



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 17-118

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) **NSF 17-117: Removal of Deadlines for the Combustion and Fire Systems Program in ENG/CBET**

1. What does "no deadline" mean?
2. Why is this change being made?
3. Will proposals still be panel and mail reviewed?
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5. Will the community be told the dates of panels?
6. Will it take longer to receive a decision on my proposal?
7. How will this affect proposals that are to be co-reviewed with core Programs that still have deadlines?
8. Can I resubmit a declined proposal right away or do I have to wait a certain length of time to resubmit it?
9. If there is a strong science timeliness reason for a rapid resubmission of a declined proposal, can there be an exception to the moratorium rule?
10. Is there a limit to how many proposals I can have pending as lead PI at the same time?
11. Does the change to no deadlines also apply to special programs such as CAREER?
12. Do I need to alert the program if I intend to submit or when I submit a proposal?

1. What does "no deadline" mean?

Beginning August 20, 2017, the [Combustion and Fire Systems Program](#) will accept proposals at any time throughout the year. There will no longer be any restriction on when an unsolicited proposal can be submitted for consideration to the Program.

2. Why is this change being made?

By accepting proposals at any time, investigators will have more time to prepare proposals and build strong collaborations; think more creatively without the pressure of a deadline; and (if desired) propose more complex, interdisciplinary projects that have the potential to dramatically advance science. Spreading proposal submissions more evenly over the year may also reduce the burden on investigators, reviewers, and submitting institutions.

3. Will proposals still be panel and mail reviewed?

All proposals will undergo panel review, as is the present practice. Proposals also will be considered for Ad Hoc reviews, as deemed necessary.

4. How will this work?

Program Officers will schedule panels as needed depending on the submissions received.

5. Will the community be told the dates of panels?

No, as is normal under NSF policy.

6. Will it take longer to receive a decision on my proposal?

No change in average time to decision and release of reviews is expected with this transition to open submission.

7. How will this affect proposals that are to be co-reviewed with core Programs that still have deadlines?

If deadlines exist for other programs, the Combustion and Fire Systems Program will work with those programs to co-review in the same manner as is currently done for proposals that are shared between programs. If a proposal is submitted for co-consideration with another program that operates with deadlines, PIs are encouraged to consult with both the Combustion and Fire Systems Program and the other program to seek guidance on the best time to submit the proposal. This should help avoid delays in review.

8. Can I resubmit a declined proposal right away or do I have to wait a certain length of time to resubmit it?

Any declined proposal is subject to a 12-month moratorium period from its submission date. Any proposal on the same topic with the same or similar goals is also subject to the 12-month moratorium period. Principal Investigators are reminded to note PAPPG Chapter IV.E, which states, "A declined proposal may be resubmitted, but only after it has undergone substantial revision. A resubmitted proposal that has not clearly taken into account the major comments or concerns resulting from the prior NSF review may be returned without review."

9. If there is a strong science timeliness reason for a rapid resubmission of a declined proposal, can there be an exception to the moratorium rule?

Exceptions to the moratorium are at the discretion of the Program, but will only be allowed if the Program finds a compelling scientific timeliness reason. Reasons related to personnel or facility availability are not generally considered suitable cause to grant an exception.

10. Is there a limit to how many proposals I can have pending as lead PI at the same time?

There is no limit to the number of pending proposals a PI can have within the Combustion and Fire Systems Program at any given time. However, each proposal must be significantly different from the others to be considered for review. Proposals that appear to represent the same topics or the same or similar goals to another that is already pending with the program will be returned without review. The date and time stamp of submission will be used to determine which proposal was submitted first to the program.

11. Does the change to no deadlines also apply to special programs such as CAREER?

No. The CAREER Program and others will continue to accept proposals once a year, by the deadlines stated in their respective solicitations. Proposals that are submitted to the wrong program will be returned without review. Any questions about where a proposal belongs should be addressed to the Combustion and Fire Systems Program Director prior to submission.

12. Do I need to alert the program if I intend to submit or when I submit a proposal?

No, there is no requirement, although as is currently the case, PIs should contact a Program Officer if they have questions or are proposing a large or complex proposal that may need special consideration.