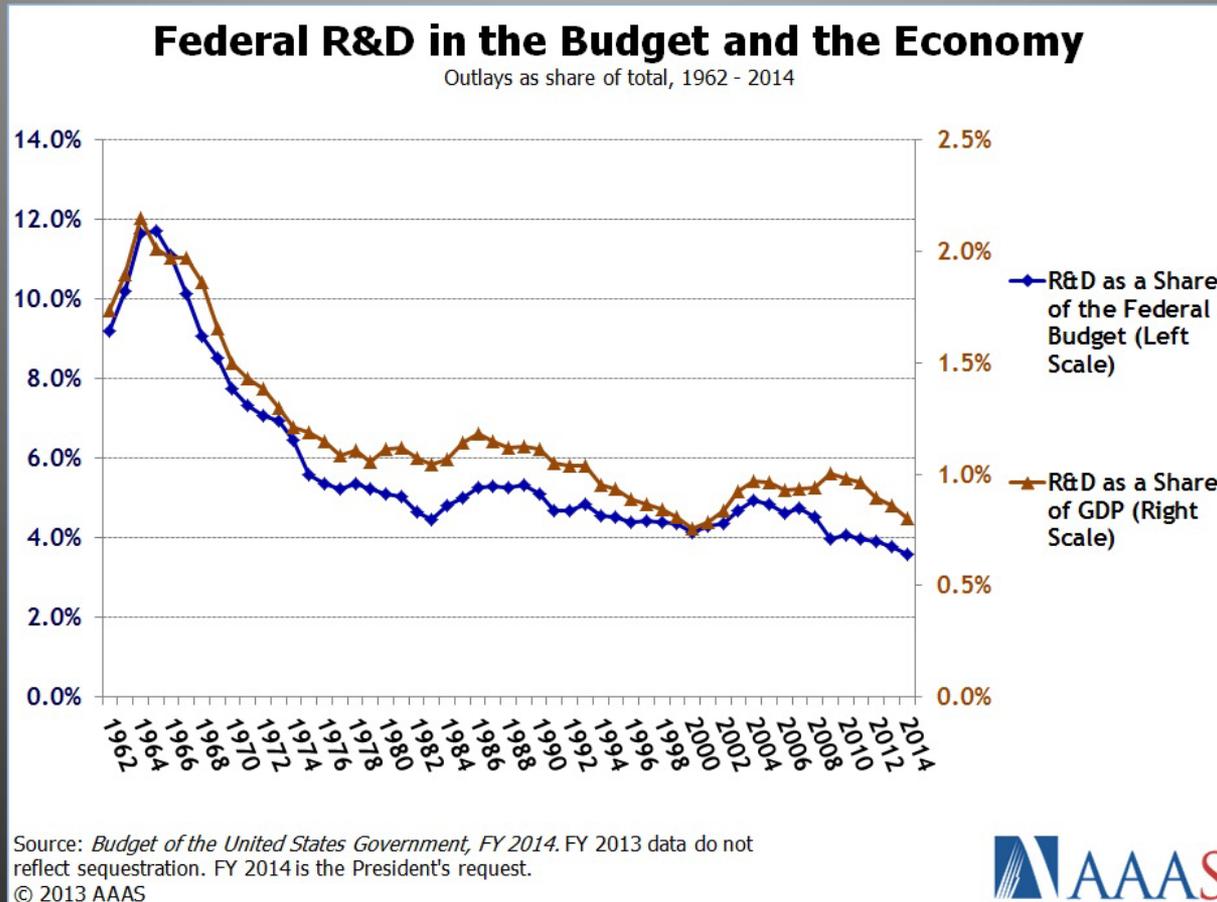
**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PRESIDENTS OF UNIVERSITIES AND  
COLLEGES AND HEADS OF OTHER NATIONAL SCIENCE  
FOUNDATION AWARDEE ORGANIZATIONS**

**Subject: NSF Abstracts and Titles**

Since the issuance of the December 11 2013 Important Notice to the Community (IN-135) that announced our focus on transparency and accountability, we have developed and are now implementing an approach for addressing the two primary areas of the initiative.

- The first is improving public understanding of our funding decisions through our award Abstracts and Titles.
- The second is ensuring that the broad areas of supported research (or portfolios) are aligned to the national interest, as defined by NSF's mission, "...to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; to secure the national defense..."

