The Notice states that the purpose of the Biographical Sketch is to assess how well qualified the individual, team, or organization is to conduct the proposed activities. The purpose of Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPS) is to assess the capacity of the individual to carry out the research as proposed and to help identify any potential scientific and budgetary overlap/duplication, as well as overcommitment with the project being proposed. As implied in the Notice, the activities listed in the NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance Pre- and Post-award: Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support (“Table”) should meet the stated objectives for the Biographical Sketch and CPS and have practical utility. Unfortunately, many of the activities listed in the Table can be interpreted broadly and create confusion, leading to inconsistent responses. For example, the biographical sketch requires listing academic, professional, and institutional appointments and positions, but these terms can mean different things to different people, and no guidance or definitions are provided to clarify what these terms mean. For example, what is meant by an "institutional appointment"? Would this include variables such as professor, associates professor, and parking committe? Do professional positions include service on an editorial board? We also question the practical utility of some of the required data elements and how they contribute to the intended purpose of the forms, which is to assess the individual's qualifications to conduct the proposed activities and to assess potential overlap or overcommit.

Thank you for your comment. With regard to the issue of appointments, the NSPM-33 Definitions Appendix has been revised to provide specific definitions for Institutional, Professional and Academic Positions and Appointments. Additional information has been added to the Current and Pending (Other) Support section that deals with in-kind contributions, both in terms of descriptors as well as the categories of information requested. With regard to the Disclosure table, multiple research funding agencies have seen a significant reduction in questions regarding the types of activities to be reported upon issuance of the Disclosure Tables. The tables, however, will be modified to address changes made as a result of the public comment process.

Finally, a relatively new item has been introduced related to reporting “start-up companies that are unrelated to intellectual property licensed by the applicant institution.” The relation this has to the stated goals of CPS to assess the capacity of the individual to carry out the research as proposed and to help identify any potential scientific and budgetary overlap/duplication is not clear. Rather, this would be addressed more appropriately under the recipient’s conflict of interest and conflict of commitment policies and not as part of a researcher’s grant application.

Thank you for your comment. The instructions for the Current and Pending (Other) Support Common form have been revised to state, “In this section, disclose all in-kind contributions with an estimated dollar value of $5000 or more and that require a commitment of the individual’s time. An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution provided by an external entity that directly supports the individual’s research and development efforts. An in-kind contribution may include but is not limited to: real property; laboratory space; equipment; data or data sets; supplies; other expendable property, goods and services; employees or student resources. In-kind contributions with an estimated value of less than $5000 need not be reported.”

The Notice states that the purpose of the Biographical Sketch is to assess how well qualified the individual, team, or organization is to conduct the proposed activities. The purpose of Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPS) is to assess the capacity of the individual to carry out the research as proposed and to help identify any potential scientific and budgetary overlap/duplication, as well as overcommitment with the project being proposed. As implied in the Notice, the activities listed in the NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance Pre- and Post-award: Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support (“Table”) should meet the stated objectives for the Biographical Sketch and CPS and have practical utility. Unfortunately, many of the activities listed in the Table can be interpreted broadly and create confusion, leading to inconsistent responses. For example, the biographical sketch requires listing academic, professional, and institutional appointments and positions, but these terms can mean different things to different people, and no guidance or definitions are provided to clarify what these terms mean. For example, what is meant by an "institutional appointment"? Would this include variables such as professor, associates professor, and parking committe? Do professional positions include service on an editorial board? We also question the practical utility of some of the required data elements and how they contribute to the intended purpose of the forms, which is to assess the individual's qualifications to conduct the proposed activities and to assess potential overlap or overcommit.

Thank you for your comments. The proposed burden assessment will be revised based on feedback received.

The Notice estimates burden time as one hour for the Biographical Sketch and one hour for the CPF. COGR member institutions report that this is a significant underestimation of the actual time it takes to initially complete the form and update the information, considering the complexity of disclosure requirements. In a poll of COGR conducted during a recent webinar, the majority of respondents indicated it takes two hours or more to complete the biographical sketch for the first time, with almost half indicating it takes about an hour to update. An even larger majority indicated it takes two hours or more to complete the current and pending support for the first time, with almost half indicating it takes about an hour to update. We also collected anecdotal information from faculty, which shows that the initial completion of the CPS forms can take many hours to complete. Due to limited resources, the cost and administrative burden may be significantly greater at emerging institutions. Another consideration is that the Notice only reflects the burden of CPS submissions at the time of proposal. Proposal or JIT (pre-award) submissions are not the only instances when CPS documents are submitted with annual progress reports. Those updates take additional time, which is not reflected in the Notice. Recommendation: Recommendation: We recommend working with organizations like the Federal Demonstration Partnership to identify a more accurate estimation of burden and to understand pain points for researchers and opportunities to streamline.

Thank you for your comments. OGP has been working hard to communicate with the research community on these points. We will seek to incorporate them into community briefings going forward.

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definitions, qualifiers, and examples as simple interpretation as provided below.

Define Terms. Notably absent throughout the documents are defined terms to ensure consistency of interpretation in the types of data provided. Definitions, qualifiers, and examples provide much-needed clarity for respondents. A great example defined in both documents is senior/key personnel which describes the qualifier of a key person (listed by the applicant/awardee organization and approved by the organization). A great example defined in both documents is senior/key personnel which describes the qualifier of a key person (listed by the applicant/awardee organization and approved by the organization).

Thank you for your comment. With regard to the issue of appointments, the NSPM-33 Definitions Appendix has been revised to provide specific definitions for Institutional, Professional and Academic Positions and Appointments. Additional information has been added to the Current and Pending (Other) Support section that deals with in-kind contributions, both in terms of descriptors as well as the categories of information requested. It is not possible, however, to develop a one-size fits all definition of in-kind contributions given the variance in agency missions.

Recommended: Recommendations: We request that agencies: (1) critically assess and only require those data elements that truly serve the intended purposes of the forms, (2) provide information to the grantees community on the utility of the information needed for each type of activity and how it is necessary to meet the stated goals and make grant decisions, and (3) provide definitions and examples for each data element.

Thank you for your comment. OSP has been hard working to communicate with the research community on these points. We will seek to incorporate them into our community briefings going forward.

The Notice states that the purpose of the Biographical Sketch is to assess how well qualified the individual, team, or organization is to conduct the proposed activities. The purpose of Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPS) is to assess the capacity of the individual to carry out the research as proposed and to help identify any potential scientific and budgetary overlap/duplication, as well as overcommitment with the project being proposed. As implied in the Notice, the activities listed in the NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance Pre- and Post-award: Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support (“Table”) should meet the stated objectives for the Biographical Sketch and CPS and have practical utility. Unfortunately, many of the activities listed in the Table can be interpreted broadly and create confusion, leading to inconsistent responses. For example, the biographical sketch requires listing academic, professional, and institutional appointments and positions, but these terms can mean different things to different people, and no guidance or definitions are provided to clarify what these terms mean. For example, what is meant by an "institutional appointment"? Would this include variables such as professor, associates professor, and parking committe? Do professional positions include service on an editorial board? We also question the practical utility of some of the required data elements and how they contribute to the intended purpose of the forms, which is to assess the individual's qualifications to conduct the proposed activities and to assess potential overlap or overcommit.

Thank you for your comment. Thank you for your comments. The question/comment is unclear. We presume the comment is asking how a researcher’s involvement and commitment in a start-up company might impact the “capacity of the individual to carry out the research.” We note that start-up companies that are related to intellectual property licensed by the applicant institution are already reported to the institution. Thus, when a researcher becomes involved in a start-up company that has not already otherwise been reported, such an involvement, by definition, has the potential to impact that researcher’s capacity to perform other research. Therefore, start-up companies that are unrelated to intellectual property licensed by the applicant institution are reported to assess capacity and determine overlap/application. This is analogous to the reporting of past consulting which is outside of that which the institution permits. These activities involve a time commitment and/ or financial gain. The disclosure is meant to provide the federal funding agency with the necessary information to make that assessment.

The Notice states that the purpose of the Biographical Sketch is to assess how well qualified the individual, team, or organization is to conduct the proposed activities. The purpose of Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPS) is to assess the capacity of the individual to carry out the research as proposed and to help identify any potential scientific and budgetary overlap/duplication, as well as overcommitment with the project being proposed. As implied in the Notice, the activities listed in the NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance Pre- and Post-award: Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support (“Table”) should meet the stated objectives for the Biographical Sketch and CPS and have practical utility. Unfortunately, many of the activities listed in the Table can be interpreted broadly and create confusion, leading to inconsistent responses. For example, the biographical sketch requires listing academic, professional, and institutional appointments and positions, but these terms can mean different things to different people, and no guidance or definitions are provided to clarify what these terms mean. For example, what is meant by an "institutional appointment"? Would this include variables such as professor, associates professor, and parking committe? Do professional positions include service on an editorial board? We also question the practical utility of some of the required data elements and how they contribute to the intended purpose of the forms, which is to assess the individual's qualifications to conduct the proposed activities and to assess potential overlap or overcommit.

