

# Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER)

Includes the description of NSF Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE)

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## PROGRAM SOLICITATION

NSF 20-525

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## REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):

NSF 17-537

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### National Science Foundation

Directorate for Biological Sciences

Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering

Directorate for Education and Human Resources

Directorate for Engineering

Directorate for Geosciences

Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences

Office of Integrative Activities

Office of International Science and Engineering

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

August 11, 2020

July 26, 2021

Fourth Monday in July, Annually Thereafter

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

**Important information about the 2020 deadline:** In consideration of the challenges facing many in our country, NSF is extending the upcoming proposal deadline for the Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER) until 5:00 p.m. submitter's local time on Tuesday, August 11, 2020.

Please note that the eligibility requirements specified in the solicitation remain unchanged, and proposers must meet all of the eligibility requirements as of the original deadline of July 27, 2020. The Departmental Letter that must be submitted by the Department Chair (or equivalent) must use July 27, 2020 to determine eligibility, regardless of whether the CAREER proposal is submitted before, on, or after July 27, 2020. An untenured assistant professor on July 27, 2020 is eligible to submit a CAREER proposal even if the Principal Investigator is tenured/promoted in the fall. A new faculty member who starts on July 28, 2020 or later is not eligible to submit a CAREER proposal this year.

In order to ensure timely proposal review and decision making, NSF strongly encourages submission of CAREER proposals on or before the original deadline of July 27, 2020. NSF will not consider requests to extend the deadline date beyond 5:00 p.m., submitter's local time on August 11, 2020, except as outlined in PAPPG Chapter I.F.3.

### Other Important Information

- The PI needs to meet all eligibility criteria as of the annual deadline
- Clarification regarding the minimum percentage appointment (tenure-track and tenure-track equivalent) for eligibility to the program
- Only one annual deadline applies to all CAREER submissions, regardless of Directorate
- Added guidance on the [CAREER proposal submission timeline](#)

Any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation should be submitted in accordance with the revised *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) ([NSF 20-1](#)), which is effective for proposals submitted, or due, on or after June 1, 2020.

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## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## General Information

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### Program Title:

Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER)  
Includes the description of the NSF component of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE)

### Synopsis of Program:

*CAREER:* The Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program is a Foundation-wide activity that offers the National Science Foundation's most prestigious awards in support of early-career faculty who have the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the mission of their department or organization. Activities pursued by early-career faculty should build a firm foundation for a lifetime of leadership in integrating education and research. NSF encourages submission of CAREER proposals from early-career faculty at all CAREER-eligible organizations and especially encourages women, members of underrepresented minority groups, and persons with disabilities to apply.

*PECASE:* Each year NSF selects nominees for the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) from among the most meritorious recent CAREER awardees. Selection for this award is based on two important criteria: 1) innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology that is relevant to the mission of NSF, and 2) community service demonstrated through scientific leadership, education, or community outreach. These awards foster innovative developments in science and technology, increase awareness of careers in science and engineering, give recognition to the scientific missions of the participating agencies, enhance connections between fundamental research and national goals, and highlight the importance of science and technology for the Nation's future. Individuals cannot apply for PECASE. These awards are initiated by the participating federal agencies. At NSF, up to twenty nominees for this award are selected each year from among the PECASE-eligible CAREER awardees most likely to become the leaders of academic research and education in the twenty-first century. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy makes the final selection and announcement of the awardees.

### Cognizant Program Officer(s):

- Division CAREER contacts listed on the CAREER web page at: <https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/career/contacts.jsp>
- Faculty Early Career program, telephone: (703)292-5111, email: [nsf-ccc@nsf.gov](mailto:nsf-ccc@nsf.gov)

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

- 47.041 --- Engineering
- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences
- 47.050 --- Geosciences
- 47.070 --- Computer and Information Science and Engineering
- 47.074 --- Biological Sciences
- 47.075 --- Social Behavioral and Economic Sciences
- 47.076 --- Education and Human Resources
- 47.079 --- Office of International Science and Engineering
- 47.083 --- Office of Integrative Activities (OIA)

## Award Information

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### Anticipated Type of Award:

Standard Grant or Continuing Grant

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 500 per year

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$250,000,000

This annual amount is approximate, includes new and continuing increments, and is subject to availability of funds.

## Eligibility Information

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### Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of subawards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research labs, professional societies and similar organizations in the U.S. associated with educational or research activities.

