

CHAPTER I

BASIC INFORMATION

This chapter provides basic information about the National Science Foundation and its organization, NSF grant policies and procedures, and this Manual. It consists of the following topics:

- 100 THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**
- 110 NSF ORGANIZATION**
- 120 THE NSF GRANT POLICY MANUAL**
- 130 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND MERIT REVIEW**

100 THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

a. 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."

b. The Foundation carries out its statutory responsibilities for the support of research, education and related activities, through a number of programs. The *NSF Guide to Programs* and other announcements and solicitations contain information about NSF programs, their objectives and timing for the submission of proposals. (See *NSF Grant Proposal Guide* for information on proposal preparation guidelines.)

c. NSF has no programs involving the construction of public works in metropolitan areas, no development assistance programs, no programs requiring State plans as a condition of assistance, none involving coordination of planning in multi-jurisdictional areas and no programs of grants to State and local governments as defined in Section 6501(4) of Title 31 of the United States Code (USC).

110 NSF ORGANIZATION

The NSF organizations/offices described below are normally of most direct interest to grantees. Consult the NSF website at <http://www.nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp> for the most current listing of NSF offices/directorates.

111 National Science Board

The National Science Board establishes the policies of the National Science Foundation within the framework of applicable national policies set forth by the President and the Congress. The Board is composed of 24 members, representing a cross section of American leadership in science and engineering research and education; appointed by the President to six-year terms, with one third appointed every two years; and selected solely on the basis of established records of distinguished service. The NSF Director is a member ex officio of the Board. In addition to establishing the policies of the

Foundation, the Board along with the Director, recommends and encourages the pursuit of national policies for the promotion of research and education in science and engineering.

112 Program Division/Office

Program Divisions/Offices are responsible for the scientific, technical and programmatic review and evaluation of proposals and for recommending that proposals be declined or awarded. The scientific, engineering and/or educational aspects of an award will be monitored by the NSF Program Officer identified in the award letter.

113 Division of Grants & Agreements (DGA)

The Division of Grants and Agreements (DGA) provides excellence in stewardship of the federal funding awarded by NSF and is responsible for business, financial, and administrative assistance across the continuum of awards from pre-award through closeout. DGA provides innovative and exemplary public service in support of its diverse stakeholders including Awardees, NSF Directorates and others within the national scientific research and education communities, and maintains a leadership role in the federal grants arena. In carrying out NSF's primary mission of providing basic research support, DGA interacts on a continuing basis with academic and non-academic institutions, private industry, state and local governments, and other Federal agencies. The Division of Grants and Agreements (DGA) is responsible for the business, financial and administrative review of all recommended grants, most cooperative agreements¹ and other assistance awards and assuring that they are consistent with applicable policies, regulations, directives and fund certifications.

NSF Grants Officers have delegated authority to issue grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance awards, and to obligate NSF funds for expenditures under such arrangements. DGA is also responsible for issuing all amendments and certain approvals under these awards, for monitoring awardees' compliance with terms and conditions, and for the administration and closeout of these awards.

NSF Grants Officers provide pre- and post-award technical assistance on the aforementioned policies, regulations, and directives, both to NSF program officials and awardees. Such assistance is provided through a variety of venues, including on-site visits to awardee institutions, outreach forums and by serving on Project Advisory Teams.

114 Division of Institution and Award Support (DIAS)

DIAS is responsible for risk assessment and post-award monitoring activities, grants and agreements policy including clearance of NSF proposal-generating documents,

¹DCCA is responsible for negotiation, award and administration of complex cooperative agreements for Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC's), major research facilities and various science, technology, engineering and education center programs.

outreach to the external community, cost analysis and award support, audit resolution and electronic awards and procurement systems administration.

DIAS, through the Policy Office, is responsible for the development, coordination, and issuance of NSF pre- and post-award policies for the assistance programs of the National Science Foundation. The Policy Office provides guidance on policies and procedures related to NSF's electronic proposal and award systems. The responsibility for reviewing and providing official clearance approval for all NSF proposal-generating documents also resides in the Policy Office.

Another important function of the Policy Office is the coordination of outreach programs for external stakeholders and NSF staff. Through a variety of mechanisms, the Policy Office coordinates the release of timely and relevant information regarding NSF policy and procedures, proposal preparation, and award management to the broad research community. In addition to working closely with professional research administration associations, the Policy Office coordinates two major regional grants conferences held at various institutions around the country (one in the spring and one in the fall).

DIAS staff in the Cost Analysis and Audit Resolution (CAAR) branch perform cost analyses and resolve audit findings pertaining to the allowability, allocability, and appropriateness of costs claimed under all NSF awards, including grants and cooperative agreements. CAAR responsibilities include the performance of accounting system, financial capability, budget reviews, and award monitoring and business assistance. CAAR also negotiates indirect cost rates for organizations that have numerous Federal awards where NSF provides the preponderance of funding.

With regard to electronic award and procurement systems administration, the Systems Office within DIAS is responsible for the administration, oversight, and interpretation of business rules for assistance awards across NSF's corporate systems. In addition, the Systems Office is responsible for systems analysis and requirements development necessary for the implementation of assistance awards business rules across NSF's corporate systems.

