



**National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230**

NSF 13-004

Dear Colleague Letter - Issuance of a new NSF Proposal & Award Policies and Procedures Guide

DATE: October 4, 2012

A new version of the NSF [*Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\), \(NSF 13-1\)*](#), has been issued. The PAPPG is comprised of documents relating to the Foundation's proposal and award process and consists of the:

- a. *Grant Proposal Guide (GPG)* for guidance on the preparation and submission of proposals to NSF; and
- b. *Award & Administration Guide (AAG)* to guide, manage, and monitor the award and administration of grants and cooperative agreements made by the Foundation.

This new version of the PAPPG will be effective for **proposals submitted or due on or after January 14, 2013**. Significant changes to the PAPPG include:

- Revisions to the NSF Merit Review Criteria which implement the National Science Board's (NSB) recommendations. Changes will affect the project summary and project description sections of proposals. Annual and final reports also will be affected.
- Instructions for preparation of the Biographical Sketch have been revised to rename the "Publications" section to "Products" and amend terminology and instructions accordingly. This change makes clear that products may include, but are not limited to, publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights.
- Coverage on compensation of Indirect Costs (also known as Facilities and Administrative Costs (F&A) for Colleges and Universities) has been clarified to specify that, except as noted in the GPG sections on participant support and international travel grants, or as specified in an NSF program solicitation, the applicable indirect cost rate(s) negotiated by the organization with the cognizant negotiating agency must be used in computing indirect costs for a proposal.
- Modification of the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of proposals to assist proposers in complying with the NSF cost sharing policy.
- Additional proposal certifications must be submitted by the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) covering organizational support of the proposed research, tax obligations/liability and felony convictions.
- Numerous clarifications also have been made throughout the document.

A by-chapter summary of the changes is provided at the beginning of both the *Grant Proposal Guide* and the *Award & Administration Guide* to assist with identifying the changes.

Because the revisions to the merit review criteria will have broad repercussions for proposers, reviewers and NSF staff, the Foundation is conducting extensive outreach to the internal and external NSF communities.

This purposeful communication is intended to ensure a broad understanding of the revisions to the merit review criteria and provide easy access to supporting materials including:

- A revised [NSF Merit Review website](#) with updated information about the revisions;
- A [resource website for the proposer community](#) containing presentations, fact sheets and other important links; and
- A webcast will be available in early November 2012 covering all of the PAPPG revisions (send an e-mail to policy@nsf.gov to be notified when this webcast is available).

While this version of the PAPPG becomes effective on January 14, 2013, in the interim, the guidelines contained in the current PAPPG (NSF 11-1) continue to apply. We will ensure that the current version of the PAPPG remains on the NSF website, with a notation to proposers that specifies when the new PAPPG (including a link to the new Guide) will become effective.

In addition, we plan to revise existing funding opportunities to alert proposers that significant changes have been made to NSF proposal preparation guidelines. Please direct any questions to the Policy Office in the Division of Institution & Award Support at policy@nsf.gov, or (703) 292-8243.

Sincerely,

Martha A. Rubenstein
Chief Financial Officer and Head
Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management