### Who May Serve as PI:

A Principal Investigator (PI) may submit only one CAREER proposal per annual competition. In addition, a Principal Investigator may not participate in more than three CAREER competitions. Proposals that are not reviewed (i.e., are withdrawn before review or are returned

without review) do not count toward the three-competition limit.

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

There are no restrictions or limits.

**Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI: 1**

An eligible Principal Investigator may submit only one CAREER proposal per annual competition.

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

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### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Not required
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not required
- **Full Proposals:**
  - Full Proposals submitted via FastLane: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).
  - Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).
  - 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: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](https://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. submitter's local time):
  - August 11, 2020
  - July 26, 2021
  - Fourth Monday in July, Annually Thereafter

## Proposal Review Information Criteria

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### Merit Review Criteria:

National Science Board approved criteria apply.

## 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.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## Summary of Program Requirements

- I. **Introduction**
- II. **Program Description**
- III. **Award Information**
- IV. **Eligibility Information**
- V. **Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions**
  - A. Proposal Preparation Instructions
  - B. Budgetary Information
  - C. Due Dates
  - D. FastLane/Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements
- VI. **NSF Proposal Processing and Review Procedures**
  - A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria
  - B. Review and Selection Process
- VII. **Award Administration reviewcrilnformation**
  - A. Notification of the Award
  - B. Award Conditions
  - C. Reporting Requirements
- VIII. **Agency Contacts**
- IX. **Other Information**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This program is a Foundation-wide activity that offers the National Science Foundation's most prestigious awards for faculty members beginning their independent careers. The intent of the program is to provide stable support at a sufficient level and duration to enable awardees to develop careers not only as outstanding researchers but also as educators demonstrating commitment to teaching, learning, and dissemination of knowledge. NSF encourages submission of CAREER proposals from eligible early-career faculty at all CAREER-eligible organizations, especially women, members of underrepresented minority groups, and persons with disabilities.

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## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### A. CAREER Program

This premier program emphasizes the importance the Foundation places on the early development of academic careers dedicated to stimulating the discovery process in which the excitement of research is enhanced by inspired teaching, enthusiastic learning, and disseminating new knowledge. Effective integration of research and education generates a synergy in which the process of discovery stimulates learning, and assures that the findings and methods of research and education are quickly and effectively communicated in a broader context and to a large audience.

The CAREER program embodies NSF's commitment to encourage faculty and academic institutions to value and support the integration of research and education. Successful Principal Investigators will propose creative, effective research and education plans, developed within the context of the mission, goals, and resources of their organizations, while building a firm foundation for a lifetime of contributions to research, education, and their integration.

**Integration of Research and Education** - All CAREER proposals should describe an integrated path that will lead to a successful career as an outstanding researcher and educator. NSF recognizes that there is no single approach to an integrated research and education plan, but encourages all applicants to think creatively about the reciprocal relationship between the proposed research and education activities and how they may inform each other in their career development as both outstanding researchers and educators. These plans should reflect the proposer's own disciplinary and educational interests and goals, as well as the needs and context of his or her organization. Because there may be different expectations within different disciplinary fields and/or different organizations, a wide range of research and education activities may be appropriate for the CAREER program. In addition, NSF recognizes that some investigators, given their individual disciplinary and career interests, may wish to pursue an additional activity such as entrepreneurship, industry partnerships, or policy that enhances their research and education plans. Proposers are encouraged to communicate with the CAREER contact or cognizant Program Officer in the Division closest to their area of research to discuss the expectations and approaches that are most appropriate for that area (see <http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/career/contacts.jsp> for a list of CAREER contacts by division).

### B. Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE)

The Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) is the highest honor bestowed by the United States Government on outstanding scientists and engineers beginning their independent research careers. Selection for this award is based on two important criteria: 1) innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology that is relevant to the mission of the sponsoring organization or agency, and 2) community service demonstrated through scientific leadership, education, or community outreach. These awards foster innovative developments in science and technology, increase awareness of careers in science and engineering, give recognition to the scientific missions of the participating agencies, enhance connections between fundamental research and national goals, and highlight the importance of science and technology for the Nation's future. Please note that individuals cannot apply for a PECASE. Rather, these awards are initiated by participating federal agencies. At NSF, up to twenty nominees for this award are selected each year from among recent CAREER awardees deemed most likely to become the leaders of academic research and education for the twenty-first century. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) makes the final selection and announcement of the awardees. As all NSF PECASE awardees are also CAREER awardees, no additional funds will be allocated when the PECASE is announced.