# Issue: Changing budget landscape



# Issue: Public scrutiny

Congressional debate over science funding draws fire from critics

Senate Moves to Limit NSF Spending on Political Science

## **Why is Our Government Attacking Science?**

Rampant Waste Reported in NSF

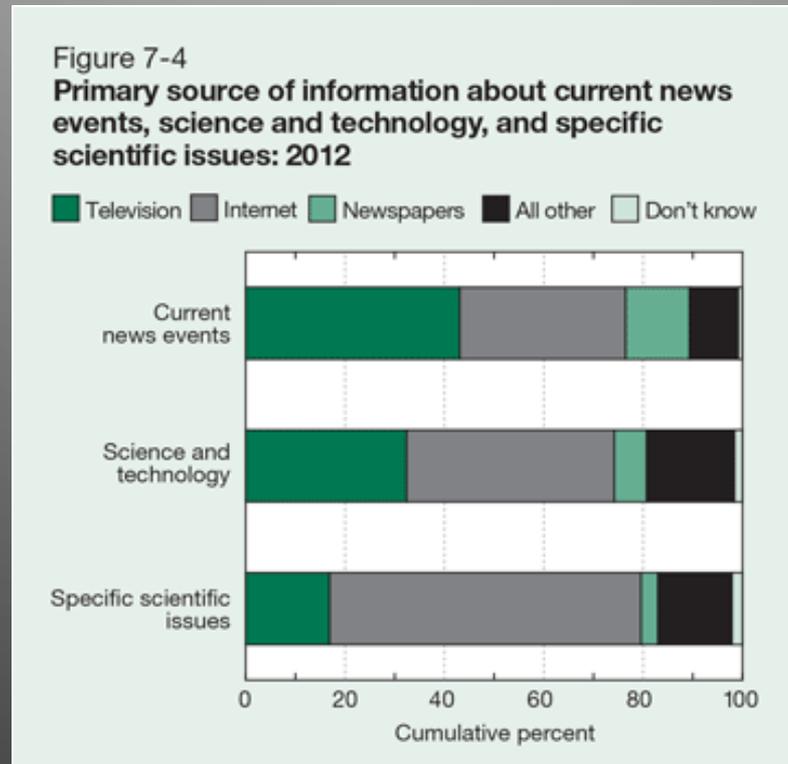
Amendment Limiting  
National Science Foundation  
Research Funding Passes Senate

The Congressional War on the Social Sciences

Coalition of Scientific Organizations Defend NSF Peer Review

Many Rival Nations Surge Past the U.S. in  
Adding New Jobs

# Issue: Media landscape



Source: Science & Engineering Indicators 2014

# Issue: Society needs



Natural hazards



Climate change



Energy



Food and drug safety



Cybersecurity



Youth violence

# Pressure from all sides!



# Imperative: Create a context and narrative for public and policymakers

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## Climate Scientist Michael Mann Interview, Part 1

"New McCarthyism" targets climate scientists, say Mann.

09:28 | 07/07/2012



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### Taxpayer-Funded 'Robo-squirrel' Makes Senator's 2012 'Wastebook'

Oct. 17, 2012

by KEVIN DOLAK

#### SDSU Defends Robo Squirrel

GREG BLOCK, SDSU SPOKESPERSON

"We have been able to support the training and education of four graduate students and approx thirty undergraduate students with this av

Robo Squirrel the Target of 'Wastebook' Spending

NEXT VII DARPAs

San Diego State University's taxpayer-funded project to invent a "robo-squirrel" criticized as a boondoggle by an Oklahoma senator, but the school defends the grant that funded the project also helped support the education of 34 st

Researchers at SDSU used funds from a \$325,000 grant provided by the t National Science Foundation on the invention of a robotic squirrel used for t Oklahoma Republican Senator Tom Coburn lambasted the project as a most exemplifying what needs to be excised from government spending.

## NSF Science & Engineering Messengers

### From Oil Boom to Science Boom: Fueling North Dakota's Hi-Tech Economy

leave a comment »

*This is a sample blog post composed for the June 25-26 "Science\_Becoming the Messenger" workshop in Fargo, North Dakota.*

If you read the news lately about North Dakota, you may get the impression that we're some sort of economic wunderkind. The reason is that in comparison with the rest of the U.S., North Dakota has an extremely low unemployment rate: just 3.2 percent. That's the lowest in the nation, by a considerable margin. And much of it is thanks to an unfolding unconventional oil and gas boom here, which has generated a large number of jobs and considerable wealth.

Clearly, North Dakota has fared better than much of the rest of the country in weathering the Great Recession and keeping its citizens employed—at least in "old economy" industries like agriculture and fossil energy. But if you look forward to the future, we're not necessarily so well positioned. According to the Washington, D.C.-based Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, we rank 34<sup>th</sup> overall in the strength of our new economy sector. The economics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will demand a much more tech savvy and advanced workforce, and plentiful jobs in hi tech industries—and what's more, oil booms by nature are cyclical, and there are reasons to think the current one will someday end. If we're going to continue to compete, those jobs need to be located and thriving right here in North Dakota.

So how do we ensure a future that's at least as prosperous as the present? North Dakota EPSCoE (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) is doing its part by helping to spur innovation in sectors that you don't usually associate with a big oil state—fields such as clean energy, sustainable materials, and green chemistry. Right now, the program is nearing the completion of a 5 year, \$ 15 million grant that has focused on two areas in particular: Generating clean and renewable energy directly from the crops that grow so plentifully here in the Great Plains; and creating sustainable materials—including those produced through innovative "green chemistry" approaches, which use less water and leave less of an environmental mark. Looking forward, we're also pursuing a new grant to focus further on sustainable materials research, and no wonder. Already, this body of science is paying off significantly in terms of economic benefits for North Dakota.

Take our "SUNRISE" program—Sustainable Energy Research, Infrastructure, and Supporting Education—which is focused on converting oils from crops into fuels and chemicals, rather than relying on carbon intensive fossil sources. Over the course of our work here, 11 patents have been issued under this program.



Links

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Generation Innovation: Priming the Science Education Pipeline in Alaska

From Oil Boom to Science Boom: Fueling North Dakota's Hi-Tech Economy

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Archives

# Abstracts & Titles

“describe the project”

“justify the expenditure”

“layman’s language”

“public record”

“purpose of the research”

Property of NSF

# Content and Format Guidelines

- Title: (In no more than 180 Characters adequately describe the purpose of the research in nontechnical terms to the fullest possible extent.)
- Opening: (A General Statement written for Public Audiences)
- Technical Description of Project (Subsequent paragraph written for a scientific audience)

WE NEED  
YOUR  
HELP

