



# National Science Foundation

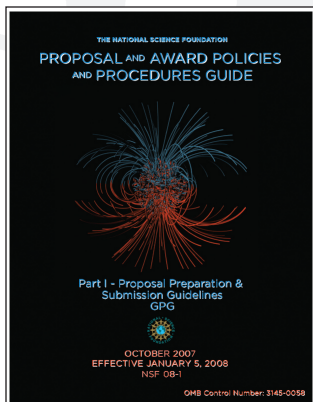
## Policy Office

### Division of Institution and Award Support

Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3

## New NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide



On October 1, 2007, NSF published a new version of the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide. This new version will be effective for proposals received on or after January 5, 2008. It should be noted that revisions were made only to the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG); all other parts of the Guide, such as the Award & Administration Guide (AAG), remain unchanged.

A number of important changes were made including 1) The revision of the intellectual merit review criterion to specifically include language on potentially transformative research; 2) The require-

ment that organizations must be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) prior to submitting a proposal to NSF; and 3) Updated guidance on the designated fonts that may be used when preparing an NSF proposal.

Regarding the use of fonts, the GPG was updated to allow the following fonts on proposals to NSF: 1) Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger; 2) Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger; and 3) Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger. A font size of less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figure, table or diagram captions and when using a Symbol font to insert Greek letters or special characters. PIs are cautioned, however, that the text must still be readable. In addition to the typefaces identified above, Macintosh users also may use Helvetica and Palatino typefaces.

The full version of the GPG is available at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg). Please contact the Policy Office at NSF at [policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov) should you have any questions.

## Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Requirement

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (P.L. 109-282) requires agencies to make award and subaward information available for search by the public. Agencies must make award data available beginning January 1, 2008 and subaward data available beginning January 1, 2009.

In order for NSF to validate the accuracy of a proposing organization's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, NSF will use the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database which is the most complete and accurate data source. CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Government. CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of agency acquisition missions, including Federal agency contract and assistance awards.

### In This Issue:

#### **New NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide**

#### **Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Requirement**

#### **The America COMPETES Act and NSF**

#### **NSF Launches Merit Review Website**

#### **NSF and Research.gov**

#### **NSF Reduces the Use of Social Security Numbers (SSN)**

#### **Spring 2008 NSF Regional Grants Conference in Providence, RI**

This CCR registration requirement will go into effect beginning on January 5, 2008. Please note that registration is required of organizations only. To register in the CCR, go to <http://www.ccr.gov/>. Proposers are advised that it takes approximately two business days to complete the registration process. Failure to complete the CCR registration process prior to proposal submission may impact the processing of an organization's proposal.

## The America COMPETES Act and NSF

The America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, otherwise known as the America COMPETES Act, was signed into law on August 9, 2007. It shares the goals of the American Competitiveness Initiative announced by the President in February 2006. The overarching goals of the America COMPETES Act are to increase research investment; strengthen educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics from elementary through graduate school; and develop an innovative infrastructure. The complete text of the America COMPETES Act (H.R. 2272) is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d110:h.r.02272:>.

The America COMPETES Act supports basic research by setting budgets at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Department of Energy's Office of Science, and the National Science Foundation on a path to doubling within the near term. The total NSF budget is authorized at \$6.6 billion in FY 2008, \$7.326 billion in FY 2009, and \$8.132 billion in FY 2010. These funding levels keep the agency on a path to double its budget in approximately seven years.

The NSF Policy Office is currently investigating policy implications that the Act imposes on NSF including activities involving mentoring of postdoctoral research fellows; required training in the responsible conduct of research; the reporting and sharing of research results; and cost sharing, to name a few.

With respect to cost sharing, the Act specifically directs NSF to require cost sharing in the Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Program of at least 30%. This is a major change from NSF's policy to remove cost sharing from all programs supported by the Foundation. The MRI program seeks to improve the quality and expand the scope of research and research training in science and engineering, and to foster the integration of research and education by providing instrumentation for research-intensive learning environments.

Specific details about the cost sharing component of the MRI funding opportunity that was posted October 24, 2007, can be found in a Dear Colleague Letter at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2007/nsf07251/nsf07251.jsp>.

For more information about NSF and the America COMPETES Act, see the NSF section of H.R. 2272 at [http://www.nsf.gov/about/congress/110/nsf\\_section\\_hr2272.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/about/congress/110/nsf_section_hr2272.pdf). Stay tuned for additional information regarding this legislation. For further information, please contact the Policy Office at NSF at [policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov).

## Important Links:

### National Science Foundation

<http://www.nsf.gov/>

### Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/>

### Budget Division

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/bud/>

### Division of Acquisition & Cooperative Support

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dcca/>

### Division of Financial Management

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/>

### Division of Grants & Agreements

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dga/>

### Division of Institution and Award Support

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/>

### Policy Office

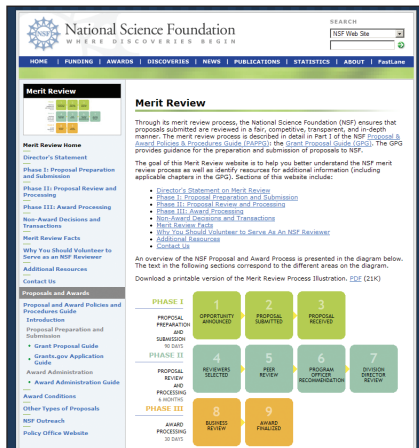
<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/>

### National Science Foundation Update

On November 19, MyNSF was replaced with a new email alert service called "National Science Foundation Update." National Science Foundation Update includes subscription options for all of the document types that were available in MyNSF, and also allows you to subscribe to new content categories, such as Images and Videos, Events, and Upcoming Due Dates for Funding Opportunities. If you were a MyNSF subscriber, the subscriptions you set up in MyNSF have automatically been transferred to National Science Foundation Update.