### III. AWARD INFORMATION

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**Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard Grant or Continuing Grant

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 500 per year

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$250,000,000

This annual amount is approximate, includes new and continuing increments, and is subject to availability of funds.

The CAREER award, including indirect costs, is expected to total a minimum of \$400,000 for the 5-year duration, with the following exceptions: Awards for proposals to the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO), the Directorate for Engineering (ENG), or the Office of Polar Programs (OPP) are expected to total a minimum of \$500,000 for the 5-year duration. The PECASE award is an honorary award for all NSF recipients and does not provide additional funds. CAREER awards are eligible for supplemental funding as described in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG).

### IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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#### Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of subawards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research labs, professional societies and similar organizations in the U.S. associated with educational or research activities.

#### Who May Serve as PI:

A Principal Investigator (PI) may submit only one CAREER proposal per annual competition. In addition, a Principal Investigator may not participate in more than three CAREER competitions. Proposals that are not reviewed (i.e., are withdrawn before review or are returned without review) do not count toward the three-competition limit.

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

There are no restrictions or limits.

#### Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI: 1

An eligible Principal Investigator may submit only one CAREER proposal per annual competition.

#### Additional Eligibility Info:

##### A. CAREER Program

Proposers must meet all of the following eligibility requirements as of the annual deadline:

- Hold a doctoral degree in a field supported by NSF;
- Be engaged in research in an area of science, engineering, or education supported by NSF;
- Hold at least a 50% tenure-track (or tenure-track-equivalent) position as an assistant professor (or equivalent title);
- Be untenured; and
- Have not previously received a CAREER award. (Prior or concurrent Federal support for other types of awards for non-duplicative research does not preclude eligibility.)

**Tenure-Track Equivalency** - For a position to be considered a tenure-track-equivalent position, it must meet all of the following requirements: (1) the employee has a continuing appointment that is expected to last the five years of a CAREER grant; (2) the appointment has substantial research *and* educational responsibilities; and (3) the proposed project relates to the employee's career goals and job responsibilities as well as to the mission of the department or organization. As stated in the Proposal Preparation Instructions, for non-tenure-track faculty, the Departmental Letter must affirm that the investigator's appointment is at an early-career level equivalent to pre-tenure status, and the Departmental Letter must clearly and convincingly demonstrate how the faculty member's appointment satisfies all the above requirements of tenure-track equivalency.

Faculty members who are Associate Professors or in equivalent appointments, with or without tenure, are not eligible for the CAREER program. Faculty members who hold Adjunct Faculty or equivalent appointments are not eligible for the CAREER program.

**NO EXEMPTIONS FROM THESE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA WILL BE GRANTED.**

##### B. PECASE

PECASE eligibility requires that the applicant be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or U.S. permanent resident by the time of nomination. Only recent CAREER awardees are considered as potential PECASE nominees by NSF. Although persons who have received PECASE awards through other agencies may be eligible for CAREER, they are not eligible to be nominated by NSF for another PECASE award.

## 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 FastLane, Research.gov, or Grants.gov.

- 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 Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg). Paper copies of the PAPPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from 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 Research.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg). Paper copies of the PAPPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov. The Prepare New Proposal setup will prompt you for the program solicitation number.
- 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: ([https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](https://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.

See PAPPG Chapter II.C.2 for guidance on the required sections of a full research proposal submitted to NSF. Please note that the proposal preparation instructions provided in this program solicitation may deviate from the PAPPG instructions.

#### **Proposal Contents**

The following instructions supplement the guidelines in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) and NSF Grants.gov Application Guide for the specified sections. Proposers are strongly encouraged to follow the recommended [CAREER submission timeline](#).

#### **The Cover Sheet:**

- **Program Solicitation Number.** FastLane users: Select the CAREER program solicitation number shown at the beginning of this solicitation from the drop-down menu. Research.gov Users: Select the CAREER program solicitation number in Step 1 of the Prepare New Proposal Wizard (Funding Opportunity). Grants.gov users: The program solicitation will be pre-populated by Grants.gov on the NSF Grant Application Cover Page.
- **NSF Unit of Consideration.** Select at least one specific core program from the drop-down list in FastLane as the NSF program(s) to consider the proposal. Research.gov users: Select at least one specific core program in Step 2 of the Prepare New Proposal Wizard (Where to Apply). Grants.gov users should refer to Section VI.1.2. of the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide for specific instructions on how to designate the NSF Unit of Consideration. For assistance in determining which program(s) to choose, refer to the NSF [Guide to Programs](#), which provides descriptions of NSF research-supporting programs.
- **Project Title.** The project title must begin with "CAREER:" and follow with an informative title.
- **Co-PIs.** No co-PIs are permitted on the Cover Sheet.

