



Office of Science and Technology Policy
Executive Office of the President
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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT TAKES STEPS TO STREAMLINE RESEARCH BUSINESS PROCESS

In several actions the Executive Office of the President, acting through the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), has taken steps to promote multidisciplinary and collaborative research and to streamline the business process for managing federal research grant awards.

The first action comes in the form of a memorandum to Federal departments and agencies from John H. Marburger, III, Science Advisor to President Bush and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). The memo establishes appropriate policies to acknowledge more than one principal investigator (PI) when there is more than one collaborating investigator working on a Federally-funded research project.

This policy will provide recognition for scientists who are working on multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary projects within their institutions, or with collaborators at other institutions. Often, issues such as promotion, tenure, and other resources are dependent on the recognition that individuals are participating as PIs on research projects. Some research agencies acknowledge such contributions today, but others do not, and this policy will help provide more uniform recognition of collaborating PIs across agencies as multidisciplinary science continues to increase over the next decade.

This action comes as a result of public comment solicited by the NSTC Committee on Science, Research Business Models (RBM) Subcommittee on policy implications of the changing nature of scientific research, particularly multidisciplinary and collaborative research.

Other actions include a memorandum from Dr. Kathie L. Olsen, OSTP Associate Director for Science, and Linda Springer, Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), to the NSTC Committee on Science that endorses the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) model research subagreement as an effective practice that should be extended among all collaborating institutions. The FDP, which is a cooperative initiative among 10 Federal agencies and 96 institutional recipients of Federal funds designed to improve the effectiveness of research administration, has refined a model subagreement for use when scientists are collaborating on research projects at different institutions.

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The agreement addresses all of the typical arrangements between the investigators and institutions, including the requirements of Federal sponsoring agencies, thereby expediting the time it ordinarily takes to negotiate these terms and initiate the research project.

The third action is a proposal from OSTP and OMB to establish the uniform and streamlined core set of terms and conditions on research awards, developed under the FDP, as guidance for all Federal research agencies. This proposal, which is to be published in the Federal Register by the end of January, would allow for more flexible and efficient use of Federal research funds by institutions, and bring greater standardization to the management of research awards among Federal agencies. The proposal promotes more consistent implementation of current OMB research administrative guidance for universities and nonprofit organizations. The proposed policy directive also instructs Federal agencies to minimize the degree to which they supplement the core set with agency-specific, program-specific or award-specific terms and conditions. [This is consistent with a longer-term objective under P.L. 106-107 (Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999) to standardize award format and content for all Federal grants and cooperative agreements.] The public and research agencies will have 60 days to comment on this proposal.

About the National Science and Technology Council

The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), a cabinet level council, is the principal means for the President to coordinate science, and technology policies across the Federal Government. NSTC acts as a “virtual” agency for science and technology to coordinate the diverse parts of the Federal research and development enterprise.

An important objective of the NSTC is the establishment of clear national goals for Federal science and technology investments in areas ranging from information technologies and health research to improving transportation systems and strengthening fundamental research. This council prepares research and development strategies that are coordinated across Federal agencies to form an investment package that is aimed at accomplishing multiple national goals.

To obtain additional information regarding the NSTC, contact the NSTC Executive Secretariat at (202) 456-6101

About the Office of Science and Technology Policy

Congress established OSTP in 1976 with a broad mandate to advise the President and others within the Executive Office of the President on the impacts of science and technology on domestic and international affairs. The 1976 Act also authorizes OSTP to lead an interagency effort to develop and to implement sound science and technology policies and budgets and to work with the private sector, state and local governments, the science and higher education communities, and other nations toward this end. The Director of OSTP serves as co-chair of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and oversees the National Science and Technology Council on behalf of the President. For more information visit www.ostp.gov.