Thank you for your comment. With regard to the issue of appointments, the NSPM-33 Definitions Appendix has been revised to provide specific definitions for Institutional, Professional and Academic Positions and Appointments. Additional information has been added to the Current and Pending (Other) Support section that deals with in-kind contributions, both in terms of descriptors as well as the categories of information requested. It is not possible, however, to develop a one-size fits all definition of in-kind contributions given the variance in agency missions.
While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definitions, qualifiers, and examples for simple interpretation as provided below:

In-kind contributions. It is still unclear exactly what is required for in-kind contributions. According to 42 U.S.C § 6605 and the CPS instructions (pg. 1), CPS includes in-kind contributions requiring a commitment of time and directly supporting the individual's research and development efforts, and the proposed CPS includes data for current and pending support. In-kind contributions include, but are not limited to, office/lab space, supplies, equipment, and employee or student resources. COGR requests confirmation that the requirement to report in-kind contributions is limited to those contributions that (a) have an associated commitment of time on the part of the senior/key person, and (b) directly support the senior/key person's research and development efforts. We also request that this be clarified in the instructions.

COGR encourages federal agencies to reassess the utility of disclosing in-kind contributions that do not have an associated commitment of time in the review for overlap and over-commitment. Whether or not an individual is reporting or is required to report all in-kind contributions, we note that in-kind contributions usually do not come with a specified "associated time commitment." For example, researchers commonly receive cell lines or other reagents from colleagues at other institutions or from industry. These reagents may be in-kind contributions, but they do not require a specified time commitment. Considering they do not require a specified time commitment, it is arguable that these contributions would not be disclosed. Similarly, when a PI or senior/key person hosts postdoctoral scholars, students, or visiting scholars, the arrangement usually does not come with a specified time commitment. It would be helpful for the PI to clarify that reporting a contribution is not required in such cases. COGR notes that NIH appears to require disclosure of in-kind contributions regardless of whether they require a time commitment, lack of consistency creates confusion for researchers.

Because most in-kind contributions do not involve time commitments, the format for reporting, with start/end date, person months, and dollar values, usually is not applicable. For this reason, the format for in-kind should allow for the optional inclusion of start/end date, person months, and dollar values to address those situations in which these elements are not applicable. (See further comments on reporting format below.) It is still unclear exactly what is required for in-kind contributions; the absence of any minimum financial thresholds to trigger the disclosure of in-kind contributions creates unnecessary burden, as does the lack of a limit on how far back in the time contribution was received (a welcome clarification previously provided by NIH).

Finally, the absence of any minimum financial thresholds to trigger the disclosure of in-kind contributions creates unnecessary burden, as does the lack of a limit on how far back in time the contribution was received (a welcome clarification previously provided by NIH). COGR strongly encourages an assessment of the utility of this information in the review process.

Thank you for your comments. The instructions for the Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Form have been revised to state, "In this section, please disclose all in-kind contributions with an estimated dollar value of $5000 or more that require a commitment of the individual's time... An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution provided by an external entity that directly supports the individual's research and development efforts. An in-kind contribution may include but is not limited to: real property; laboratory space; equipment, or data or data sets; supplies, other expendable property; goods and services; employees or student resources. In-kind contributions with an estimated value of less than $5000 need not be reported. It is not possible, however, to develop a one-size-fits-all definition of in-kind contributions given the variance in agency missions.

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definitions, qualifiers, and examples for simple interpretation as provided below:

Appointments and Positions. The Proposed Instructions for Submission of the Biographical Sketch include instructions to list all the individual’s academic, professional, or institutional appointments and positions, beginning with the current appointment (including the associated organization and organization location). However, the subsequent paragraph states that for professional appointments, senior/key personnel must only identify all current domestic and foreign professional appointments. We would welcome confirmation that this means all past and present academic and institutional appointments must be listed, but only current professional appointments must be listed. Clarification on the differences between academic, institutional, and professional appointments (and example thereof) would also be welcome, as would differentiation and explicit instruction on academic, institutional, and professional positions (again with examples). Finally, the Proposed Instructions state, "Appointments and positions include any titled academic, professional, or institutional positions..." Clarification is requested regarding what is meant by "titled" and whether the instructions are intended to exclude the reporting of "untitled" positions. Defining "titled" with examples would be helpful. The requirement to list all of their academic, institutional, and professional appointments and positions, when combined with a limit on the number of pages allowed for the Biographical Sketch, does not provide them with sufficient space to adequately demonstrate their qualifications to carry out the proposed project. Therefore, we ask that agencies not put a page limit on the Biographical Sketch or clarify that appointments and positions do not count against the page limit. We also note that the in-kind contributions section for Summary of In-Kind Contributions in the CPS specifies: Enter a summary of the in-kind contribution... whether or not it has an associated time commitment, which is contrary to the Table, which specifies an associated time commitment.

Thank you for your comments. Both the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Forms have been modified to address the inconsistencies noted.

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definitions, qualifiers, and examples for simple interpretation as provided below:

Format for Non-Project-Based Activities. There are several types of activities that are not project-based, but the proposed CPS reporting format attempts to fit them into a project-based format. These activities include in-kind, consulting, postdoctoral scholars, students, visiting scholars, sponsored travel, and startup companies based on non-organization-licensed IP. These activities often do not have a dollar value, start/end date, associated time commitment, etc. The forms should provide a format that fits the required activity and provide flexibility to indicate "not applicable."
We are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definition, qualifiers, and examples for single interpretation as provided before.

Certification. Both forms list the following certification statement: When the individual signs the certification on behalf of themselves, they are certifying that the information is current, accurate, and complete. This includes, but is not limited to, information related to domestic and foreign appointments and positions. Misrepresentations and/or omissions may be subject to prosecution and liability pursuant to but not limited to, 18 U.S.C. § 1001, 1033, and 20 U.S.C. §§ 2411-2417 and 3832. There are questions about the intent for the wording of the first part of the statement when the individual signs the certification on behalf of themselves. As worded, this seems to imply that someone other than the senior/key person could sign, which we do not believe is the intent. The form would be more straightforward if it stated; “I certify that the information is current, accurate, and complete.” Similarly, the instructions could clearly state, “When the senior/key person signs, they are certifying…”

The language also does not address unintentional omissions. NIH’s current language for other support (“funds, fellowships, or fraudulent statement”) more clearly addresses this and focuses on intentional omissions. Also, to reduce administrative burden, we request that the agencies assess the number and types of certifications they impose on applicants; for NIH, for example, will presumably require four levels of certifications (CPS form, Biobatch form, F/M/F-Certification per NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5, and the institutional certification on the PHS 398 cover page). Consistency would also be welcome, considering the common forms require a certification that the information provided is current, accurate and complete (but not that it is true), whereas the institutional certification on the 1440-6 R&R cover page and the PIRT certification specified in NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5 require certification that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current).

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definition, qualifiers, and examples for single interpretation as provided before.

As specified in the notice, variations among research agencies may be permitted as coordinated through NSTC or as cleared by OMB/OIRA. It is unclear at this time how agency-specific variations and deviations may be coordinated among research agencies, which is counterclockwise to creating true uniformity. We recognize the need for agency variances and appreciate that ODOST created a review and approval process to limit such variations to those absolutely necessary for an agency function. However, we are concerned that agency-specific variations in the common disclosure forms will reduce our researchers’ ability to maintain one form that can be used across all agencies to minimize administrative burden and lead to multiple interpretations. We request better documentation on what forms require pre-approval and what forms require agency-specific approval to report kinds of support in a non-project format. We urge NSTC to consider testing the use of any new forms on a pilot basis to receive feedback and questions from the community before finalizing the forms. The PIRT might be an ideal partner. This will go a long way toward providing agencies with the desired outcome while reducing misunderstandings and unnecessary burdens.

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definition, qualifiers, and examples for single interpretation as provided before.

The Notice specifies that variations among research agencies will be limited and coordinated through the NSTC. Additionally, modification and/or supplementation of these common forms will require clearance by OMB/OIRA under the PRA process. This includes, but is not limited to, information related to domestic and foreign appointments and positions. Misrepresentations and/or omissions may be subject to prosecution and liability pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 287, 1001, 1031 and 31 U.S.C. §§ 3729-3733 and 3732. There are questions about the intent for the wording of the first part of the statement when the individual signs the certification on behalf of themselves. As worded, this seems to imply that someone other than the senior/key person could sign, which we do not believe is the intent. The form would be more straightforward if it stated; “I certify that the information is current, accurate, and complete.” Similarly, the instructions could clearly state, “When the senior/key person signs, they are certifying…”

We request clarification in the areas mentioned above (in-kind, consulting, and appointments and positions) and recommend adding defined terms, qualifiers, and examples to minimize confusion and give researchers clear and explicit instructions on what items require disclosure. We request an assessment of the utility of reporting such a broad range of in-kind support and a reporting format more appropriate to report kinds of support in a non-project format. We urge NSTC to consider testing the use of any new forms on a pilot basis to receive feedback and questions from the community before finalizing the forms. The PIRT might be an ideal partner. This will go a long way toward providing agencies with the desired outcome while reducing misunderstandings and unnecessary burdens.

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definition, qualifiers, and examples for single interpretation as provided before.

We also note that currently, the disclosure process varies across agencies, including timelines for when disclosure occurs for initial submissions and updates. For example, at this time, NIH specifies reporting CPS for just those projects likely to be awarded (i.e., in active review). This is a significant benefit for the recipient community since only a fraction of proposals are awarded, and therefore time is not spent on CPS for unfunded projects. Also, the requirements for updated information vary across the agencies as well: NSF/NIH require updated submissions in the annual progress report. However, the Department of Energy requires updated disclosures within 30 days of the change or a timeline instructed by the program officer, which is a significant burden. Variance in reporting timelines increases the agency-specific form, increasing the burden and opportunities for errors. A comprehensive form with clear and consistent requirements across all federal agencies is ideal for recipients to develop systems and processes that will assure complete and accurate disclosures in a streamlined, efficient manner.