#### **Project Description:**

The Project Description section should contain a well-argued and specific proposal for activities that will, over a 5-year period, build a firm foundation for a lifetime of contributions to research and education in the context of the Principal Investigator's organization. The proposed project should aim to advance the employee's career goals and job responsibilities as well as the mission of the department or organization. The Project Description may not exceed 15 pages.

The Project Description should include:

- a description of the proposed research project, including preliminary supporting data where appropriate, specific objectives, methods and procedures to be used, and expected significance of the results;
- a description of the proposed educational activities and their intended impact;
- a description of how the research and educational activities are integrated or synergistic;
- a description of other broader impacts, besides the education activities, that will accrue from the project; and
- results of prior NSF support, if applicable.

Successful applicants will propose creative, effective research and education plans, along with strategies for assessing these components. The proposed activities should help applicants develop in their careers as both outstanding researchers and educators. While excellence in both education and research is expected, activity of an intensity that leads to an unreasonable workload is not. The research and educational activities do not need to be addressed separately if the relationship between the two is such that the presentation of the integrated project is better served by interspersing the two throughout the Project Description.

Proposed research activities may be in any area of science, mathematics, engineering and education normally supported by NSF (see the PAPPG for areas of



research are not appropriate for NSF). To help determine the appropriateness of the project for NSF and identify the disciplinary or interdisciplinary program to which it should be submitted, proposers are urged to refer to the NSF [Guide to Programs](#). Program information can also be found on Directorate web pages, which can be accessed from the NSF home page (<https://www.nsf.gov>). Proposers are also encouraged to contact the appropriate NSF Program Officer when preparing a submission, as some programs do not accept CAREER proposals.

**Education Activities** – The education component of the proposal may be in a broad range of areas and may be directed to any level: K-12 students, undergraduates, graduate students, and/or the general public, but should be related to the proposed research and consistent with the career goals of the PI. Some examples are: incorporating research activities into undergraduate courses; teaching a graduate seminar on the topic of the research; designing innovative courses or curricula; providing mentored international research experiences for U.S. students; linking education activities to industrial, international, or cross-disciplinary work; supporting teacher preparation and enhancement; conducting outreach and mentoring activities to enhance scientific literacy or involve students from groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in science; researching students' learning and conceptual development in the discipline; implementing innovative methods for evaluation and assessment; or creating cyberinfrastructure that facilitates involvement of the broad citizenry in the scientific enterprise. Education activities may also include designing new or adapting and implementing effective educational materials and practices. Such activities should be consistent with research and best practices in curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation. Proposers may build on, or otherwise meaningfully participate in, existing NSF-supported activities or other educational projects ongoing on campus.

**Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives** – NSF recognizes that disciplinary boundaries evolve with time and that inter-, multi-, trans-disciplinary approaches are often needed to push the frontiers of research and education. We invite proposals from early-career investigators who wish to pursue research and education activities that cross disciplinary boundaries. Increasingly, CAREER proposals are co-reviewed by more than one program within a Division or a Directorate, or across Directorates/Offices. We encourage investigators to seek research and education collaborations with partners in other areas of academia as well as from other sectors (for example, partnerships with industry, national laboratories, schools and school districts, or museums). Investigators have the option of including the associated costs in the budget line items of the proposal, or in subawards to another institution for all necessary research and educational activities (for example, hiring an external evaluator, or securing time at a shared research facility). Because the CAREER program is designed to foster individual career development, partners or collaborators may not be listed as co-principal investigators on the cover page. If critical for a given project, support for collaborators may be requested in the senior personnel or consultant services budget line items of the proposal, or in subawards to another institution. However, while recognizing that projects may entail cross-disciplinary collaborations, it is expected that the primary support for a CAREER award will be for the PI and his/her research efforts, with support for other senior personnel commensurate with their limited role in the project. Proposals submitted with co-principal investigators will be returned without review. Ensuring that the CAREER program continues to focus on fostering individual career development of early-career scientists and engineers will be an integral part of the merit review of CAREER proposals.

**Cross-Sector Perspectives** – NSF recognizes that individual investigators may have disciplinary and career interests that enhance their research and education plans through an additional activity such as entrepreneurship, industry partnerships, or policy. We invite proposals from early-career investigators who wish to enhance their research and education activities along these lines. If critical for a given project, investigators have the option of including the associated costs in the budget line items of the proposal or in subawards to another institution.

