

NSF 99-164



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the Professional Opportunities for Women in Research and Education (POWRE) Program

Receipt Deadline: December 9, 1999, 5:00 p.m. local time

The official guidelines for submission of POWRE proposals can be found in the Professional Opportunities for Women in Research and Education (POWRE) program announcement (NSF 99-164), available from the POWRE Web page. (From the NSF home page <http://www.nsf.gov>, select "Crosscutting Programs," then "POWRE.") The questions and answers listed here are intended to be helpful supplements to that document.

The following sections of this document can be directly accessed by selecting the appropriate heading:

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1. ELIGIBILITY

Question:

If I have received funds from the Federal Government to perform research, am I still eligible?

Answer:

Yes, you may submit a POWRE proposal as long as the activities you propose do not substantially overlap with those concurrently supported through the other source(s).

Question:

I am not a U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident. May I still apply?

Answer:

No, the POWRE program opportunity is only available to U.S. citizens, nationals, and permanent residents.

Question:

My application for permanent residency is in process and will not be granted by the December 9 deadline. May I still apply?

Answer:

No. You must be a permanent resident at the time of proposal submission.

Question:

I am currently unemployed. May I apply for a POWRE grant?

Answer:

Yes. You may prepare a POWRE proposal, but it must be submitted through the academic institution with which you will work during the grant period.

Question:

Am I eligible if I work at a two-year college?

Answer:

Yes. If you hold a faculty or research-related position at a U.S. degree-granting academic institution, you are eligible to apply.

Question:

I am working on my doctorate, and will not have been awarded the Ph.D. by the December 9 deadline. May I still apply?

Answer:

For most people, the answer is no. You must have a Ph.D. or equivalent experience to be eligible to apply. To establish whether or not your professional experience is equivalent, contact the POWRE Coordinating Committee member from the NSF Directorate most closely affiliated with your discipline for an evaluation.

Question:

NSF's CAREER program is not appropriate for senior or experienced investigators. Are they eligible for this program?

Answer:

Yes, senior or experienced investigators may apply for POWRE awards.

2. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Question:

How do I decide what program to indicate on the Cover Sheet in the section marked "NSF Unit Consideration"?

Answer:

Refer to the NSF *Guide to Programs* (available on the NSF Web Site under "documents online") for descriptions of NSF's disciplinary programs. Appendix A of NSF's *Grant Proposal Guide (GPG, NSF 00-2, available under "documents online")* lists directorates, divisions, and programs that provide support. If you are unsure, you should talk with the program director of the program you think is most closely related to your research/educational goals. However, if you indicate an inappropriate program on the Cover Sheet, the POWRE Coordinating Committee will redirect the proposal to the appropriate organizational unit. NSF will make the final assignment.

Question:

What if my proposal arrives after December 9, 1999?

Answer:

Your POWRE proposal must be submitted electronically using NSF FastLane by 5:00 p.m. (your local time) on December 9, 1999. Any POWRE proposal received after the deadline will not be reviewed.

Question:

Do I need to mail a signed cover sheet to NSF?

Answer:

No, page two of the cover sheet (the certification page) should be printed and signed by the appropriate people and then scanned into the "Supplementary Docs" section of your FastLane proposal before it is submitted to NSF. Do not mail it to NSF.

Question:

I would like to submit some additional figures, graphs, and tabular materials that would exceed the project description page limits. May I submit this as an appendix?

Answer:

No. Only if you have received a written exemption from an NSF Assistant Director may appendices be included. Exemptions are seldom granted.

Question:

I want to apply for a Visiting Professor award. Can I still do that?

Answer:

You may propose to visit another institution if that is what makes the most sense for your career development and you justify it well.

Question:

I plan to visit another institution if I receive a POWRE award. Which institution — my home or my host — should submit the proposal?

Answer:

If you are not currently at an academic institution, you **MUST** apply through an academic host institution. If both home and host are academic institutions, then either your home institution or your host institution may submit the proposal. You may wish to talk with both your home and host institutions to evaluate which submission route would be better for you in terms of professional development, administrative simplicity and economy. In most cases, NSF expects submission through the home institution will be more advantageous. If you have further questions, feel free to ask one of the members of the POWRE Coordinating Committee listed in the program announcement.

Question:

I was planning to apply to POWRE for a supplement to my existing NSF grant. I do not see that listed in the examples of activities. Can I apply for one?

Answer:

No, but you may submit a POWRE proposal, if appropriate. Principal Investigators interested in supplemental funding should contact the cognizant program officer for the existing award to determine whether or not program funds might be available in the disciplinary program to support a supplemental funding request.

Question:

May I list a collaborator as a co-principal investigator on my proposal?

Answer:

No. Your project may be collaborative, but a POWRE award is intended to enable an awardee to carry out her individual career-development plan. Therefore, no co-principal investigator may be named.