While we are pleased that the forms align with agency requirements for NIH and NSF, we had hoped that the common forms and corresponding instructions would provide clarity to longstanding areas in the disclosure requirements that remain ambiguous and in need of further clarification, definition, qualifiers, and examples for single interpretation as provided before.

If approved, the forms will be more efficient and effective in reducing administrative burdens for our researchers. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that the disclosure statement on the SF424 R&R cover page is clear and unambiguous to researchers. The new requirement that the investigator certify that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current) creates unnecessary administrative burden, and leads to multiple interpretations (including agency-specific or even program manager-specific interpretations). As worded, the certification statement compares to federal misinformation and misrepresentation laws and regulations.

If approved, the forms will be more efficient and effective in reducing administrative burdens for our researchers. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that the disclosure statement on the SF424 R&R cover page is clear and unambiguous to researchers. The new requirement that the investigator certify that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current) creates unnecessary administrative burden, and leads to multiple interpretations (including agency-specific or even program manager-specific interpretations).

We request that the agencies assess the number and types of certifications they impose on applicants; for NIH, for example, will presumably require four levels of certifications (CPS form, Biobatch form, F/M/F-Certification per NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5, and the institutional certification on the PHS 398 cover page). Consistency would also be welcome, considering the common forms require a certification that the information provided is current, accurate and complete (but not that it is true), whereas the institutional certification on the 1440-6 R&R cover page and the PIRT certification specified in NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5 require certification that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current).

We request that the agencies assess the number and types of certifications they impose on applicants; for NIH, for example, will presumably require four levels of certifications (CPS form, Biobatch form, F/M/F-Certification per NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5, and the institutional certification on the PHS 398 cover page). Consistency would also be welcome, considering the common forms require a certification that the information provided is current, accurate and complete (but not that it is true), whereas the institutional certification on the 1440-6 R&R cover page and the PIRT certification specified in NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5 require certification that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current).

We request that the agencies assess the number and types of certifications they impose on applicants; for NIH, for example, will presumably require four levels of certifications (CPS form, Biobatch form, F/M/F-Certification per NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5, and the institutional certification on the PHS 398 cover page). Consistency would also be welcome, considering the common forms require a certification that the information provided is current, accurate and complete (but not that it is true), whereas the institutional certification on the 1440-6 R&R cover page and the PIRT certification specified in NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5 require certification that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current).

We request that the agencies assess the number and types of certifications they impose on applicants; for NIH, for example, will presumably require four levels of certifications (CPS form, Biobatch form, F/M/F-Certification per NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5, and the institutional certification on the PHS 398 cover page). Consistency would also be welcome, considering the common forms require a certification that the information provided is current, accurate and complete (but not that it is true), whereas the institutional certification on the 1440-6 R&R cover page and the PIRT certification specified in NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5 require certification that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current).

We request that the agencies assess the number and types of certifications they impose on applicants; for NIH, for example, will presumably require four levels of certifications (CPS form, Biobatch form, F/M/F-Certification per NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5, and the institutional certification on the PHS 398 cover page). Consistency would also be welcome, considering the common forms require a certification that the information provided is current, accurate and complete (but not that it is true), whereas the institutional certification on the 1440-6 R&R cover page and the PIRT certification specified in NIH-GPS 2.5.7.5 require certification that the information in the proposal is true, complete and accurate (but not that it is current).
Thank you for your comment. We believe that language clarity, to ensure that the common forms and associated data elements defined remain consistent across agencies and will promote clarity and accuracy of what must be disclosed.

To help ensure coordination and consistency, we recommend that for the initial implementation, all agencies adopt the common forms during the same period and for each agency to make it clear how they plan to implement them. We recommend that the final forms, resources, training, and FAQs be posted and maintained by a single entity on a single site for a "one-stop-shop" approach (perhaps hosted by the NSF similar to the federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions).

We also recommend that changes to the forms be reduced to a workable and predictable timeframe, e.g., once a year, and apply to all agencies simultaneously. We request sufficient advance notice to implement changes in the requirements, especially those that require changes in IT systems and business processes. We also recommend continued engagement with stakeholders for input throughout the review process.

Thank you for your comment. The long-term vision is for services like ORCID and SciENcv to integrate seamlessly with the Common Forms. At this juncture, federal research funding agencies will make decisions about the extent of integration with these services, while we continue to move towards possibilities for digital standardization.

Number Comment Source Submitted Comment Response
17 Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) Recommendations: We recommend that agency-specific information be collected separately from the standardized disclosure forms and be explicitly limited to additional (not revised or altered standards) data elements. This will increase the likelihood that the common forms and associated data elements/definitions remain consistent across federal agencies and will promote clarity and accuracy of what must be disclosed.

Thank you for your comment. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Forms, we believe that language clarity, to ensure that the common forms and associated data elements defined remain consistent across agencies and will promote clarity and accuracy of what must be disclosed.

To help ensure coordination and consistency, we recommend that for the initial implementation, all agencies adopt the common forms during the same period and for each agency to make it clear how they plan to implement them. We recommend that the final forms, resources, training, and FAQs be posted and maintained by a single entity on a single site for a "one-stop-shop" approach (perhaps hosted by the NSF similar to the federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions).

We also recommend that changes to the forms be reduced to a workable and predictable timeframe, e.g., once a year, and apply to all agencies simultaneously. We request sufficient advance notice to implement changes in the requirements, especially those that require changes in IT systems and business processes. We also recommend continued engagement with stakeholders for input throughout the review process.

Thank you for your comment. This approach would be burdensome for reviewers to separately consider the qualifications and capacity of senior/key personnel in multiple locations in the proposal.

18 Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division Senior/key personnel with professional appointments should be required to identify past domestic and foreign appointments as well as current. Recommendation: A set time frame for disclosure could be considered, or all past appointments could be required to be reported.

Thank you for your comment. The Biographical Sketch Common Form and associated instructions have been modified to specify parameters regarding professional appointments. With regards to professional appointments, senior/key persons must only identify all current domestic and foreign professional appointments outside of their primary organization. The purpose of creation of a Common Form must balance the needs of the Federal Research Funding Agencies with the administrative burden associated with responding to these requirements.

19 Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division The pending support section should better define “under consideration”, which would help clarify as well as encourage full disclosures that otherwise might not have received. The sources of support section should clarify on what is meant by “internal funds” and none if such funds are derived from foreign support/donations. The Statement of Potential Overlap should be updated to clarify if it refers to any foreign or domestic pending proposal or award.

Thank you for your comment. The instructions in the Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Form have been modified to provide additional detail. The instructions also clearly outline the fact that the reporting applies to both foreign and domestic. See language for immediate reference: Identify the entity (entities) that is/provide services that is providing the in-kind contribution. Include, for example, Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, local, foreign, public, or private foundations, non-profit organizations, industrial or other commercial organizations, or internal funds allocated toward specific projects.

20 Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division Recently completed support or support that has ended from foreign and domestic sources should be required for disclosure. This disclosure would fall in line with the disclosed related research publications that are required, provides additional info on sources of funding, and indicates if research was already attempted and funded by another US agency.

The activity section labeled “Consulting that is considered part of an individual’s appointment/agreement with their home organization and consistent with the proposing organization’s ‘Outside Activities’ policies and procedures” should be updated to disallow all foreign consulting.

Thank you for your comment. As stated on the Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Form, "Current and pending (other) support information is used to assess the capacity or any conflicts of commitment that may impact the ability of the individual to carry out the research effort as proposed. The information also helps assess any potential scientific and budgetary overlap/duplication with the project being proposed." With regard to the issue of consulting, the instructions provided on the Current and Pending (Other) Support have been revised to improve clarity on what types of consulting must be reported as follows:

- Consulting activities must be disclosed under the Proposals and Active Projects Section of the form when any of the following scenarios apply:
  - the consulting activity will require the senior/key person to perform research as part of the consulting activity;
  - the consulting activity does not involve performing research, but is related to the senior/key person’s research portfolio and may have the ability to impact funding, alter time or effort commitments, or otherwise impact scientific integrity; and
  - the consulting entity has provided a contract that requires the senior/key person to conceal or withhold confidential financial or other ties between the senior/key person and the entity, irrespective of the duration of the engagement.5

- The consulting entity has provided a contract that requires the senior/key person to conceal or withhold confidential financial or other ties between the senior/key person and the entity, irrespective of the duration of the engagement.5

21 University of Tennessee When possible, simplify instructions and provide explanations/definitions at the point of entry. For instance, where “in-kind” will be entered, include hovering definition of “in-kind”.

Thank you for your comment. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Forms, we believe that language clarity, user interface, and help tools will be important components of systems development.

22 University of Tennessee Make forms/fields.

Thank you for your comment. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Forms, we believe that language clarity, user interface, and help tools will be important components of systems development.

23 University of Tennessee Include tables so that fields do not need to be manually repeated for each entry.

Thank you for your comment. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Forms, we believe that language clarity, user interface, and help tools will be important components of systems development.

24 University of Tennessee Do not require duplicate entry of information. Allow automatic generation of the Biographical Sketch and Current & Pending (Other) Support from (1) the Excel file or (2) Science.

Thank you for your comment. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Forms, we believe that language clarity, user interface, and help tools will be important components of systems development.