**Scientific Software Development** – Proposed research activities may involve development of innovative scientific software, along with related studies of reproducibility, provenance, usability, security, adoption, and sustainability of the software, as well as its adaptability to emerging technologies and requirements. If software artifacts are anticipated in a given project, investigators should state and justify which software license(s) will be used for the released software.

**International/Global Dimensions** – NSF encourages CAREER Principal Investigators to include international/global dimensions in their projects. As appropriate, the CAREER proposal should delineate how its activities fit within the context of expertise, facilities, data, and other resources that are being applied globally in relevant areas of research and education, and how the CAREER award would position the Principal Investigator and his/her organization to take a leadership role. If applicable, the proposal should clearly state how the research and education activities will be enhanced by international engagements, and should describe the benefits to participants in the U.S. and abroad. If an international component is included, proposers are encouraged to contact the relevant country Program Officer in the Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE) listed in <https://www.nsf.gov/od/ia/ise/country-list.jsp>.

**Field Work in the Polar Regions** – For guidance on submitting information about field work proposed in the Arctic or Antarctica, proposers should contact the Program Officer in Polar Programs (<https://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=OPP>) who is associated with the program most closely aligned with the research being proposed.

**Proposals Requiring Seagoing Facilities** – For guidance on submitting proposals that require use of sea-going facilities such as ships (including those participating in the University National Oceanographic Laboratory System [UNOLS], foreign vessels under charter or other arrangements, submersibles, remotely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles, etc.), proposers should contact the Program Officer in Ocean Sciences (<https://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=OCE>) who is associated with the program most closely aligned with the research being proposed.

#### References Cited:

Provide references in support of both research and education aspects of the CAREER proposal.

#### Biographical Sketch of Principal Investigator:

The Biographical Sketch should be prepared following the instructions in the latest *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) and should include **both** research and education activities and accomplishments.

#### Additional Supplementary Documentation for CAREER Proposals:

Scan the signed original(s) of the following document(s) and upload the scans as a PDF file into the Supplementary Documents section of the proposal. Do not send paper copies to NSF. All documents must be submitted with the proposal in Fastlane, Research.gov or Grants.gov by the deadline.

1. **Departmental Letter (a proposal submitted without this Letter will be returned without review)** – NSF encourages organizations to value and reward the integration of research and education and the effective mentoring of its early-career faculty in their department. This integration of research and education requires close collaboration between the CAREER Principal Investigator (PI) and his/her organization throughout the duration of the award. To demonstrate the department's support of the career development plan of the PI, the proposal must include one (and only one) letter from the PI's department head (or equivalent organizational official). In cases of joint appointments, the letter should be signed by both department heads. The letter, which will be included as part of the consideration of the overall merits of the proposal, should demonstrate an understanding of, and a commitment to, the effective integration of research and education as a primary objective of the CAREER award.

The Departmental Letter should be no more than 2 pages in length and include the department head's name and title below the signature. The letter should contain the following elements:

- o A statement to the effect that the PI is eligible for the CAREER program. For non-tenure-track faculty, the Departmental Letter must affirm that the investigator's appointment is at an early-career level equivalent to pre-tenure status, pursuant to the eligibility criteria specified above. Further, for non-tenure-track faculty, the Departmental Letter must clearly and convincingly demonstrate how the faculty member satisfies all the requirements of tenure-track equivalency as defined in the eligibility criteria specified in this solicitation.
  - o An indication that the PI's proposed CAREER research and education activities are supported by and advance the educational and research goals of the department and the organization, and that the department is committed to the support and professional development of the PI; and
  - o A description of a) the relationship between the CAREER project, the PI's career goals and job responsibilities, and the mission of his/her department/organization, and b) the ways in which the department head (or equivalent) will ensure the appropriate mentoring of the PI, in the context of the PI's career development and his/her efforts to integrate research and education throughout the period of the award and beyond.
2. *Letters of Collaboration* – If the project involves collaborative arrangements of significance, these arrangements should be documented through letters of collaboration. Letters of collaboration should be limited to stating the intent to collaborate and should not contain endorsements or evaluation of the proposed project. Letters of collaboration should follow the single-sentence format:

"If the proposal submitted by Dr. [insert the full name of the Principal Investigator] entitled [insert the proposal title] is selected for funding by the NSF, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment or Other Resources section of the proposal."

