

**NSF Policy Issues:  
The American Recovery &  
Reinvestment Act & the America  
COMPETES Act**

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# Ask Early, Ask Often!

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# Topics

- American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009
  - Eligible Proposals
  - Reporting and Accountability Requirements & Special Award Conditions
  
- America COMPETES ACT
  - NSF Implementation



# American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) was signed into law by President Obama on February 17th, 2009. It is an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The Act is an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression, and includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need.
- Important Notice 131, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009



# NSF ARRA Implementation

- Eligible proposals
  - Eligibility includes proposals that will be received, reviewed and/or awarded prior to September 30, 2009.
  - Reversal of Previously Declined Proposals



# NSF ARRA Implementation (Continued)

## ■ Reversal of Declined Proposals

- Proposals that were highly rated and declined due to lack of available funding at the time the original decision was made are eligible for funding.
- NSF PO will send a notification to AOR, PI and co-PIs that NSF is considering the reversal of a decline decision.



# NSF ARRA Implementation (Continued)

- Reversal of Declined Proposals
  - Organizational response from AOR must stipulate:
    - Scope of work specified in original proposal can still be completed
    - PI and any identified co-PIs remain available
    - Submission of a new set of proposal certifications
  - Program Officers will contact the organization to initiate the process!



# NSF ARRA Implementation (Continued)

- Reporting and Accountability Requirements
  - Expectations for accountability & transparency for agencies and recipients
  - Higher scrutiny from:
    - Administration
    - Congress
    - Public
    - Recovery Act Accountability & Transparency Board
    - NSF Office of the Inspector General (OIG)





# NSF ARRA Implementation (Continued)

- Reporting and Accountability Requirements and Special Award Conditions:
  - Awards will identify funding from ARRA.
  - Funding should be considered one-time funding.
  - Within 10 days following the end of each quarter, the recipient must report in accordance with Section 1512c of the Act. The specific data elements to be reported are currently being finalized.
  - Funds must be separately tracked and monitored independently of non-ARRA funding.
  - NSF will monitor ARRA funds, and, if, after 12 months, no allowable expenditures have been incurred, NSF will consider reducing or terminating the award and reallocating the funds.
  - Additional award terms may be added for certain programs.



# NSF ARRA Website

- Additional information, including FAQs are available on the NSF ARRA website at:
  - [www.nsf.gov/recovery/](http://www.nsf.gov/recovery/)



# America COMPETES Act NSF Implementation

- 5 internal working groups were formed in the following areas:
  - Budget
  - Major Research Equipment & Facilities Construction
  - Education & Human Resources
  - Computer & Information Science & Engineering/Cyber Infrastructure
  - Policy



# ACA Policy-Related Provisions of Interest to the Research Community

- SEC 7008: Postdoctoral Research Fellows
- SEC 7009: Responsible Conduct of Research
- SEC 7010: Reporting of Research Results
- SEC 7013: Cost Sharing



# SEC 7008: Postdoctoral Research Fellows

- “Mentoring - The Director shall require that all grant applications that include funding to support postdoctoral researchers include a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals, and shall ensure that this part of the application is evaluated under the Foundation's broader impacts merit review criterion. Mentoring activities may include career counseling, training in preparing grant applications, guidance on ways to improve teaching skills, and training in research ethics.
- Reports - The Director shall require that annual reports and the final report for research grants that include funding to support postdoctoral researchers include a description of the mentoring activities provided to such researchers.”



# Section 7008 Implementation

- Section 7008 has been implemented via revisions to the relevant sections of the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), the FastLane Project Reporting System, and the Representative Activities of Broader Impacts document that is posted on the NSF website.
  - Each proposal that contains postdoctoral researchers must include, as a supplementary document, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. The mentoring plan must not exceed one page.
  - This one-page limitation also is applied to proposals with subawards, and, separately submitted collaborative proposals.



# Section 7008 Implementation

- The Return without Review section and the Proposal Preparation Checklist will emphasize that proposals that do not describe mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers **will be** returned without review.
- The FastLane project reporting format is being modified to inform PIs of the requirement to report on the mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers during the performance period.
  - This includes any postdoctoral researcher not identified in the original proposal submission!



# SEC 7009: Responsible Conduct of Research

- “The Director shall require that each institution that applies for financial assistance from the Foundation for science and engineering research or education describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in the proposed research project.”





# SEC 7009: Responsible Conduct of Research

- NSF-funded workshop –*Ethics Education: What's Been Learned? What Should be Done?* held by the National Academies of Science & Engineering.
- Federal Register Notice requested public comment
- NSF is adding “the responsible and ethical conduct of research” as a Representative Activity in the listing of Broader Impacts Representative Activities



# SEC 7009: Responsible Conduct of Research

- Proposed Implementation Plan (as described in Federal Register):
  - Beginning October 1, 2009, NSF will require that at the time of proposal submission to NSF, a proposing institution's AOR must certify that the institution has a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF to conduct research.



# SEC 7009: Responsible Conduct of Research

## ■ Proposed Implementation Plan

- Training plans are not required to be included in submitted proposals.
- Standard Award Conditions to be modified – institutions must require RCR training.
- NSF will support the development of an online digital library containing research findings, pedagogical materials, and promising practices regarding the ethical and responsible conduct of research.



# SEC 7010: Reporting of Research Results

- Section 7010 requires that all final project reports and citations of published research documents resulting from research funded, in whole or in part, by the Foundation, are made available to the public in a timely manner and in electronic form through the Foundation's Website.



# SEC 7010: Reporting of Research Results

- Final Project Report will be modified to require PIs to prepare a summary – specifically for the public – on the nature and outcomes of the award.
- FastLane Project Reports system will be modified to incorporate this requirement.
- Expected implementation in Fall 2009.



# SEC 7013: Cost Sharing

- Section 7013 of the America COMPETES Act directed the National Science Board (Board) to “evaluate the impact of its [2004] policy to eliminate cost sharing for research grants and cooperative agreements for existing programs that were developed around industry partnerships and historically required industry cost sharing, such as the Engineering Research Centers and Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers.” The Act directed that the Board “also consider the impact that the cost sharing policy has on initiating new programs for which industry interest and participation are sought.”



# SEC 7013: Cost Sharing

## ■ Cost Sharing History

- 2004 policy was eliminated cost sharing at NSF.
- ACA directed the NSB to evaluate the impact of NSF cost sharing policy.
- NSB issued preliminary report recommendations
  - Cost Sharing Requirements would be applied to the following programs:
    - Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR);
    - Engineering Research Centers (ERC); and
    - Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRC).



# SEC 7013: Cost Sharing

- NSB issued second report on cost sharing  
<http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/committees/cs/index.jsp>
- Nine recommendations have two primary objectives:
  - To allow, but narrowly circumscribe, the application of mandatory cost sharing requirements in NSF Programs;
  - To prohibit voluntary committed cost sharing in NSF proposals and eliminate post-award tracking and reporting requirements.





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[www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov)