25 University of Tennessee Clarify to users how these forms will interact with ORCID and SciENcv.

Thank you for your comment. The long-term vision is for services like ORCID and SciENcv to integrate seamlessly with the Common Forms. At this juncture, federal research funding agencies will make decisions about the extent of integration with these services, while we continue to move towards possibilities for digital standardization.
Comments Submitted in Response to the Federal Register Version Notice Regarding Common Disclosure Forms for the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support

Please be aware that the Other Support implementation has required an enormous amount of effort both to create and maintain this document. At Mount Sinai, our primary funder is the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and so, my response is focused on the NIH.

We need clear and thorough instructions and would appreciate any extra-training materials from the Federal Funding agency as well.

Please review our FAQs on Biosketch and Other Support FAQs [https://cafm.mssm.edu/play/MSSM/ Commons/Research/GCO/NIH/Biosketch/QS_FAQs.pdf]

We currently have 82 questions and answers on the Other Support page alone. Approximately 50 of them are not responses that is part of the Other Support instructions. If the instructions were clear and thorough, we would not need to ask so many FAQs to clarify. Clear and thorough instructions are necessary for such a complex document. For example, there should either be definitions of basic terms in the Other Support instructions document itself or links to them in the relevant source documentation. What are Projects? Proposals? What are in-kind Contributions? Now do the NIH define Gifts? The NIH requests information on person-month effort for each project but how do we calculate that? Is it six months in time and active at the moment we submit? Is that the JIT grant starts on a certain date and the NIH would like the proposed efforts starting on that date? We have also created training sessions to educate our research community on Other Support. It is my understanding there is no comparable federal training. It would be very helpful to have a training session like GCO-04 reviewing the basics of preparing the page.

GCO-01: Basics of Preparing an NIH Other Support (OS) Page
GCO-02: Collecting Information for the NIH Other Support (OS) Page
GCO-03: Using Mount Sinai’s Other Support Template
GCO-04: Upcoming Changes to the NIH Biosketch and Other Support Page (Slide Set)
For applications due on or after May 25, 2021 Video (last updated 5/5/2021) [Slide Set] (last updated: 8/4/2021)

Thank you for your comment. The instructions for the Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Form have been modified to change "committed" to "devoted".

-Person-Month(s) Per Year Committed to the Project: This important field needs clarification. The field sub-heading refers to "committed" effort while the instructions ask for "how much time the individual expects to carry out the research proposed. It is incumbent on each Federal Research Funding Agency to issue guidance regarding any specific limitations to the number

Statement of Potential Overlap: I see the advice to enter "N/A" if there is no potential overlap instead of categorically stating "none." N/A suggests a field that can be omitted as opposed to a response that asserts a negative status. Suggest that "None" be used when an investigator has no potential overlap as opposed to "N/A.

Thank you for your comments. We concur with your recommendation and the instructions have been modified to address the issue.

Statement of Potential Overlap: Needed clearly worded guidance that assists investigators in understanding what the agency wants here as opposed to inviting generic statements. There are two key areas that should be addressed:

(a) Since the majority of pending applications are unknown in terms of possible funding status, what is the agency reasonably looking for when it comes to commitment overlap? There is nothing wrong or problematic with a given investigator having, for example, a total of 24 person-months of commitments on pending proposals. It's only when a proposal becomes an award that effort cannot exceed 12 person months. Commitment overlap, therefore, should be measured by consideration of all active projects plus any pending projects for which funding is imminent, such as in a JIT stage. Pending applications where funding likelihood is unknown are not a factor in describing potential commitment overlap. The proposal or progress report for which the other support is being submitted. We have seen a considerable uptick in investigators providing unfriendly, generic statements, such as "if all pending proposals are awarded, adjustments in effort will be made to assure no over-commitment," because they do not understand what the agencies are asking for in this section. I'm guessing that it is not broad general statements that can be copied and pasted into all other support.

(b) Out-year commitments on active grants can only be represented on the other support as the originally planned commitment. Therefore it is possible that an agency adds up a future year's effort it will exceed 12 person months. This should not be an issue for agency review of the current state of other support. Until a future year becomes a current year and the investigator knows what adjustments from investigators and institutions that cannot be reasonably known. Again, most awards and agencies allow for fluctuation of effort based on the actual needs of a given project.

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The Products section has a lengthy list of products but doesn't state how these are to be organized/presented nor whether there remains a page limit to the overall bi sketch. There is no guidance for an investigator to know how to prepare this section.

Thank you for your comment. The listing of products should be organized by the senior/key person in a way that best demonstrates their ability to carry out the research proposed. It is incumbent on each Federal Research Funding Agency to issue guidance regarding any specific limitations to the number of products permitted.

The Products section includes "website(s) and other internet cites." URLs have historically been disallowed except when linking to Federal sources, such as the list to own publications. URLs have also been historically disallowed because of security issues, cookies, and other tracking methods that could reveal agency visits and even the identity of agency reviewers of an application. Is this no longer a concern?

Thank you for your comments. Ultimately, decisions regarding conflicts of commitment only can be made once the applicant has provided a thorough picture of future possibilities for conflicts. We recommend that applicants provide information on all award applications that are pending so that Federal Research Funding Agencies can make informed decisions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Department of Homeland Security</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Michael Ferguson (submitting as an individual)</td>
<td>Certification: what type of signature is acceptable, e.g., electronic only and verifiable by the institution, as opposed to a wet, a stamp, or a drooped image of an investigator's signature. Recommendation: Needs further guidance about what type of signature is acceptable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>Department of Homeland Security: Needs additional detail for the type of signature acceptable, and clarification when these are not included. The current format assumes an electronic signature is acceptable.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Research Laboratory of Electronics</td>
<td>Proposes Current and Pending funding for Ph.D. and I have a question about the Total Award Amount. Is it possible on the form to add clarification on what we should put here? Is it the total anticipated award amount or total obligated funds? Should we put the total amount for the project or just the portion that will go to the FR for which we are reporting?</td>
<td>Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Research Laboratory of Electronics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>With the information currently available from agencies, EU believes that it is difficult to comment on whether the collected information is “necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency” and has “practical utility,” since the goal of these common forms is to use them across multiple federal agencies and current practice shows federal agencies using disclosure information in a multitude of ways. While the instructions for both forms contain a general purpose statement, this is too high level to make utility determinations. The disclosure requirements outlined in “73FR-3533 Guidance for Final and Post-Award Disclosures Regarding the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support” dated Sept. 1, 2022, disclosure requirements outline a good start to the harmonization goal for disclosure requirements; however, we would request adding resources to help investigators better understand agency expectations and use. Our proposed additions include: examples/case studies for required disclosures, definitions of terms used in the forms and the disclosure requirements outline, and agencies-specific details on the use/necessity of the required information.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>We would also like to comment on the accuracy of the burden estimate of one hour to complete a checklist and one hour to complete a CPS. Based on current activity, it takes significantly longer than one hour to initially complete a checklist and current and pending/support documents. In that case, there is no indication that the time commitment would be reduced in the newly proposed forms. A discussion with the proposed burden study is necessary. It is important that the requirement for the Common Form is not at odds with the requirements of the other federal agencies.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>The overall CPS format raises concern because it assumes all activities can be reported in a project-based format, but many activities cannot, including in-kind commitment and sponsored travel and startup companies based on non-organization/lessor. In other words, it assumes access to certain information on in-kind contributions.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>CFDA instructions define “Funding” as “Funding—any proposal currently under consideration for funding (including this proposal) from whatever source irrespective of whether such support is provided through the proposing organization or is provided directly to the individual.” This instruction fails to realize that the funding is also required at time of progress report, for which “this proposal” will no longer be pending. Please include instructions on how to format the form for submission with progress reports or provide a process to only update submissions during progress report submission.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>Please clarify the requirement under “Total Award Amount” that requests: “If the support is in a foreign country's currency, convert to US dollars at time of submission.” Does this indicate the expectation that the value of pending proposals submitted in foreign currency should be recalculated at time of CPS submission or is the use of USD that was calculated at time of that proposal's submission compliant?</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>CPS-in-kind contributions. Disclosure requirements are still unclear for in-kind contributions. According to 42 U.S.C. §§ 6605 and 6606 of the CPS instructions, disclosures should include in-kind contributions requiring a commitment of time and directly supporting the individual's research and development efforts, but page 4 of the CPS instructions state to disclose all in-kind contributions related to current and pending support.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>Please clarify if the requirement to report in-kind contributions that have an associated commitment of time on the part of the senior/key person/PI if the requirement is to report all in-kind contributions that directly support the senior/key person's research and development efforts regardless of time commitment. The disclosure requirements outline is unclear as to report on in-kind commitments as an associated time commitment. If the requirement is truly to report all in-kind commitments that directly support senior/key person's research and development efforts, this list could be extensive and contain many entities that are under the $50,000/threshold considered “significant” for financial conflict of interest (42 CFR 600.20). Additionally, as noted above, it is not clear how this data would be useful for agencies.</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
University of Kansas

The Bio Sketch Instructions do not address page limits, and the CPS Instructions specify there is no page limit. Recommendation: Please clarify if there is a page limit, as this could impact the number of products to be included in the form.

Thank you for your comment. Contributions of senior/key personnel must be reported in the in-kind section.