Departure from this format may result in the proposal being returned without review. Specifics about the need for and nature of collaborations, such as intellectual contributions to the project, permission to access a site, an instrument, or a facility, offer of samples and materials for research, logistical support to the research and education program, or mentoring of U.S. students at a foreign site, should be detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment, and other Resources section. Requests for letters of collaboration should be made by the PI well in advance of the proposal submission deadline, because they must be included at the time of submission. **Please note that letters of recommendation for the PI or other letters of support for the project are not permitted.**

#### Appendices:

No appendices are permitted.

#### Proposal Compliance with Program Solicitation Requirements:

All CAREER proposals will be checked for compliance with this CAREER program solicitation and the latest *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG).

Make sure to use this CAREER Program Solicitation number in the cover sheet in order to have the proposal reviewed according to the current guidelines associated with the CAREER program.

In addition, proposals that are non-compliant with the CAREER solicitation for the following reasons will be **returned without review**:

- Co-principal investigator(s) listed on the cover page
- Departmental Letter is missing (be sure to put the letter in the Supplementary Documents section, *not* the Single Copy Documents section)

In addition, according to the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG), any proposal submitted to a program solicitation with a fixed proposal deadline must be submitted by that deadline date up to 5 p.m. proposer's local time in order to be accepted and reviewed. Program Officers will be instructed to return without review any CAREER proposal that arrives after the deadline, unless there was a technical problem with the proposal submission (through either Fastlane, Research.gov or Grants.gov) and the technical problem is supported by documentation from Fastlane, Research.gov or Grants.gov at the time of submission and **prior to the deadline**. A possible slowdown of Fastlane, Research.gov or Grants.gov due to volume is not a valid reason for an extension and PIs are **strongly encouraged** to submit their CAREER proposals well in advance of the deadline to allow time to correct any problems that may occur in the submission process. Please see the recommended timeline for submission of CAREER proposals listed below.

Program Officers will also return without review any proposal that is non-compliant with the PAPPG because:

- The proposed work duplicates, or is substantially similar to, a proposal already under consideration by NSF from the same submitter
- The proposal was previously declined and was not revised to take into account the major comments from the prior NSF review
- The proposal topic falls outside the purview of NSF

The above list is not an all-inclusive list of reasons that proposals are returned without review. For complete information on PAPPG proposal compliance refer to the full text of the PAPPG. Also consult the Proposal Preparation Checklist of the PAPPG.

#### Proposal Submission Timeline:

Because late proposals will not be accepted by NSF, NSF strongly advises PIs and institutions to abide by the milestones listed in the [CAREER submission timeline](#). Please note that new organizations (not registered at NSF or that don't have a DUNS ID), should start the process of registration **at least nine weeks in advance**. For PIs that are new (no NSF ID) or have not logged into our systems for a long time, we encourage starting **at least three weeks in advance** to resolve any account issues.

#### Post-Submission:

As soon as the proposal is submitted via Fastlane, Research.gov or Grants.gov by your research office, make sure to print a final copy of the submitted version for your records. It is your responsibility, and that of your sponsored projects office, to ascertain that all of the proposal contents are there and that the proposal is compliant with the PAPPG and the CAREER solicitation. If mistakes or missing information/documentation are found **prior to the appropriate CAREER deadline**, you can submit a proposal file update that would be automatically accepted. Note that according to the PAPPG, file updates will NOT be allowed after the deadline, except to correct a technical problem with the proposal (i.e., PDF file formatting or print problems). If the CAREER deadline has passed and you discover a formatting or print problem, contact your disciplinary Program Officer immediately to discuss whether NSF will approve a proposal file update. You should thoroughly review your submitted proposal document in order to identify any PDF conversion or printing problems, leaving enough time to correct any problems prior to the deadline. This is particularly critical for those submitting via Grants.gov as the transfer process from that portal to NSF's systems can be technically challenging due to the compliance checking process.

## B. Budgetary Information



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### Cost Sharing:

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

### Other Budgetary Limitations:

The CAREER award, including indirect costs, is expected to total a minimum of \$400,000 for the 5-year duration, with the following exceptions: Awards for proposals to the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO), the Directorate for Engineering (ENG), or the Office of Polar Programs (OPP) are expected to total a minimum of \$500,000 for the 5-year duration. Before preparing a CAREER proposal, PIs are strongly encouraged to contact their disciplinary Program Officer or the appropriate CAREER contact to discuss budget requests for their proposed CAREER activities, and typical funding levels for their discipline. Many programs and Directorates prefer to make more awards by funding CAREER proposals closer to the minimum award size. Proposers should also review the list of recent CAREER awards made in their discipline for guidance on average award size. A list of CAREER Division/Directorate Contacts can be found on the CAREER web page at <http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/career/contacts.jsp>.