Question:

May I list a collaborator as a senior associate in my POWRE budget?

Answer:

Collaborators cannot be analogous to co-PIs, and no salary support for co-investigators or other faculty members of the home or host institution may be included in the budget. With adequate justification, salary may be requested for a visiting colleague.

Question:

Even though my collaborators may not be co-investigators or request salary in my proposal, it is important for reviewers to know about my collaborators. What documentation may I submit to show the collaborative effort?

Answer:

The planned collaborative effort(s) should be described in your proposal. You may submit a short letter from each collaborator to support what you have described in the proposal. The letter(s) should be scanned into the "Supplementary Docs" section of your FastLane proposal. Do not submit any other documentation such as a biographical sketch or other NSF forms for any collaborator.

Question:

I have two great projects. May I submit one to the POWRE program and one to the regular disciplinary program?

Answer:

Yes, you may submit to both as long as the proposed activities are substantially different.

3. FASTLANE

Question:

Does a POWRE proposal have to be submitted via FastLane?

Answer:

Yes. Your POWRE proposal must be submitted electronically using FastLane. Consult with the SRO at your institution well in advance of the proposal deadline to ensure that they are able to provide the support you will need during the submission process. Direct questions concerning FastLane or problems utilizing FastLane to fastlane@nsf.gov or by phone at (703) 306-1142 or to powrefl@nsf.gov or by phone at (703) 306-1040. The proposal number assigned by FastLane **when your proposal is submitted** can be used for tracking your proposal during the review process.

Question:

I am having difficulties with FastLane. How can I get help from NSF?

Answer:

If you encounter problems when using the Proposal Preparation module in FastLane, you can reach the FastLane user-support staff by scrolling down any page and clicking on "Send Comments to NSF." Be sure to include your name and e-mail address in the appropriate boxes before clicking on the "Submit Comments" button. You can also reach the FastLane user-support staff by calling (703) 306-1142 or the Office of Integrative Activities at (703) 306-1040.

Question:

I am not registered with NSF as a PI (or my institution is not registered for FastLane). What do I need to do?

Answer:

If your institution is not a FastLane institution, your SRO needs to submit the registration form located at <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a0/about/registration.htm>. This should be done as soon as possible. A list of registered institutions is located at http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a0/fastlane_insts.htm.

If you have never submitted a proposal to NSF before, you will need to send an e-mail to your institution FastLane administrator (usually in your SRO or equivalent) at your institution with the following information: Name, Highest Degree and Year Conferred, Present Institution, Department, Street Address, City, State, Zip, Social Security Number, E-mail Address, Business Phone, and Business Fax Number.

4. DECISIONS REGARDING POWRE PROPOSALS AND FUTURE SUBMISSIONS

Question:

When will I be notified of the final decision on my POWRE proposal?

Answer:

POWRE proposals are reviewed by different panels and/or mail review held at different times across the Foundation. For this reason, award and declination letters will be issued at different times. Most applicants will be notified by June 2000. You can check the status of your POWRE proposal by accessing FastLane. If you have not received notification of a decision on your proposal by the beginning of June 2000, and your proposal status is shown as "pending" in FastLane, you may contact the program or division to which your proposal was assigned to inquire about the status. Your proposal's NSF program assignment can be found through FastLane.

Question:

If my proposal is declined and I wish to revise and resubmit, or if I wait a year to apply for the first time to POWRE, will the program still exist in future years?

Answer:

No. NSF constantly re-evaluates its programs and expects to promote the advancement of women scientists and engineers through different mechanisms after FY2000. The regular disciplinary programs will, of course, continue to welcome research and education proposals that are appropriate for their mandates.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Grantees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities, and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with federal statutes, regulations, and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF. (Some programs may have special requirements that limit eligibility.)

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the program announcement or contact the program coordinator at (703) 306-1636.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation regarding NSF programs, employment, or general information. To access NSF TDD, dial (703) 306-0090; for FIRS, 1-800-877-8339.

Privacy Act and Public Burden Statements

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as

part of the review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Reports Clearance Officer; Information Dissemination Branch; Division of Administrative Services; National Science Foundation; Arlington, VA 22230.

Year 2000 Reminder

In accordance with Important Notice No. 120 dated June 27, 1997, Subject: Year 2000 Computer Problem, NSF awardees are reminded of their responsibility to take appropriate actions to ensure that the NSF activity being supported is not adversely affected by the Year 2000 problem. Potentially affected items include: computer systems, databases, and equipment. The National Science Foundation should be notified if an awardee concludes that the Year 2000 will have a significant impact on its ability to carry out an NSF funded activity. Information concerning Year 2000 activities can be found on the NSF web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/oirm/y2k/start.htm>.

The National Science Foundation is committed to making all of the information we publish easy to understand. If you have a suggestion about how to improve the clarity of this document or other NSF-published materials, please contact us at plainlanguage@nsf.gov.