115 Division of Contracts and Complex Agreements (DCCA)

DCCA provides acquisition and cooperative agreement award leadership to the Foundation. The Contracts Branch is responsible for planning, solicitation, negotiation, award and administration of research and research support contracts for NSF. The Complex Agreements Office (CAO) is responsible for planning, solicitation, negotiation, award and administration of complex cooperative agreements for Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), major research facilities and various science, technology, engineering and education center programs. CAO provides cooperative agreement management and oversight for supported multi-institutional and international programs. This includes key participation and input on project advisory teams, business process reviews and redesign, risk assessments, financial and

administrative assistance to all stakeholders and on-site support for large research facilities and FFRDCs.

116 Division of Financial Management (DFM)

The Institutional Ledger Section (ILS) of DFM is available to assist the grantee financial and business official in matters of payment and financial reporting discussed in Chapter IV of this Manual.

117 Office of the General Counsel (OGC)

OGC is the legal advisor and advocate for the Foundation, providing legal advice and assistance on all aspects of the Foundation's programs, policies, and operations, as well as areas affecting science and technology more broadly. Advice is provided in a wide variety of areas, such as: contracts and grants; intellectual property; conflicts of interest; employee and labor relations; privacy (including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act and the Sunshine Act); civil rights; health, safety and environment; public regulation of research; Federal fiscal and administrative law and procedure; international law and agreements; and national security restrictions of scientific research (including export controls).

118 Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (OEOP)

OEOP is responsible for responding to all civil rights matters pertaining to NSF programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. (See GPM 700 for additional information.)

119 Office of Inspector General (OIG)

OIG is an independent oversight office that reports directly to the National Science Board and the Congress. It is responsible for conducting audits, reviews, and investigations of NSF programs and organizations that receive NSF funding. OIG also evaluates allegations of research misconduct, such as plagiarism or the falsification or fabrication of data, involving researchers who request or receive NSF funding (see GPM 931, "NSF Policies and Responsibilities"). The OIG staff includes scientists, attorneys, certified public accountants, investigators, evaluators, and information technology specialists. OIG audits focus on NSF's internal agency programs, as well as grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements funded by NSF. Their purpose is to ensure that the financial, administrative, and program activities of NSF and its awardee organizations are conducted efficiently and effectively. OIG investigations focus on program integrity and possible financial or nonfinancial wrongdoing by organizations and individuals who submit proposals to, receive awards from, conduct business with, or work for NSF. Grant recipients and administrators should contact OIG (1-800-428-2189) to report any instances of possible misconduct, fraud, waste, or abuse.

120 THE NSF GRANT POLICY MANUAL

121 Purpose and Applicability

a. Purpose. This NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) sets forth NSF policies regarding the award and administration of grants and implements Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110, *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations* (2 CFR §215.30), and 45 CFR §602 (the Common Rule implementing OMB Circular A-102), *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments*.² This Manual also implements other OMB Circulars, Public Laws, Executive Orders (E.O.) and other directives³ listed in Exhibit I-1 insofar as they apply to grants, and is issued pursuant to the authority of Section 11(a) of the NSF Act (42 USC §1870).

b. Applicability. This Manual is applicable to NSF grants and cooperative agreements, unless noted otherwise in the award instrument. This Manual does not apply to NSF contracts.

122 General Organization and Citation

The GPM is organized into chapters that correspond, in general, to the process from issuance and administration of a grant through closeout. Other requirements or considerations that either are not universally applicable or which do not necessarily follow the award cycle are contained in Chapters VII-IX. Chapters are subdivided into sections that cover single subjects within the scope of the chapter. Specific sections may be cited by the section number, e.g., GPM 122, “General Organization and Citation.”

123 Changes

The GPM is periodically revised to update existing information, reflect changes in NSF policies and procedures, and incorporate additions or changes in applicable Federal statutes or regulations. The NSF website will always display the most current version of the GPM. Notification of periodic updates or revisions to the GPM will be sent electronically to users via the Custom News Service. Questions or comments concerning GPM chapters and subchapters should be directed to the Policy Office, which can be reached by e-mail at policy@nsf.gov.

130 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND MERIT REVIEW

General guidance for the preparation, (content, format, budget, etc.), submission, review and processing of proposals is contained in the *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG). Proposers are advised that some NSF programs issue or utilize more specific program solicitations that may modify the guidance contained in the GPG. The latest version of

² For purposes of this Manual, references to OMB Circular A-110 also include comparable portions of 45 CFR §602, where appropriate.

³ Consult Exhibit I-1 for information on obtaining these types of documents.

the GPG is available electronically on NSF's website at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubsys/ods/getpub.cfm?gpg>.

STATUTES, EXECUTIVE ORDERS AND OTHER DIRECTIVES

Following are lists of the various statutes, executive orders and other directives referred to or implemented by the GPM section indicated.

