

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF EQUITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314**

**OECR BULLETIN NO. 23-02**

**March 9, 2023**

**ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**SUBJECT: Sexual Harassment Reporting**

The National Science Foundation is committed to promoting safe and productive working environments for NSF staff and award participants.

**Internal-Based Complaints**

The Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) receives and addresses sexual harassment complaints filed by NSF employees. Such complaints are covered under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. If you become aware of an incident of sexual harassment involving an NSF staff member or want to make a complaint, you should contact OECR immediately at [eeo@nsf.gov](mailto:eeo@nsf.gov). If you do not receive an acknowledgment from OECR staff within 48 hours, please reach out to OECR to ensure your communication was received.

**NSF Program Complaints**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance, including NSF grants and cooperative agreements. OECR is responsible for handling all Title IX discrimination complaints filed by NSF funded program participants. Any program participant seeking to report an incident of sexual harassment may do so by using the [NSF Awardee Program Complaint Form](#).

As a term and condition of NSF awards, NSF requires awardee organizations to notify NSF of any findings of sexual harassment, other forms of harassment or sexual assault regarding an NSF funded Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI, or any administrative action relating to harassment or sexual assault taken regarding a PI or co-PI, such as the placement of the PI or co-PI on administrative leave. OECR receives harassment notifications from NSF awardee organizations and coordinates review of these forms with NSF's Office of the General Counsel, the Policy Office and program staff who manage the affected NSF funding awards.

To ensure the safety of those attending NSF funded conferences, all NSF funded conferences are required to have a policy or code of conduct that addresses sexual harassment, other forms of harassment and sexual assault. The conference policy or code of conduct must include clear, accessible mechanisms to report and resolve incidents. In addition, NSF does not fund travel to conferences that do not have such a policy or code of conduct.

All NSF staff members must inform OECR immediately if they become aware of a harassment issue in an NSF-funded program, project or institution, including a complaint of sexual harassment, whether the incident occurred on campus, in the field, at a conference, at a facility or elsewhere. These incidents may be reported to [saferscience@nsf.gov](mailto:saferscience@nsf.gov). Moreover, NSF staff members are not authorized to address these issues independently or as part of the award management process. OECR is the designated office for

coordinating NSF actions to ensure awardee compliance with Title IX and related award term & conditions. As such, OECR utilizes its policies and processes to resolve these matters consistent with applicable laws, regulations, executive orders, and legal precedent. OECR may coordinate these actions with other offices across the Foundation as appropriate.

We all have a role in preventing sexual harassment, because we are all invested in achieving NSF's mission. By contributing to an NSF culture of respect and civility and knowing where and how to report incidents of sexual harassment, we can all help ensure a positive, supportive, and successful NSF.

Rhonda J. Davis  
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