

# Opportunities for Promoting Understanding through Synthesis (OPUS)

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## PROGRAM SOLICITATION NSF 10-557

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REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):  
NSF 08-559

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**National Science Foundation**  
Directorate for Biological Sciences  
Division of Environmental Biology

**Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

July 07, 2010

July 7, Annually Thereafter

January 07, 2011

January 7, Annually Thereafter

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

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A revised version of the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG), [NSF 11-1](#), was issued on October 1, 2010 and is effective for proposals submitted, or due, on or after January 18, 2011. Please be advised that the guidelines contained in [NSF 11-1](#) apply to proposals submitted in response to this funding opportunity. Proposers who opt to submit prior to January 18, 2011, must also follow the guidelines contained in [NSF 11-1](#).

**Cost Sharing:** The PAPPG has been revised to implement the National Science Board's recommendations regarding cost sharing. Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited. In order to assess the scope of the project, all organizational resources necessary for the project must be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal. The description should be narrative in nature and must not include any quantifiable financial information. Mandatory cost sharing will only be required when explicitly authorized by the NSF Director. See the [PAPP Guide Part I: Grant Proposal Guide \(GPG\) Chapter II.C.2.g \(xi\)](#) for further information about the implementation of these recommendations.

**Data Management Plan:** The PAPPG contains a clarification of NSF's long-standing data policy. All proposals must describe plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, or assert the absence of the need for such plans. FastLane will not permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Data Management Plan. The Data Management Plan will be reviewed as part of the intellectual merit or broader impacts of the proposal, or both, as appropriate. Links to data management requirements and plans relevant to specific Directorates, Offices, Divisions, Programs, or other NSF units are available on the NSF website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>. See [Chapter II.C.2.j](#) of the GPG for further information about the implementation of this requirement.

**Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan:** As a reminder, each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral researchers must include, as a supplementary document, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. Please be advised that if required, FastLane will not permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan. See [Chapter II.C.2.j](#) of the GPG for further information about the implementation of this requirement.

### Revision Summary

In lieu of salary, or in cases in which investigators do not need salary support to carry out the proposed synthesis, equivalent funds may be requested to support a technician or another researcher with expertise that is necessary to the synthesis but that lies beyond the investigator's training or expertise.

Investigators that receive OPUS awards are required to attend PI meetings that will be held at NSF in 2012 and 2014. Funds to cover travel to and attendance at these meetings should be included in the requested budget.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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### General Information

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#### Program Title:

Opportunities for Promoting Understanding through Synthesis (OPUS)

#### Synopsis of Program:

All four clusters within the Division of Environmental Biology ( Population and Community Ecology, Ecosystem Science, Evolutionary Processes and Systematic Biology and Biodiversity Inventories) encourage the submission of proposals aimed at synthesizing a body of related research projects conducted by a single individual or a group of investigators over an extended period. OPUS proposals will often be appropriately submitted in mid-to-late career, but will also be appropriate early enough in a career to produce unique, integrated insight useful both to the scientific community and to the development of the investigator's future work. In cases where multiple scientists have worked collaboratively, an OPUS award will provide support for collaboration on a synthesis.

**Cognizant Program Officer(s):**

- Saran Twombly, Program Director, 635N, telephone: (703) 292-8133, email: [stwombly@nsf.gov](mailto:stwombly@nsf.gov)
- Maureen Kearney, Program Director, 635, telephone: (703) 292-7187, email: [mkearney@nsf.gov](mailto:mkearney@nsf.gov)
- Susan L. Perkins, telephone: (703) 292-4821, email: [sperkins@nsf.gov](mailto:sperkins@nsf.gov)

**Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):**

- 47.074 --- Biological Sciences

## Award Information

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**Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard Grant

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 6 to 8 annually; anticipated award size is \$125,000 - \$150,000.

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$750,000 to \$1,200,000 per year, pending the availability of funds.

## Eligibility Information

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**Organization Limit:**

None Specified

**PI Limit:**

None Specified

**Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:**

None Specified

**Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:**

None Specified

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

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**A. Proposal Preparation Instructions**

- **Letters of Intent:** Not Applicable
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not Applicable
- **Full Proposals:**
  - Full Proposals submitted via FastLane: NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Part I: Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) Guidelines apply. The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg).
  - Full Proposals submitted via Grants.gov: NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov Guidelines apply (Note: The NSF Grants.gov Application Guide is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide))

**B. Budgetary Information**

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** Not Applicable
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

**C. Due Dates**

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):
  - July 07, 2010
  - July 7, Annually Thereafter
  - January 07, 2011
  - January 7, Annually Thereafter

## Proposal Review Information Criteria

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**Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

## Award Administration Information

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**Award Conditions:** Additional award conditions apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

**Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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All four clusters within the Division of Environmental Biology (Population and Community Ecology, Ecosystem Science, Evolutionary Processes, and Systematic Biology and Biodiversity Inventories) encourage the submission of proposals aimed at synthesizing a body of long-term research. Support will be provided to produce an integrated product that is useful both to the scientific community and for the development of future work by the principal investigator(s).

## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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Synthesis is an essential component of scientific inquiry. Synthetic works—those that integrate information from numbers of studies—have historically been influential in describing the state of a field and in spawning new knowledge, understanding, and research directions. To encourage synthetic studies, the Population and Community Ecology, Ecosystem Science, Evolutionary Processes, and Systematic Biology and Biodiversity Inventories Clusters in the Division of Environmental Biology have established OPUS (Opportunities for Promoting Understanding through Synthesis).

OPUS supports investigators to synthesize the body of their research. OPUS awards target investigators who have, over time, produced important papers from a series of related research projects, but have not yet integrated that series in a single synthesis. OPUS will fund single or multiple investigators to synthesize the body of work they themselves have generated, but OPUS funds generally will not be provided for the production of new data or for synthesizing other investigators' research.

Support will be provided for syntheses by investigators at mid-to-late career stages, as well as by those early enough in a career to produce unique, integrated insight useful both to the scientific community and to the development of the investigator's future work. In some areas, multiple investigators may have collaborated throughout the history of a series of research projects. In these cases, support would enable two or more scientists to work collaboratively on a synthesis. We expect OPUS awards to generate critical syntheses that will produce new, emergent insights that are more than the sum of their individual parts (e.g., individual research projects or a suite of publications). Efforts to summarize previous results will not be supported.

### III. AWARD INFORMATION

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The Clusters plan to make between 6-8 awards annually, or 3-4 awards per target date. We anticipate that individual awards will range from \$125,000 to \$150,000; the support available each year is between \$750,000 and \$1,200,000 depending on availability of funds and the quality of proposals received.

These funds may be expended over a total of two years. Generally, OPUS funding will not be provided for the production of new data.

### IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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The categories of proposers eligible to submit proposals to the National Science Foundation are identified in the [Grant Proposal Guide](#), Chapter I, Section E.

**Organization Limit:**

None Specified

**PI Limit:**

None Specified

**Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:**

None Specified

**Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:**

None Specified

### V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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#### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

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**Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** Proposers may opt to submit proposals in response to this Program Solicitation via Grants.gov or via the NSF FastLane system.

- Full proposals submitted via FastLane: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg). Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov). Proposers are reminded to identify this program solicitation number in the program solicitation block on the NSF Cover Sheet For Proposal to the National Science Foundation. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.
- Full proposals submitted via Grants.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation via Grants.gov should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov. The complete text of the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: ([http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide)). To obtain copies of the Application Guide and Application Forms Package, click on the Apply tab on the Grants.gov site, then click on the Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions link and enter the funding opportunity number, (the program solicitation number without the NSF prefix) and press the Download Package button. Paper copies of the Grants.gov Application Guide also may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

In determining which method to utilize in the electronic preparation and submission of the proposal, please note the following:

**Collaborative Proposals.** All collaborative proposals submitted as separate submissions from multiple organizations must be submitted via the NSF FastLane system. Chapter II, Section D.4 of the Grant Proposal Guide provides additional information on collaborative proposals.

The following instructions deviate from the Grant Proposal Guide and NSF Grants.gov Application Guide:

An OPUS proposal must limit the Project Description to **ten** pages. The title of an OPUS proposal must begin with "OPUS:", followed by the substantive title.

The Project Description must include:

1. evidence of a series of related research projects that have resulted in merit-reviewed articles ("Core Articles") over a reasonably long period, but that have not been integrated in a single synthetic product. Where it is appropriate, this discussion should be incorporated into the section on Results of Prior NSF Support. It is not necessary to list references to these articles in the Project Description; however, references to the articles discussed **should** be listed as a separate group in the References Cited section (see below).
2. a specific plan for management of time. This plan should outline a process by which results and insights from accomplished work will be integrated into a synthesis. Generally, OPUS will not support generation of new experimental data or the synthesis of other investigators' research; and

3. plans for a well-defined, widely accessible and disseminated product useful to current and future students and colleagues.

The References Cited section must include:

references to the articles discussed in #1 above, grouped separately under a heading labeled "Core Articles".

## B. Budgetary Information

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**Cost Sharing:** Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited

**Other Budgetary Limitations:**

Requests may be for up to two years. Direct costs are limited to:

1. Up to a total of 6.5 months salary plus fringe benefits for the PI may be requested. (NOTE: This is **not** a yearly amount; that is, a total of 6.5 months salary plus fringe benefits may be requested for a period up to two years.) In cases where multiple investigators are involved, the equivalent of 6.5 months salary for the senior PI may be distributed among investigators. (That is, the total for all PIs' salaries may not exceed the amount for 6.5 months of the salary for the senior PI.) Where multiple PIs are at different institutions, subawards may be used to provide support; submission of collaborative proposals is discouraged.
2. Up to \$25,000 for direct costs other than PI salary plus fringe benefits.
3. In lieu of PI salary or in cases where investigators do not need a full 6.5 months of salary to carry out a synthesis, the equivalent amount of money may be requested to support students, technicians or others who can accomplish critical portions of the synthetic activities that lie beyond the PI's expertise. In such cases, funds for PI salary and technical or other support may be flexibly allocated but may not exceed the total of #1 and #2.
4. Funds to travel to a PI meeting at the NSF that will be held in 2012.

