



# NSF's Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Program

Presentation to the National Science Board  
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August, 2016



# IPA Program at NSF is Well-Established

- Authority: Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (5 U.S.C. 3371 - 3376)
- 2004 NAPA Report: “...long-standing and highly regarded practice, which has both programmatic advantages and operational challenges.”



# IPAs Provide Significant Value to NSF

- IPAs bring fresh perspectives and deep expertise that keep NSF nimble.
- Combining IPAs with experienced federal employees creates the synergy required to support fundamental research at the frontiers of science.
- IPAs enable a close connection with the community, building and nurturing trust, and serve as ambassadors.



# Performance and Accountability

- IPA performance plans and assessments
- IR/D Council
- Training and development activities for IPAs
  - NEXt program for new executives
  - Mandatory training in Merit Review Basics
  - Federal Supervision at NSF
  - IPAs take same mandatory training (COI, Privacy and Security, etc.) as federal employees



# FY 2015 Facts and Figures

- 176 IPAs
  - ~12% of NSF workforce; ~ 28% of NSF scientific staff
- IPA agreement costs: \$41.4M
  - \$5.7M above the cost if the same positions were filled by federal employees (\$35.7M)
  - Added ~2% to agency personnel costs in FY 2015 (\$247.5M for feds and IPAs)
- On average, IPA and federal program directors costs were similar
- On average, IPA executive costs were 50% higher than federal SES



## Benchmarking Use of IPAs at Other Agencies

- Compared NSF to NIH, NIST, NOAA, NASA, EPA
- Percentage of IPAs in the workforce is higher at NSF
- With exception of per diem, policies on IPA compensation are similar across the agencies
- NIH and NASA use other hiring authorities that provide higher compensation for executive positions



## Steering Committee – Review and Next Steps

- Opportunity to articulate overall use of IPAs within a strategic workforce framework
- Opportunity to identify cost savings
  - Considering impact on NSF mission accomplishment and recruitment/retention of IPAs



# Appendix for NSB members

People | Place | Technology  
Your Success is Our Success!

Administrative Services  
Human Resource Management  
Information Systems  
Chief Information Officer



# Use of IPAs/related policies at science agencies

	NIH	NASA	DOC (NIST and NOAA)	EPA	NSF
# of IPAs	78 (less than 1% of scientific workforce)	55 (less than 1% of scientific workforce)	20 at NIST, 4 at NOAA (less than 1% of scientific workforce)	1 (less than 1% of scientific workforce)	176 (28% of scientific workforce)
Use in executive positions	Generally no	Generally no	Generally no	No	Yes
Cost-sharing	Not required, but most do cost share 15-50%	Not required; most do not cost share.	Not required; many do not cost share.	Not required, but most do cost share 15-25%.	Not required, but 45% cost share
Per diem/relocation paid	Yes	Yes. Per diem limited to 2 years.	Yes, but rarely provided.	Yes. Amount and term for per diem is negotiable.	Yes. Per diem provided for full duration of assignment.
Lost consulting paid	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Salary limits/caps	No	No	No	No	No
Supplemental pay	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes



# Comparison of hiring authorities

NASA	DOC (NIST and NOAA)	EPA	NIH	NSF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>NASA Excepted (NEX) Authority</u></b> Up to 425 temporary positions. Generally, for 2-3 years, with up to 1-3 additional years. Pay up to the rate for Executive Schedule III (\$168,700).</li> <li>• <b><u>Critical Position Pay Authority</u></b> Up to \$205,700 for certain positions and to up the level of the Vice President's salary (\$230,000) for other positions.</li> </ul>	<p>None.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Special Government Employees</u></b> Can work up to 1,030 hours/year. Pay up to \$133,400.</li> <li>• <b><u>Title 42 authority</u></b> Temporary employees targeted to senior level. Capped at ~20 slots (e.g., Science Advisor, Deputy Administrator for Science). Pay range is ~\$260,000 - \$270,000 (includes benefits).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Title 42 authority</u></b> (includes 42% of researchers and clinical practitioners at NIH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Title 42 U.S.C. 209(g)</u>: Temporary post-doctorate fellows. Pay up to Executive Level IV (\$160,300).</li> <li>- <u>Title 42 U.S.C. 209(f)</u>: If term limited, pay up to Executive Level IV (\$160,300). The permanent Institute and Center Directors are hired under this authority, with recent salaries up to \$350,000.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b><u>Critical Position Pay Authority</u></b> Up to \$205,700 for certain positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>NSF Excepted Authority</u></b> Salaries up to \$170,400</li> </ul>