University of Kansas

The second paragraph of the bio sketch instructions state “… approved by the Federal research funding agency who contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of a research and development project proposed to be carried out with a research and development award.” KU’s understanding was that these forms would be required for all federal assistance agreements, even those for training. The wording in this specific sentence could be interpreted to indicate that this form is not required for all assistance agreements.

Thank you for your comment. The requirements apply to all Federal research and development financial assistance. Federal financial assistance that is outside the scope of research and development may be subject to other provisions, but not NSF-33.

University of California, Los Angeles

While in principle we support the requirement for PIs to self-certify that the information provided in disclosure forms is complete and accurate, we question the practical utility of requiring separate signatures on both the Biosketch and CPS documents for all PIs and senior key personnel. We believe one certification covering all documents would serve the same purpose and reduce the burden.

Thank you for your comment. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Forms, we believe that language clarity, user interface, and help tools will be important components of systems development.

University of California, Los Angeles

The Certification statement on both forms also raises concerns and questions. "When the individual signs the certification on behalf of themselves, they are certifying that the information is current, accurate, and complete. This includes, but is not limited to, information related to domestic and foreign appointments and positions. Misrepresentations and/or omissions may be subject to prosecution and liability pursuant to, but not limited to, 18 U.S.C. §§ 287, 3001, 1011 and 31 U.S.C. §§ 3773-3773 and 1802” could be interpreted to allow delegation of signatures. Please consider revising this statement to make it clear that each senior/key personnel must sign their own form.

Thank you for your comment. Contributions of senior/key personnel must be reported in the in-kind section.

University of California, Los Angeles

In contrast, there is significant additional burden associated with more frequent reporting such as the DOE’s requirement that disclosures be updated within 30 days of any change. This certification does not address what type of signature (flattened electronic, wet, etc.) would be acceptable. While this might be intentional to allow for agencies to determine this, inconsistency in certification requirements can lead to lack of clarity and unintentional errors, so we would ask that the certification type be determined and made consistent.

Thank you for your comment. Continued diligence and coordination will be necessary as the forms are implemented. OSTP will continue to ensure this coordination through the Research Security Subcommittee.

University of California, Los Angeles

While in principle we support the requirement for PIs to self-certify that the information provided in disclosure forms is complete and accurate, we question the practical utility of requiring separate signatures on both the Biosketch and Current and Pending Support (CPS) documents for all PIs and senior key personnel. We believe one certification covering all documents would serve the same purpose and reduce the burden.

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Thank you for your comment. Contributions of senior/key personnel must be reported in the in-kind section.
The Federal Notice estimates burden time as 1 hour for the Biographical Sketch and 1 hour for the CPS. We strongly disagree with these estimates. Anecdotal feedback from researchers, department personnel, and research administrators suggests that it takes 2-3 hours to create and edit each of these documents. To the extent that agency-specific variations are permitted to the ‘common’ form, this burden will only increase.

We also strongly support the recommendation from COGR that OSTP only permits agency specific changes to be requested during a set annual timeframe that is applied to all agencies simultaneously.

Techniques are readily available.

The burden of collecting information will be greatly reduced if the new forms are required only after appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection methods. The lack of automated solutions places the data collection burden squarely with institutions without giving us sufficient lead time to respond to these changes.

We strongly urge the roll out of the common disclosure forms be delayed until such time, as federal agency proposal and award information can be feed into SciENcv or ORCID. This, coupled with the ability to collect electronic signatures in SciENcv, would greatly reduce administrative burden. As it stands, with a January 2023 manual roll out of the forms, we will have insufficient lead time to appropriately train PIs, departmental support staff and central research administrators. The lack of automated solutions places the data collection burden squarely with institutions without giving us sufficient lead time to respond to the new requirements. The burden of collecting information will be greatly reduced if the new forms are required only after appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques are readily available.

Timing of the rollout.

We believe that the proposed forms will require substantial rework by the NIH-funded researchers in particular (the proposed common forms more closely align with current NSF requirements than NIH). We understand the NIH intends to roll the manual version of these forms out in January 2023, at the same time as the new NIH Data Management Sharing requirements become effective. This will create significant administrative burden on researchers, departmental and central administrators.

We are concerned about how far in advance the final forms will be shared before we are required to implement them. Comments are required by October 31st, and there will need to be sufficient time to review feedback. However, we understand the NIH and NSF intend to issue the updated final forms in January 2023. This is insufficient lead time for institutions to support a successful roll out. We need time to update our processes to support the generation of accurate and timely data.

As noted previously, it will limit our ability to review and train on the new requirements. This is compounded by the lack of adequate technological tools currently available (e.g. SciENcv).
Conversations with AAAMC constituents flagged concerns that the estimate of time for completing both the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending (Other) Support form as set forth in the Federal Register did not reflect the actual effort or time commitment required of researchers. While NSF has estimated that it would take one hour to complete both the Biographical Sketch and form, input from AAAMC constituents conveyed that it can take up to three hours to complete a Biographical Sketch for the first time (with less than an hour to update it).

Similarly, the Current and Pending (Other) Support form was reported to take over an hour to complete. Investigators also noted that the estimates should be expanded to account for the additional time needed when applying to or receiving funding from multiple federal agencies.

Institutions, to develop more accurate burden estimates. This could be implemented through engagement with the Federal Demonstration Partnership and other related organizations.

With regard to administrative burden, the Federal Register Notice estimates a one-hour burden to complete the CP form. AIRI contends that this is an underestimate of the time required to complete the CPS form, given the complexity of the disclosure requirements and the need to continually monitor and update the list of projects/proposals and their corresponding details. In addition, administrative burden will likely be significantly increased at smaller research institutions, independent research institutions, and academic societies, and organizations, for reporting effort around clinical research, or when storing confidential data. Finally, constantly changing requirements present one of the biggest challenges—each time a government agency changes a form or requests unique information, it becomes increasingly difficult to automate a system to collect these data points and the burden subsequently increases.

As SciENcv that link to existing biosketch forms are compatible with the common disclosure forms.

The system was developed at the request of an Institute of Medicine (now National Academies) workgroup to fill an unmet need to reuse disclosure data for multiple purposes and for institutions to link existing systems through public APIs. Already in use by many journals, academic societies, and organizations, Convey can collect and store any of the requested information and can be adapted to the disclosure needs of the receiving organization, a key point when agencies may require additional data beyond the common elements. Importantly, Convey can also connect disclosure information to digital persistent identifiers, through its integration with the ORCID iD. The AAAMC would like to continue this discussion, as the implementation of ORCID iD moves forward.

Although the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support forms do not specify a process for correcting unintentional errors or inconsistencies, this is an important issue for researchers to understand. NSTC should ensure that once these forms are implemented, researchers have the resources necessary to accurately complete the forms, including clear guidance and instructions. We would further suggest refinement to these sections could create greater congruency with the section titled “Travel supported/paid by external entity for research activities with associated time commitment.” If the text is adjusted in similar way.

Thank you for your comment. The proposed burden assessment will be revised based on feedback received.

Comments Submitted in Response to the Federal Register Version Notice Regarding Common Disclosure Forms for the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support