Co-PIs are not allowed in CAREER proposals. Support for other senior personnel (i.e., in the Budget Category A) or consultants is permitted, but must be commensurate with their limited role in the project. In particular, while recognizing that projects may entail cross-disciplinary collaborations, it is expected that the primary support for a CAREER award will be for the PI and his/her research efforts. All other allowable costs, as described in the PAPPG, are permitted. Allowable costs include funds for postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, undergraduate students, PI salary, education or outreach activities, support for an evaluator, travel and subsistence expenses for the PI and U.S. participants when working abroad with foreign collaborators, and consultant expenses. In some cases, it may be appropriate to include academic year salary support for the PI on a CAREER budget (for example, PIs who have heavy teaching responsibilities or who must conduct field work during the academic year). Proposers should talk to the cognizant Program Officers about their individual cases.

### Budget Preparation Instructions:

A Budget Justification (maximum of five pages) must be included as part of the CAREER proposal.

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## C. Due Dates

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

August 11, 2020

July 26, 2021

Fourth Monday in July, Annually Thereafter

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## D. FastLane/Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements

### For Proposals Submitted Via FastLane or Research.gov:

To prepare and submit a proposal via FastLane, see detailed technical instructions available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. To prepare and submit a proposal via Research.gov, see detailed technical instructions available at: [https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=research\\_node\\_display&\\_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationandSubmission.html](https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=research_node_display&_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationandSubmission.html). For FastLane or Research.gov user support, call the FastLane and Research.gov Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov) or [rgov@nsf.gov](mailto:rgov@nsf.gov). The FastLane and Research.gov Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane and Research.gov systems. 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.

### 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. Comprehensive information about using Grants.gov is available on the Grants.gov Applicant Resources webpage: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>. In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide (see link in Section V.A) provides instructions regarding the technical 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.

Proposers that submitted via FastLane or Research.gov may use Research.gov to verify the status of their submission to NSF. For proposers that submitted via Grants.gov, until an application has been received and validated by NSF, the Authorized Organizational Representative may check the status of an application on Grants.gov. After proposers have received an e-mail notification from NSF, Research.gov should be used to check the status of an application.

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## VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program for acknowledgement and, if they meet NSF requirements, for review. 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 either as *ad hoc* reviewers, panelists, or both, who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with 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. In addition, Program Officers may obtain comments from site visits before recommending final action on proposals. Senior NSF staff further review recommendations for awards. A flowchart that depicts the entire NSF proposal and award process (and associated timeline) is included in PAPPG Exhibit III-1.

A comprehensive description of the Foundation's merit review process is available on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit\\_review/](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/).

Proposers should also be aware of core strategies that are essential to the fulfillment of NSF's mission, as articulated in *Building the Future: Investing in Discovery and Innovation - NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2018 – 2022*. These strategies are integrated in the program planning and implementation process, of which proposal review is one part. NSF's mission is particularly well-implemented through the integration of research and education and broadening participation in NSF programs, projects, and activities.

One of the strategic objectives in support of NSF's mission is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions must recruit, train, and prepare a diverse STEM workforce to advance the frontiers of science and participate in the U.S. technology-based economy. NSF's contribution to the national innovation ecosystem is to provide cutting-edge research under the guidance of the Nation's most creative scientists and engineers. NSF also supports development of a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce by investing in building the knowledge that informs improvements in STEM teaching and learning.

NSF's mission calls for the broadening of opportunities and expanding participation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines, which 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.

## A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria

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The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes." NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.

### 1. Merit Review Principles

These principles are to be given due diligence by PIs and organizations when preparing proposals and managing projects, by reviewers when reading and evaluating proposals, and by NSF program staff when determining whether or not to recommend proposals for funding and while overseeing awards. Given that NSF is the primary federal agency charged with nurturing and supporting excellence in basic research and education, the following three principles apply:

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals. These "Broader Impacts" may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified.
- Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects. If the size of the activity is limited, evaluation of that activity in isolation is not likely to be meaningful. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these activities may best be done at a higher, more aggregated, level than the individual project.

With respect to the third principle, even if assessment of Broader Impacts outcomes for particular projects is done at an aggregated level, PIs are expected to be accountable for carrying out the activities described in the funded project. Thus, individual projects should include clearly stated goals, specific descriptions of the activities that the PI intends to do, and a plan in place to document the outputs of those activities.