These funds may be expended over a total of two years.

## C. Due Dates

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- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

July 07, 2010

July 7, Annually Thereafter

January 07, 2011

January 7, Annually Thereafter

## D. FastLane/Grants.gov Requirements

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- **For Proposals Submitted Via FastLane:**

Detailed technical instructions regarding the technical aspects of preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov). The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

**Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets.** The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the Grant Proposal Guide for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>.

- **For Proposals Submitted Via Grants.gov:**

Before using Grants.gov for the first time, each organization must register to create an institutional profile. Once registered, the applicant's organization can then apply for any federal grant on the Grants.gov website. The Grants.gov's Grant Community User Guide is a comprehensive reference document that provides technical information about Grants.gov. Proposers can download the User Guide as a Microsoft Word document or as a PDF document. The Grants.gov User Guide is available at: <http://www.grants.gov/CustomerSupport>. In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide provides additional technical guidance regarding preparation of proposals via Grants.gov. For Grants.gov user support, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or by email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Grants.gov Contact Center answers general technical questions related to the use of Grants.gov. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this solicitation.

**Submitting the Proposal:** Once all documents have been completed, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit the application to Grants.gov and verify the desired funding opportunity and agency to which the application is submitted. The AOR must then sign and submit the application to Grants.gov. The completed application will be transferred to the NSF FastLane system for further processing.

## VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

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Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program where they will be reviewed if they meet NSF proposal preparation requirements. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal.

These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal.

## A. NSF Merit Review Criteria

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All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board (NSB)-approved merit review criteria: intellectual merit and the broader impacts of the proposed effort. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two NSB-approved merit review criteria are listed below. The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which the reviewer is qualified to make judgements.

### **What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?**

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

### **What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?**

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts are available electronically on the NSF website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/broaderimpacts.pdf>.

Mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers supported on the project, as described in a one-page supplementary document, will be evaluated under the Broader Impacts criterion.

NSF staff also will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

### ***Integration of Research and Education***

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

### ***Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities***

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

### **Additional Review Criteria:**

Reviewers will be instructed to evaluate OPUS proposals using the following additional criteria:

1. Potential of the proposed activity to generate new understanding or a new research agenda as a result of synthetic analyses.
2. Broader impacts for OPUS proposals may differ somewhat from those of standard research proposals. A successful OPUS project may itself constitute a major broader impact if it generates new understanding or new research directions in a particular field. Student training, outreach, and other activities may be included as broader impacts but must involve aspects of the proposed synthesis.

## B. Review and Selection Process

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Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or

personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

## VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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### A. Notification of the Award

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Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

### B. Award Conditions

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An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1); \* or Research Terms and Conditions \* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

\*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award\\_conditions.jsp?org=NSF](http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF). Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Award & Administration Guide (AAG)* Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=aag](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag).

**Special Award Conditions:** Investigators receiving OPUS awards will be required to attend a PI meeting that will be held at NSF sometime in 2012. Funds to support travel to and attendance at this meeting should be included in the requested budget.

### C. Reporting Requirements

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For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require more frequent project reports). Within 90 days after expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final project reports, or the project outcomes report will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through FastLane, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on activities and findings, project participants (individual and organizational) publications; and, other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system. Submission of the report via FastLane constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

## VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

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General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Saran Twombly, Program Director, 635N, telephone: (703) 292-8133, email: [stwombly@nsf.gov](mailto:stwombly@nsf.gov)
- Maureen Kearney, Program Director, 635, telephone: (703) 292-7187, email: [mkearney@nsf.gov](mailto:mkearney@nsf.gov)
- Susan L. Perkins, telephone: (703) 292-4821, email: [sperkins@nsf.gov](mailto:sperkins@nsf.gov)

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov).

For questions relating to Grants.gov contact:

- Grants.gov Contact Center: If the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of application, please contact via telephone: 1-800-518-4726; e-mail: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

## IX. OTHER INFORMATION

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The NSF Website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this Website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, National Science Foundation Update is a free e-mail subscription service designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF Regional Grants Conferences. Subscribers are informed through e-mail when new publications are issued that match their identified interests. Users can subscribe to this service by clicking the "Get NSF Updates by Email" link on the [NSF web site](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this new mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <http://www.grants.gov>.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 40,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

*Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities* provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II, Section D.2 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

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 about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090 and (800) 281-8749, FIRS at (800) 877-8339.

The National Science Foundation Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at <http://www.nsf.gov>

- **Location:** 4201 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA 22230
- **For General Information**  
(NSF Information Center): (703) 292-5111
- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired):** (703) 292-5090
- **To Order Publications or Forms:**  
  
Send an e-mail to: [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov)  
  
or telephone: (703) 292-7827
- **To Locate NSF Employees:** (703) 292-5111

## PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

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