Number | Comment Source | Submitted Comment | Response
--- | --- | --- | ---
58 | California State University, Pomona | The proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency and will have a practical utility, in investigation instances and for agency internal consideration as well as assessment of COI. There is a burden associated with the collection of the proposed information, more so if it is not organized in a way that can serve other purposes (across the board post award management, research training/assessment requirements). Incorporating these requirements in current grant proposal submissions and online platforms that integrate with current federal agency submission platforms. In order to reduce burden of the collection of this information agencies must set clear expectations for institutional officials and require these are incorporated into currently established policies and procedures or not doing so will allow unintended flexibilities in applicability. | Thank you for your comment. We continue to work across the Federal Research Funding Agencies to ensure that these new harmonized data elements and instructions are integrated with all available reporting platforms and that they are integrated into agency policies and procedures. |
60 | Association of American Medical Colleges | We would further suggest refinement to these sections could create greater congruency with the section titled “Travel supported/paid by external entity for research activities with associated time commitment.” If the text is adjusted in similar way. | Thank you for your comment. This comment, however, is unclear and therefore cannot be addressed at this time. |
62 | Association of American Medical Colleges | Conversations with AAAMC constituents flagged concerns that the estimate of time for completing both the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending (Other) Support form as set forth in the Federal Register did not reflect the actual effort or time commitment required of researchers. While NSF has estimated that it would take one hour to complete both the Biographical Sketch and form, input from AAAMC constituents conveyed that it can take up to three hours to complete a Biographical Sketch for the first time (with less than an hour to update it). Similarly, the Current and Pending (Other) Support form was reported to take over an hour to complete. Investigators also noted that the estimates should be expanded to account for the additional time needed when applying to or receiving funding from multiple federal agencies. | Thank you for your comment. OSTP will continue to work across the Federal Research Funding Agencies to ensure that these new harmonized data elements and instructions are integrated with all available reporting platforms and that they are integrated into agency policies and procedures. |
43 | Association of Independent Research Institutions | AIRI takes seriously the need to ensure proper stewardship of federal funds through transparent reporting of other sources of research support. The Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPS) form requires, for each project/proposal listed, reporting of “the total award amount for the entire period of performance, including indirect costs.” Direct costs are the best reflection of the research dollars available to an institution to conduct project research efforts. Indirect costs are often used as the cornerstone for assessing an individual’s research support, the CPS form disservices investigators from independent research institutions, which often have higher facilities and administrative (F&A) rates due to their unique business model and emphasis on federal funding, relative to universities and other granting entities within the NIH and NSF ecosystems. Recommendation: We urge OSTP to allow institutions to report the breakdowns of direct and indirect costs for each project/proposal on the CPS form. This simple modification will improve the clarity and utility of funding information as it relates to current and pending support and reduces unintentional bias against research institutions with higher F&A rates. | Thank you for your comment. The proposed burden assessment will be revised based on feedback received. |
64 | Association of Independent Research Institutions | With regard to administrative burden, the Federal Register Notice estimates a one-hour burden to complete the CP form. AIRI contends that this is an underestimation of the time required to complete the CPS form, given the complexity of the disclosure requirements and the need to continually monitor and update the list of projects/proposals and their corresponding details. In addition, administrative burden will likely be significantly increased at smaller research institutions, research institutions, and academic societies and organizations, for reporting effort around clinical research, or when storing confidential data. Finally, constantly changing requirements present one of the biggest challenges—each time a government agency changes a form or requests unique information, it becomes increasingly difficult to automate a system to collect these data points and the burden subsequently increases. This could be implemented through engagement with the Federal Demonstration Partnership and other related organizations. | Thank you for your comment. The amount to be disclosed is inclusive of both direct and indirect costs. |
65 | American Physiological Society | The requirements outlined on the common Biographical Sketch form closely recapitulate the NSF and NIH forms that researchers are already familiar with, making the transition to the new form easier. Recommendation: With the need to have more clarity on which persistent identifiers (PIs) are accepted. Specifically, will an ORCID ID be required, or may researchers use other forms of PIDs such as OpenID or ISNI? The form should clearly specify what is required for a valid PID. | Thank you for your comment. It will be incumbent on Federal Research Funding Agencies to include any relevant guidance on use of persistent identifiers in their implementation guidance on use of these Common Forms. |
66 | AMERICAN PHYSIOLOGICAL SOCIETY | Although the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support forms do not specify a process for correcting unintentional errors or inconsistencies, this is an important issue for researchers to understand. NSTC should ensure that once these forms are implemented, researchers have the resources necessary to accurately complete the forms, including clear guidance and instructions. | Thank you for your comment. The Implementation Guidance from OSTP will address the flexibility of Federal Research Funding Agencies to provide additional guidance on use of the Common Forms. Specific questions regarding each of the Common Forms will be addressed by NSF. |
67 | American Physiological Society | MPS is supportive of efforts to reduce administrative burden for researchers, and the creation of common disclosure forms for use across different agencies is a positive step toward that goal. Once these forms are finalized, NSTC should direct agencies to use them in their final format, and not to create any additional agency specific requirements, restrictions, or extra sections. NSTC should work with participating agencies to ensure that the format and use of these forms are consistent across all agencies so as to minimize confusion and maintain clear standards for researchers. Finally, NSTC should ensure that tools such as SciENcv that link to existing biosketch forms are compatible with the common disclosure forms. | Thank you for your comments. As the Implementation Guidance states, any proposed changes or modifications to forms will be required to be submitted to the NSTC subcommittee for review and veto. At this point, agencies are bound by statute to include additional information. If the reasoning for a modification is not statutory, it will be considered in greater depth. The goal is to ensure the highest level of standardization possible across federal agencies, and to encourage Federal agencies to employ technological tools that lower burden for researchers. |
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td>U-M supports the common themes that the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) has provided in its response to the request for comments on this topic. We look forward to further clarification being released. We appreciate your continued partnership.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Association of American Universities; Association of American Medical Colleges; Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, COGR</td>
<td>In addition to these high-level comments, we also support the more detailed comments submitted by our colleagues at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Limit Agency Variation in Required Disclosure Data Elements and Instructions. The request for comments notes “agencies may develop agency- or program-specific data elements and instructions, if necessary, to meet programmatic requirements, although agencies will be instructed to minimize the degree to which they supplement the common forms.” While we appreciate the request that agencies minimize changes or additions to the data elements included in the common disclosure form, we urge that these common disclosure forms and instructions have limited variance among agencies. We are sure that the federal research agencies not use this common disclosure form as a mere “floor” to which agencies are expected to add additional requirements. The allowances for such additions and inconsistencies in reporting formats across agencies will only create confusion and place increased and unnecessary compliance burdens on both researchers and institutions. Each additional, single-agency request for a piece of information or a unique format in which that information must be provided increases the burdens on researchers and institutions and undermines the harmonization efforts that OSTP has worked hard to accomplish with this common form. Recommendation: Therefore, we recommend that any agency-specific departures from a final version of the common disclosure form be accompanied by a publication of a justification of the necessity of the additional information or a modification to the form in which that information should be provided.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. As the Implementation Guidance states, any proposed changes or modifications to forms will be required to be submitted to the NSTC subcommittee for review and vetting. At points, agencies are bound by statute to include additional information. If the reasoning for a modification is not statutory, it will be scrutinized in greater depth. The goal is to ensure the highest level of standardization across federal agencies, and to encourage federal agencies to employ technological tools that lower burden for researchers.</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>American Medical Colleges; Universities; Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities; COGR</td>
<td>The request for comments notes “agencies may develop agency- or program-specific data elements and instructions, if necessary, to meet programmatic requirements, although agencies will be instructed to minimize the degree to which they supplement the common forms.” While we appreciate the request that agencies minimize changes or additions to the data elements included in the common disclosure form, we urge that these common disclosure forms and instructions have limited variance among agencies. We are sure that the federal research agencies not use this common disclosure form as a mere “floor” to which agencies are expected to add additional requirements. The allowances for such additions and inconsistencies in reporting formats across agencies will only create confusion and place increased and unnecessary compliance burdens on both researchers and institutions. Each additional, single-agency request for a piece of information or a unique format in which that information must be provided increases the burdens on researchers and institutions and undermines the harmonization efforts that OSTP has worked hard to accomplish with this common form. Recommendation: Therefore, we recommend that any agency-specific departures from a final version of the common disclosure form be accompanied by a publication of a justification of the necessity of the additional information or a modification to the form in which that information should be provided.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. As the Implementation Guidance states, any proposed changes or modifications to forms will be required to be submitted to the NSTC subcommittee for review and vetting. At points, agencies are bound by statute to include additional information. If the reasoning for a modification is not statutory, it will be scrutinized in greater depth. The goal is to ensure the highest level of standardization across federal agencies, and to encourage federal agencies to employ technological tools that lower burden for researchers.</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>Association of American Universities; Association of American Medical Colleges; Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, COGR</td>
<td>In addition to these high-level comments, we also support the more detailed comments submitted by our colleagues at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Ensure a Transparent and Uniform Process for Upgrading the Common Forms. Our associations request clarification on the process for future modifications to the common disclosure form whether through government-wide announcements or by individual agencies, noting that the NSF states “modification and/or supplementation of these common forms will require clearance by OMB/OIRA under the PRA process.” It is important to provide transparency on the factors considered to determine the utility of the requested information and how it meets the programmatic requirements for the agency. Currently agencies can update their forms at any time. Establishing a more consistent and uniform frequency will help the research community better manage expectations of when they can expect updates, develop systems and processes to better adhere to reporting requirements, limit potential reporting errors that sound inadvertent from such changes, and reduce the administrative burden on institutions and individuals completing disclosure forms for multiple federal agencies. We also ask that OSTP establish a clear and consistent expectation on how often the researchers should update the information they provide to agencies to meet disclosure requirements. Currently, it differs across agencies, with some requesting at the time of application, just-in-time, at the time of award, annually, or within 30-60 days of a change (or designated by the program officer). The inconsistency across agencies poses a challenge for researchers to effectively manage requirements and increases the administrative burden without sound reasoning for the frequency of updates. Recommendation: Our associations request clarification on the process for future modifications to the common disclosure form whether through government-wide announcements or by individual agencies. Additionally we ask that the federal government establish a clear and consistent frequency on how often OSTP and the federal research agencies will expect to issue updates to the forms.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. As the Implementation Guidance states, any proposed changes or modifications to forms will be required to be submitted to the NSTC subcommittee for review and vetting. At points, agencies are bound by statute to include additional information. If the reasoning for a modification is not statutory, it will be scrutinized in greater depth. The goal is to ensure the highest level of standardization across federal agencies, and to encourage federal agencies to employ technological tools that lower burden for researchers. The NSTC Research Security Subcommittee takes the issue of violations and penalties very seriously.</td>
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<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Association of American Universities; Association of American Medical Colleges; Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, COGR</td>
<td>In addition to these high-level comments, we also support the more detailed comments submitted by our colleagues at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Clarity Definitions To Facilitate Compliance is creating a common disclosure form, we ask that the NSTC, working with the NSF and NIH, further clarify specific definitions relating to the types of information that must be reported, and ensure these definitions are consistently followed across the research agencies for a clear and common interpretation. Currently there is continuing confusion on the specific meaning of some key terms where disclosure is required. These include terms such as “consulting” and “in-kind contributions.” The definitions for these and other important terms, such as “key/senior personnel,” should be clarified with qualifiers and examples and made consistent across the agencies. For example, stating that senior/key personnel on P/FIDs across the various agencies. In addition to defining terms, we ask that the NSTC include qualifiers and provide examples to assist researchers in understanding what is required to disclose. For more specific terms and areas that need clearer definitions and explanations, we call your specific attention to the separate comments submitted by the COGR.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. With regard to the issue of appointments, the 16PM-33 Definitions Appendix has been revised to provide specific definitions for institutional, Professional and Academic Positions and Appointments. Additional information has been added to the Current and Pending (Other) Support section that deals with in-kind contributions, both in terms of descriptions as well as the category of information requested. It is not possible, however to develop a one-size fits all definition of in-kind contributions given the variance in agency missions. The consulting activities provided on the Current and Pending (Other) Support have been revised to improve clarity on what types of consulting must be reported as follows: Consulting activities must be disclosed under the Proposals and Active Projects section of the form when any of the following occur (or apply): consulting activity will require the senior/key person to perform research as part of the consulting activity; consulting activity does not involve performing research, but is related to the senior/key person’s research portfolio and may have the ability to impact funding, alter time or effort commitments, or otherwise impact scientific integrity; and consulting activity has provided a contract that requires the senior/key person to consult or provide confidential financial or other ties between the senior/key person and the entity, irrespective of the duration of the engagement.”</td>
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As much as a researcher will try to be accurate with a standardized form, it will never be complete. A researcher or a group of researchers will be vulnerable to selective or arbitrary allegations of violation when there is no historical data or a measurable benchmark on the magnitude of past and existing cases, investigations, or allegations, as well as their current state and disposition at the agency and aggregate levels.