These three merit review principles provide the basis for the merit review criteria, as well as a context within which the users of the criteria can better understand their intent.

### 2. Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board approved merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. **Both** criteria are to be given **full consideration** during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria. (PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.d(i) contains additional information for use by proposers in development of the Project Description section of the proposal). Reviewers are strongly encouraged to review the criteria, including PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.d(i), prior to the review of a proposal.

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to
  - a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and

- b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Proposers are reminded that reviewers will also be asked to review the Data Management Plan and the Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan, as appropriate.

## 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 evaluate proposals using two National Science Board approved merit review criteria and, if applicable, additional program specific criteria. A summary rating and accompanying narrative will generally be completed and submitted by each reviewer and/or panel. 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 strives to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. Large or particularly complex proposals or proposals from new awardees may require additional review and processing time. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director acts upon the Program Officer's recommendation.

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. After an administrative review has occurred, Grants and Agreements Officers perform 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.

Once an award or declination decision has been made, Principal Investigators are provided feedback about their proposals. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers or any reviewer-identifying information, 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.

## 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 notice, 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 notice; (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 notice. 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 [https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award\\_conditions.jsp?org=NSF](https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF). Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 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 *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).

**Special Award Conditions:**

If the Principal Investigator (PI) transfers at any time prior to or during the award period to a position that is tenured, tenure-track, or tenure-track-equivalent at a CAREER-eligible institution, the CAREER award may be transferred to the new institution. Before such a transfer will be approved by NSF, the PI's new organization must supply documentation, including a new Departmental Letter. The new Departmental Letter must document support for the project goals as described in the original proposal or in a revised scope, as well as provide a plan for the mentoring of the PI. Note that if a CAREER award has received co-funding from the Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), no portion of the EPSCoR funds may be transferred to a non-EPSCoR institution.

The CAREER award must be relinquished if the PI transfers at any time prior to or during the award period:

- to a position that is not at least 50% tenured, tenure-track, or tenure-track equivalent; or
- to a new organization that is not CAREER-eligible.

In most circumstances, transfer of the CAREER award to a substitute PI is not permissible. However, the cognizant Program Officer may approve a no-cost extension period to allow students or postdoctoral researchers to finish their work.

In some specific situations where a PI is incapacitated and unable to continue the work (for instance, for health reasons), continued support of the graduate and postdoctoral students supported under the CAREER project may be possible. If the PI's institution provides evidence that other faculty members are willing and able to provide high-caliber mentoring of the students, then the cognizant Program Officer can request that the NSF Division of Grants and Agreements approve the appointment of a substitute PI at the institution for the award with budget modified by elimination of PI salary. Support for students and postdoctoral associates (including travel to conferences and other items in the budget) would remain unchanged. Such action is most strongly supported when the students can pursue research in projects that are the same as those established by the original PI or in closely-allied areas.

## 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 no later than 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require submission of more frequent project reports). No later than 120 days following 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 all identified PIs and co-PIs on a given award. 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 Research.gov, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on accomplishments, project participants (individual and organizational), publications, and other specific products and impacts of the project. Submission of the report via Research.gov constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report also 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.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)* Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).

## VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

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General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Division CAREER contacts listed on the CAREER web page at: <https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/career/contacts.jsp>
- Faculty Early Career program, telephone: (703)292-5111, email: [nsf-ccc@nsf.gov](mailto:nsf-ccc@nsf.gov)

For questions related to the use of FastLane or Research.gov, contact:

- FastLane and Research.gov Help Desk: 1-800-673-6188  
FastLane Help Desk e-mail: [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov).  
Research.gov Help Desk e-mail: [rgov@nsf.gov](mailto:rgov@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).

**CAREER Directorate and Division Contacts:**  
<https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/career/contacts.jsp>

## 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, "NSF Update" is an information-delivery system 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 [Grants Conferences](#). Subscribers are informed through e-mail or the user's Web browser each time new publications are issued that match their identified interests. "NSF Update" also is available on [NSF's website](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <https://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 55,000 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 Arctic 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 (FASSED)* provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* Chapter II.E.6 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 <https://www.nsf.gov>

- **Location:** 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
- **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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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; and 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 proposal review process; to proposer 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 or other entities needing information regarding applicants or nominees as part of a joint application review process, or in order to coordinate programs or policy; 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 [System of Record Notices](#), NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records." Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. 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 the burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

Suzanne H. Plimpton  
Reports Clearance Officer  
Office of the General Counsel  
National Science Foundation  
Alexandria, VA 22314

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