Panelists

Jean Feldman
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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/ 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

• Federal Register Notice:

• Direct Questions to: policy@nsf.gov
For More Information

Ask Early, Ask Often!

nsf.gov/staff
nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp
nsf.gov/about/career_opps/rotators/index.jsp
Transparency and Accountability
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  
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Notice No. 136  
2014

March 28, 2014

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

The Congressional War on the Social Sciences

Amendment Limiting National Science Foundation Research Funding Passes Senate

Coalition of Scientific Organizations Defend NSF Peer Review

Many Rival Nations Surge Past the U.S. in Adding New Jobs
Issue: Media landscape

Figure 7-4
Primary source of information about current news events, science and technology, and specific scientific issues: 2012

Source: Science & Engineering Indicators 2014
Issue: Society needs

- Natural hazards
- Climate change
- Energy
- Food and drug safety
- Cybersecurity
- Youth violence
Pressure from all sides!

- public scrutiny
- competition
- funding levels
- media
- public interest
- perceptions
Imperative: Create a context and narrative for public and policymakers.
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