Recommendation 1: Clearly define "in-kind support" and clarify what is included in the definition. Federal agencies should define clearly "in-kind support" and restrict what falls in this category to ensure that scientists are not spending hundreds of hours attempting to track down the origins and value of all the equipment and supplies in their labs.

As the guidance is currently written, "in-kind support" includes every piece of equipment and all supplies. It is not feasible for PIs to document and estimate the cost of each item in a single form. According to this guidance, every single plunger, cell line, set of pipets, microfuge, etc. would need to be documented, resulting in hundreds of hours of administrative labor. This type of information has no bearing on the quality of a research project. In addition, principal investigators cannot estimate the financial value of everything in their laboratory.

Recommendation 1: The section that explains "person-month(s) per year committed to the project" is unclear as written. Instead of aligning the person-months to the budget period, this should be changed to ask for the months during that budget period.

Recommendation 3: Provide examples, including completed forms with references to types of support to give clear guidance to investigators.

Evidence-based policymaking and transparency are critically important in our democracy, re-earn public trust, and heal the Asian American community. However, they are still significantly inadequate in the current implementation of NSPM-33.

Recommendation 2: Federal agencies to recognize that emphasis on compliance is far less productive and effective than building partnership. There has been serious loss of public trust and confidence in recent years due to both perceived and factual profiling and discrimination against scientists and researchers of Asian descent, especially those of Chinese origin.

While it is minimally necessary to create consistency within the federal government, fear and chilling effects will continue if there is no commitment and clarity to prevent misuse or abuse of power by law enforcement and grant-making agencies. Evidence-based policymaking and transparency are critically important in our democracy, re-earn public trust, and heal the Asian American community. However, they are still significantly inadequate in the current implementation of NSPM-33.

Recommendation 1: Your comment regarding the use of semi-automated systems is appreciated. Federal Research Funding Agency policies will determine the extent to which the use of semi-automated systems is permissible. The common standards will ensure that all Federal science funding agencies are using the same formats to reduce confusion and burden; in the future, we will work towards the possibility of streamlined technologies to support inputs into the common formats.

Recommendation 2: Federal research funding agencies will include guidance on whether there are any limitations on the number of products that may be included in the products section of the Biographical Sketch.
The University of Pennsylvania (实干), like many other institutions, has proactively developed tools to assist our research community in accurately reporting the required information for Other/Current and Pending Support. At AP, this included working with a third-party vendor to create a system that aggregates information about the researcher’s active consulting to form a single dashboard that provides accurate, up-to-date information (including amount of effort) for inclusion in the Other Support Form. The tool has been key to our ability to ensure compliance with the reporting requirements for Other Support.

The required use of SciNet as the only acceptable system for the preparation of Current and Pending (Other) Support forms will require manual entry of numerous data fields and introduce the possibility of user error when transcribing information from our existing tool into the SciNet system. We will increase the burden on our research community, both for investigators re-entering data from existing software tools and for research administrators who must review and certify the accuracy of such reports.

An API directly into SciNet for the Current and Pending (Other) Support information would allow institutions to send accurate data that is sourced from existing systems of record and researcher-entered data that has been reviewed within the institution’s existing dashboard tool directly into SciNet. An API would ensure higher levels of accuracy in meeting federal requirements for transparency of Other Support provided by investigators, allowing agencies to make better informed funding decisions.

We encourage NSF to ensure that such APIs are available prior to the October 2023 effective date for the required use of SciNet for Other Support reporting. If it is not feasible for an API to be ready by the October 2023 deadline, the option for users to upload a data file (e.g., csv) or another file format template to populate SciNet would be extremely helpful.

Thank you for your comments. As new systems are developed to support electronic development of the Common Form, usability will be an important component of new systems development.

The page-view Disclosure Table is confusing and thus it does not meet the first “Objective” of the Guidance for Implementing NSPM-33 on National Security Strategy for the US Government – Supported Research and Development (NSPM33 Guidance), which reads: “Provide clarity regarding disclosure requirements…” (page 20). Effective June 1, 2023, disclosure table includes descriptions of activities that are unclear, in some cases, contradictory. For example, one entry in the “Type of Activity” column states that, “Consulting that is considered part of an individual’s appointment/arrangement with their home organization and consistent with the proposing organization’s ‘Outside Activities’ policies and procedures” does not need to be disclosed. We are unclear how consulting could be both part of an individual’s appointment and subject to an Outside Activity policy simultaneously. Furthermore, while this example states that consulting that does not require disclosure, a prior entry in the “Type of Activity” column implies that consulting does require disclosure. That entry reads, “All projects (including this project) currently under consideration from whatever source, and all ongoing projects, irrespective of whether support is provided through the proposing organization, another organization or directly to the individual and regardless of whether or not they have monetary value” (emphasis in original) must be disclosed in the statement of Current and Pending Support.

Currently there is substantial confusion about the need to disclose consulting activity and much of this confusion stems from the table entitled Pre- and Post-award Disclosure Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support. The Federal Register notice includes a link to this table, in the document titled Common Current and Pending (Other) Support Form, and the table is included in this respect for comment. Before the forms can be reviewed, we believe that it is essential to address the substance of the disclosure requirements. Recommendation: If the full-page Disclosure Table dated September 1, 2022 (“Disclosure Table”) is reviewed extensively, become the official multi-agency policy on disclosure requirements, we strongly encourage that it is posted as a stand-alone Request for Comments in the Federal Register.

Thank you for your comments. Multiple research funding agencies have seen a significant reduction in questions regarding the types of activities to be reported upon issuance of the Disclosure Tables. The tables, however, will be modified to address changes made as a result of the public comment process. With regard to consulting, the consulting instructions provided on the Current and Pending (Other) Support have been revised to include clarity on what types of consulting must be reported as follows:

- Consulting activities must be disclosed under the Proposals and Active Projects Section of the form when any of the following scenarios apply:
  - Consulting activity will require the senior/key person to perform research as part of the consulting activity;
  - Consulting activity does not involve performing research, but is related to the senior/key person’s research portfolio and may have the ability to impact funding, alter time or effort commitments, or otherwise impact scientific integrity; and
  - Consulting entity has provided a contract that requires the senior/key person to confer or withhold confidential information or other ties between the senior/key person and the entity, irrespective of the duration of the engagement.

Thank you for your comment. As the Implementation Guidance states, any proposed changes or modifications to forms will be required to be submitted to the NSTC Subcommittee for review and approval. As points, agencies are bound by statute to include additional information. If the reasoning for a modification is not statutory, it will be scrutinized in greater depth. The goal is to ensure the highest level of standardization possible across federal agencies, and to encourage federal agencies to employ technological tools that lower burden for researchers.

In her talk to the American Association for the Advancement of Science on October 21, 2022, Director Dr. Arati Prabhakar cited the integrated use of data science and behavioral science to address inequity in science and technology. However, there has been little or no clarification about privacy, data quality, bias in algorithms, and unintended consequences that may have disparate impact and serious civil rights ramifications.

Thank you for your comment. The Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights addresses many of the issues that are cited, including privacy, data quality, and unintended consequences.

We recommend the following language for consideration as an alternative to the consulting entries above: “Consulting that involves any of the following must be disclosed in the statement of Current and Pending Support: (1) a foreign entity; (2) research; or (3) the transfer of technical information or intellectual property in the same or similar applications to the project/statement of work being proposed.”