1. Statutes (Names in quotes are unofficial)

<i>Title</i>	<i>United States Code</i>	<i>GPM</i>
Age Discrimination Act	42 USC §§6101 et seq.	705
Animal Welfare Act	7 USC §§2131-59	713
Bayh-Dole Act	35 USC §§200-212	730
Cash Management Improvement Act	31 USC §6503	443
Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX	42 USC §§2000d et seq.	702
Cost-type Research and Development Contracts with Educational Institutions	41 USC §254(a)	630
Davis-Bacon Act	40 USC §§276a et seq.	721
Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, Sec. 204	42 USC §3334	800
Education Amendments of 1972, Title IX	20 USC §§1681-86	704
Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977	31 USC §§6301-08	210
Freedom of Information Act	5 USC §552	812.3
Government in the Sunshine Act	5 USC §552b	812.3
Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968	31 USC §6502	800
Internal Revenue Code of 1954	26 USC 501(c)	730
International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act of 1974	49 USC §1517	760
Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972	16 USC §§1361-1421h	714
Metric Conversion Act of 1975, as amended	15 USC §205a-k	863
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Sec. 102	42 USC §4332	830
National Flood Insurance Act of 1968	42 USC §4012a 42 USC §4106	723
National Historic Preservation Act	16 USC §470	840
National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended	42 USC §§1861-75	100, 120, 333, 722, 731
Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980	44 USC §§3501-11	811.1
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 504	29 USC §794	703
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act	42 USC §6962	830
Single Audit Act	31 USC §§7501-07	350

2. Executive Orders

<i>Number</i>	<i>Short Title</i>	<i>GPM</i>
11246	Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended	701, 706
12250	Leadership and Coordination of Nondiscrimination Laws	702

11988	Floodplain Management	723
11593	Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment	840
12958	Classified National Security Information	850
12372	Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs	800
12549	Debarment and Suspension	912
12699	Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally-assisted or Regulated New Building Construction	724
12770	Metric Usage in Federal Government Programs	863
12958	National Security	850

3. NSF Regulations (45 CFR, Chapter VI)

<i>Part Number</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>GPM</i>
602	Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments	Entire Manual
605, 611, 617, 618	Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs	700
612, 613, and 614	Freedom of Information, Privacy, and Government in the Sunshine Acts	812.3
620	Debarment and Suspension	912, 930
630	Drug Free Workplace	
640	National Environmental Policy Act	830
650	Patents	731
660	Intergovernmental Review of NSF Programs	800
689	Research Misconduct	930
690	Protection of Human Subjects	711

4. Other Federal Regulations

<i>Title</i>	<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>	<i>GPM</i>
Contract Cost Principles and Procedures (Federal Acquisition Regulations)	48 CFR §31	600
Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public	5 CFR §1320	811
Council on Environmental Quality	40 CFR §§1500-1508	830
Disposition (Government-owned Federal Information Processing Equipment)	41 CFR §201.23	546.6
Equal Employment Opportunity	41 CFR §60	706
Metric Usage in Federal Government Programs	3 CFR, 1991 comp	863
Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development Under Grants and Contracts with Hospitals	45 CFR, Part 74, Appendix E	601
Withdrawal of Cash from the Treasury for Advances Under Federal Grant and Other Programs	31 CFR, 205	430
Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties	36 CFR §800	840
Rights to Inventions Made by Nonprofit	37 CFR §§401 et seq.	731

Organizations and Small Business Firms Under Government Grants, Contracts, and Cooperative Agreements		
Rules and Procedures for Funds Transfers	31 CFR §205	Chapter 4
Small Business Size Regulations	13 CFR §121	501
Utilization of Personal Property	41 CFR §101.43	543

5. Office of Management and Budget Circulars

<i>Number</i>	<i>Short Title</i>	<i>GPM</i>
A-21	Cost Principles for Educational Institutions	601
A-87	Cost Principles for State and Local Governments	601
A-110	Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements to Non-Profit Organizations	Entire Manual
A-122	Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations	601
A-133	Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations	350

6. How to Obtain

Volumes of the *United States Code* and the *Code of Federal Regulations* can be purchased from the Government Printing Office by contacting Superintendent of Documents, Attn: New Orders, Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Telephone orders can be made with a credit card by dialing: (202) 512-1800 (voice), (202) 512-2250 (fax), or (202) 512-2265 (TDD). In addition, the Government Printing Office distributes these documents to U.S. Government Depository Libraries in each state. These documents are also often available in the reference sections of major libraries.

Copies of pending and enacted federal legislation can be requested by bill or law number by calling either the Senate Document Room at (202) 224-7701 or the House Document Room at (202) 225-3456. For further information about ordering other congressional documents, contact the Government Printing Office on (202) 512-2465.

Copies of *Executive Orders* and *Office of Management and Budget Circulars* can be obtained by contacting: The Executive Office of the President (EOP), Publications Distribution Services, 725 17th Street, NW, Room 2200, Washington, DC 20503 or by telephone at (202) 395-7332. In addition, electronic copies of almost all of these documents are available on the World Wide Web. A convenient starting point for locating them is the General Services Administration's Fedlaw site at <http://fedlaw.gsa.gov/>.