To subscribe to this service, go to [http://service.govdelivery.com/service/multi\\_subscribe.html?code=USNSF&custom\\_id=823](http://service.govdelivery.com/service/multi_subscribe.html?code=USNSF&custom_id=823).

## NSF Launches Merit Review Website



On October 1, 2007, NSF launched its new Merit Review website at <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/meritreview/>. Prominently displayed on the NSF homepage, the Merit Review website provides an in-depth look at the entire review process at NSF.

A video introduction to the site is provided by NSF Director, Dr. Arden L. Bement, who underlines the importance of the merit review system to the success of NSF-funded science. The website then walks the user through a timeline

covering three distinct stages: (1) Proposal Preparation and Submission; (2) Proposal Review and Processing; and (3) Award Processing. Additional sections cover the topics, “Merit Review Facts,” and “Why You Should Volunteer to Serve as a Reviewer.”

Specifically, the new website answers the following types of questions: What happens when you submit a proposal to NSF; how are reviewers selected to review proposals; who decides whether a proposal is awarded or declined; what type of information does one receive once a proposal has been reviewed; and how long does the entire merit review process take?

To answer these questions, the website includes tools as well as links to specific resource materials found in the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=papp](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp). Please contact the Policy Office at NSF at [policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov) with any questions regarding this new site.

## NSF and Research.gov

In Fall 2007, the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) undertook a pilot project to test NSF’s newest application for the research community. [Research.gov](http://www.research.gov) is a web portal that enables institutions and grantees to access a menu of research grants management services for multiple federal agencies in one location.

One of the greatest challenges facing the research community is the administrative burden associated with federal grants management. Each federal research grant-making agency administers grants differently, with varying business processes and policies, which creates undue burden for grantees. In addition, there is demand in the research community for a consolidated research destination that incorporates streamlined services with comprehensive and up-to-date research content.

Research.gov is dedicated to assisting grantees in navigating the maze of available research information by offering comprehensive research content as well as standardized grants management services that help ease the grants management burden. Grantee benefit can continue to increase over time as other federal agencies actively participate and offer their services through Research.gov.

The Research.gov pilot project currently offers users to check Grant Application Status of proposals submitted to NSF and CSREES, as well as a Policy Library consisting of documents required for submission to both agencies. In the future, Research.gov will include a host of services including online tools to complete and submit research performance progress reports; request electronic funds disbursement and payment; convert documents into PDF format required by many federal agencies; complete and submit the consolidated Financial Status Report (SF-269) and Federal Cash Transaction Report (SF-272); and a publicly searchable sub-award data from NSF and partner agencies in accordance with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA).

Please check out <http://www.research.gov> for more information and updates.

## NSF Reduces the Use of Social Security Numbers (SSN)

The National Science Foundation is taking proactive steps to protect its customer's personally identifiable information and reduce the use of Social Security Numbers (SSNs). The Foundation takes this responsibility very seriously. Over the next few months we are reducing the use of SSN in applications that do not require it for business purposes and introducing a new security feature throughout FastLane. NSF IDs will replace SSNs as our primary means of identifying you. You will use your NSF ID — in conjunction with your FastLane password — to log into FastLane. You will also be asked to provide your NSF ID in other areas such as password change requests.

As of this writing, NSF has already started the process of implementing an NSF ID to replace the use of SSN. New users of the FastLane Grants applications are assigned an NSF ID when they register.

Existing FastLane customers and SPOs do not need to take any action at this time as the change will be done for you in the coming months. When NSF IDs are assigned, you will be notified as you start to log in to FastLane. After identifying yourself to FastLane, an intermediate log-in screen containing your NSF ID will appear. An NSF ID lookup function will also be available should you need to retrieve your NSF ID in the future. We will post a FastLane Advisory once this change occurs. Grants.gov applicants who submit an application to NSF via Grants.gov will be assigned NSF IDs as their FastLane Login ID.

You will still be required to use your SSN in some situations. For example, NSF will continue to need your SSN to distribute reimbursements when applicable.

Although we know that moving to new identifying numbers may be inconvenient for some customers, we trust you understand that this is just one more step NSF is taking to protect your personally-identifiable information.

To view more information and advisories, please visit FastLane at <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/>. We will continue to provide updates.



## Spring 2008 NSF Regional Grants Conference in Providence, RI



University of Rhode Island

The second National Science  
Foundation Regional Grants  
Conference of fiscal year 2008

will be held in Providence, RI and hosted by the University of Rhode Island on April 7-8, 2008, with optional FastLane/Grants.gov sessions on April 6th.

Key representatives from the National Science Foundation as well as your colleagues - faculty, researchers and grant administrators - representing colleges and universities from around the US will participate.

This two-day conference is a must, especially for new faculty, researchers and administrators who want to gain key insight into a wide range of current issues at NSF including the state of current funding; new and current policies and procedures; and pertinent administrative issues. NSF program officers representing each NSF directorate will be on hand to provide up-to-date information about specific funding opportunities and answer your questions.

Additional conference details including registration information will be posted shortly on the NSF Policy Office website. Check <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/outreach.jsp> for further updates.