Thank you for your comment. This suggestion is being taken very seriously by the NSTC Research Security Subcommittee.
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<td>85</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>One way to significantly reduce the burden is to recommend continued engagement with stakeholders for input throughout the review process. This would allow researchers to use the same form for federal proposals and project reports across agencies. Not only would this reduce burden but would likely reduce confusion of what needed to be disclosed, which in turn, would improve the accuracy of the information provided. If there are varying informational needs by agencies driven by statutes, there could be a customisable section of the standard form developed subject to OSTP oversight and agreement that required.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. We recommend that the NSTC Research Security continue engagement with the research community at the OSTP level, and on an individual agency by agency basis. With regard to the issue of reporting, the Current and Pending (Other) Support.</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>Please clarify, whether or not, in-kind contributions only need to be disclosed if they have a time commitment. The NSF Proposal and Pre-award Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support tab, indicates that in-kind resources only need to be disclosed if they have a time commitment. However, the instructions on the Current and Pending (Other) Support form indicates &quot;whether or not it has an associated time commitment&quot;. Also, the required fields for the in-kind section are too restrictive and confusing. For example, we do not have good examples of what is meant by &quot;time commitment&quot; for in-kind resources, such as equipment. The instructions for Person Months in the in-kind section refer to &quot;how much time the individual anticipates is necessary to complete the scope of work on the proposed project or award,&quot; which would not apply to some types of in-kind contributions. We would like to suggest capturing descriptive information on the in-kind contribution and allow for flexibility in the Person-Months and Dollar Value fields.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comments and suggestions. This feedback will be seriously considered as we continue forward in the process of adopting and implementing the Common Forms.</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>While we understand flexibility for disclosure requirements is mandated, or desirable, among the different agencies, we would like to share a few specific concerns. Allowing an agency to create variances to require additional information is understandable but drains harmonisation efforts and increases the administrative burden on researchers and institutions. To help ease this possible and unintentional administrative burden, we suggest: * any agency variations be handled through separate, agency-specific additional forms rather than new overall agency disclosure form. Such a process would allow for harmonised common forms for the Biographical Sketch and the current and pending (other) support documents, ones which are familiar to the researchers. Additionally, it would likely reduce the chance of data inaccuracies since the researcher would be customised to the common format to provide their core information, then include additional information if needed. * one central website where all approved, agency-specific additional forms are listed. * any agency variations be released on a set schedule (e.g., every six months or once a year), the schedule is standardised across all federal agencies to avoid confusion and consistent tracking. * collection of the current and pending support form should not be required across all agencies until a proposal has reached the stage of possible award avoidance, such as, for example, National Institutes of Health (NIH) pending status and/or in-process or the newly proposed National Science Foundation (NSF) process.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comments. The instructions for the Current and Pending (Other) Support Common form have been revised to state, &quot;In this section, please disclose all in-kind contributions with an estimated dollar value of $500 or more and that require a commitment of the individual’s time. An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution provided by an external entity that directly supports the individuals’ research and development efforts. In-kind contributions may include—but is not limited to—real property, laboratory space, equipment, data or data sets; supplies; other expendable property; goods and services; employees or student resources. In-kind contributions with an estimated value of less than $500 need not be reported.&quot; It is not possible, however to develop a one-size fits all definition of in-kind contributions given the variance in agency missions.</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>Appointments: We recommend definitions and associated examples for the different types of academic, professional, and institutional appointments. For example, for someone with an “honorary” appointment at a foreign university. Appointments: we suggest an example indicating if the appointment should be listed in the academic or institutional section.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. The template has been revised to remove the phrase in-kind contributions from that sections project to avoid confusion.</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>All Projects: In the section titled, “All projects,” the text includes a reference to in-kind contributions. Researchers have expressed confusion regarding this section because of the in-kind reference. If it is meant to be required that reporting in this section for research awards only, we recommend removing the in-kind text “e.g., even if the support received is an in-kind contribution such as office/labatory space...” to decrease confusion. Alternatively, a separation of in-kind text vs. other makes it easier for researchers to complete the forms successfully.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. The script has been revised to remove the phrase in-kind contributions from that sections project to avoid confusion.</td>
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<td>90</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>* In the in-kind sections, we recommend further clarification on the goals and flexibility of reporting &quot;in-kind&quot; contributions. Many in-kind contributions reflect a variety of circumstances. For example, it's easy to provide a start to end date for an in-kind postdoctoral researcher but it's not easy to list out all in-kind contribution of any or all lines, which may take place over time. Ifminated the research project develops.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. The instructions have been modified to remove the start and end date. In lieu of these data elements the template will specify &quot;in-kind&quot;.</td>
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<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>Consulting: The current text seems to assume an activity processed through any institution’s “Outside Activity” policy means the activity falls within an individual’s appointment; this text creates confusion for researchers and institutions alike. It is unclear if the information is being requested to illustrate some possible scientific overlap or other entities related to a possible conflict of commitment. While UNC does have an “Outside Activity” policy which delineates a cap on outside effort (similar to many universities), the activities approved under this &quot;Outside Activity&quot; process are considered, and treated, as external to the University and are not considered part of any individual’s institutional duties or responsibilities. For example, any executed contracts are between the individual and the external entity, the University provides no support for these contracts, the University is not a party to them, and the conducted work is not considered within the scope of the individual’s appointment. These external activities may be subject to some UNC policies, such as intellectual property or conflict of commitment, but are not a defined part of any institutional duties. It is our perception the intent of these sections is for relevant external activity information to be disclosed. However, the current text would mean nearly all that activity by researchers would not be reportable. To avoid confusion, we recommend careful consideration of the intent of these sections which currently have &quot;consulting&quot; in their description and whether the goal is capture reporting of proper professional knowledge-based external work where research, or research-like, activities are occurring and where there is a desire to create transparency into these activities. We would further suggest refinement to these sections could create greater congruency with the section titled &quot;Travel supported/paid by external entity for research activities with associated time commitment&quot; if the text is adjusted in a similar vein.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. With regard to the issue of consulting, the instructions provided on the Current and Pending (Other) Support have been revised to improve clarity on what types of consulting must be reported as follows: * Consulting activities must be disclosed under the Proposals and Active Projects Section of the form when any of the following scenarios apply: * the consulting activity will require the senior/key person to perform research as part of the consulting activity; * the consulting activity does not involve performing research, but is related to the senior/key person's research portfolio and may have the ability to impact funding, alter time or effort commitments, or otherwise impact scientific integrity; and * the consulting entity has provided a contract that requires the senior/key person to conceal or withhold confidential financial or other ties between the senior/key person and the entity, irrespective of the duration of the engagement.”</td>
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Thank you for your comment. This particular insertion to the Disclosure Table was provided by NSF and the response is as follows:

- NSF does not collect financial conflict of interest information from individuals who work at awarded organizations. NSF does require disclosure of current and pending support, including start-up companies based on non-organization licensed IP to assess capacity, duplication or overlap. Generally, IHE technology transfer offices track startup companies to license and commercialize technology developed at the university only. The intent of the CIP disclosure was not to impose undue burden by collecting information has already been reported elsewhere.

Thank you for your comment. The list of products should be organized by senior key personnel in a way that best demonstrates their ability to carry out the research proposal. Each Federal Research Funding Agency will determine the appropriate length of the products required under agency specific requirements.

Thank you for your comment. There appears to be a misunderstanding of how the OBRA/DIRA process will work for implementation of these Common Forms. One agency is responsible for completion of the PRA process, and, as such, the numbers reflected apply only to the sponsoring agency. Each Federal Research Funding Agency will be responsible for separately clearing use of the Common Forms through the OBRA/DIRA Paperwork Reduction Act process.
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<td>98</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>Harmonization/variation: As mentioned earlier, our institution believes that an effective way to reduce burden would be to standardize forms to the greatest extent possible and eliminate variation across agency requirements wherever possible. We would like to strongly encourage that agencies must be rigorously defend requested deviations from the Common Disclosure Forms and that clear standards be created to determine the rare circumstances to make deviation requests. One example of a less common disclosure requirement is to include previous support from the past five years in a Current and Pending Support form. This is required by Department of Defense, and Department of Energy may also request this information. Also, NASA currently only requires co-investigators who spend 20% or more of their time on a project to provide current and pending support. Though we cannot comment on the utility of this information, we would recommend that unusual requests such as these be discontinued. We strongly recommend that disclosure requirements be standardized across all Federal research funding agencies. The greater the harmonization across agencies in the disclosure forms, the easier it will be for institutions and investigators to submit the necessary information.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. As the implementation Guidance states, any proposed changes or modifications to forms will be required to be submitted to the NSTC subcommittee for review and vetting. At points, agencies are bound by statute to include additional information. If the reasoning for a modification is not statutory, it will be scrutinized in greater depth. The goal is to ensure the highest level of standardization possible across federal agencies, and to encourage federal agencies to employ technological tools that lower burden for researchers.</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>Defined terms: We ask that all terms be clearly defined and that a specific section of the instruction documents be devoted to definitions, not simply in footnotes. For instance, for the Biographical Sketch instructions, we ask for clarification on the difference between “position” and “appointment.” We also ask that the terms “academic”, “professional”, or “institutional” be defined. The terms are being used with a presumption that there is a collective understanding of each, but these terms can be interpreted and used in diverse ways. Clear examples of what is meant by “position”, “appointment”, “academic”, “professional”, or “institutional” would also be helpful.</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. The terminology “academic, professional, and institutional appointments” was specified in NSPM-33. In response to feedback received, definitions for each of the appointment/position categories have been added to a revised version of the Definitions Appendix in the NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance.</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>Start-up company based on organization-licensed Intellectual Property (IP): The Pre- and Post-Award Disclosures table indicates that for a “startup company based on organization-licensed Intellectual Property (IP),” disclosure is not required. Given that Bayh-Dole enables an organization to designate an assignee subject to the same provisions as the contractor, we would suggest that this Type of Activity be amended to read, “Startup company based on Intellectual Property (IP) licensed from organization or organization’s designee allowed under 37 CFR 401.14(k)(1).”</td>
<td>Thank you for your comment. We have modified the Disclosure table to address this issue as well as to incorporate other changes necessitated by revisions made to the Common Forms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>