Preliminary Proposal Impacts on IOS Workload and Workflow

Jane Silverthorne

BIO/IOS
Outline

• Why were changes made?
• What did we change?
• What were the impacts?
• Next steps?
Why Were Changes Made?

• **At NSF**
  – The number of proposals being submitted was increasing
  – The funding rates were decreasing
  – Workload was increasing
  – It was harder to find panel and *ad hoc* reviewers

• **In the Community**
  – PIs were writing more and more proposals to get funded
  – Reviewers were being asked to provide more and more *ad hoc* and panel reviews
IOS Proposal Submissions and Awards

![Graph showing number of projects, success rate, and awards over years from 2001 to 2011. The graph includes data for Proposals, Success Rate, and Awards, with a notable increase in proposals post-ARRA in 2009. The success rate overall shows a slight decrease over the years.](image-url)
Burden on the IOS Reviewer Community

![Graph showing the number of total, ad hoc, and panelist reviews from 2000 to 2010.](image)
FY 2012 IOS Core Program Solicitation

- IOS Solicitation: NSF 11-572
- Frequently Asked Questions: NSF 11-079
- Webinar

- Changes:
  - Preliminary proposal deadline in January
  - Binding Invite/Do Not Invite decision
  - Full proposal deadline in August
  - Funding decision in December
  - Limit of two pre-proposals per PI as PI/co-PI
~ 2,000 15-page full proposals with budgets to write and review: 14,000 ad hoc requests

Full-proposal Submission (~850)

review panels

Notification of Award/Decline

Full-proposal Review (~1050)

review panels

Notification of Award/Decline

Time to Revise

~ 550 15-page full proposals to write and review:

3500 ad hoc requests

30% invite rate

Pre-proposal submissions (1836)

~ 4-page pre-proposals to write and review (no budgets):

0 ad hoc requests

Resubmit? (~20%)
Impacts on IOS Workload and Workflow

- The workload was higher in the first six months and lower in the last six months of the year but more manageable overall.
- The changes promoted adoption of standard operating procedures and templates across IOS.
- The new workflow provided opportunities for administrative staff to learn new skills.
- Free time was created to allow planning activities.
Next Steps

• “Compliance Query” to avoid eJacket delays
  – Automated data access through eJacket is inefficient and should not be necessary.
  – Goal: 100% of NSF proposals checked for basic compliance automatically.

• Tools dissemination
  – DEB, MCB already testing
  – Centralized repository?

• Tools discovery?
  – Other Divisions?

• Staff training programs: Advanced Office© features