



## General Programmatic Terms and Conditions (PTC) for the Long- Term Ecological Research Network Office (LTER) Cooperative Agreement(s)

Issued Pursuant to the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG), (NSF 08-01), Effective January 5, 2008

1. **Key Personnel:** Except for the Principal Investigator(s) (PIs) or Co-PIs identified in this award, requests to make any changes to personnel, organizations, and/or partnerships specifically named in the proposal, that have been approved as part of this award, shall be submitted in writing to the cognizant NSF Program Official for approval prior to any changes taking effect.

**Executive Director (defined in the LTER Bylaws Article IX, Section 4):** The Executive Director is the Principal Investigator and scientific leader of the Cooperative Agreement. The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Long-Term Ecological Research Network (LTER) Office, including cooperation with the LTER Executive Board to set priorities for the Office, development and implementation of a strategic vision for the Office, management and evaluation of staff, oversight of Office efforts as outlined in the Cooperative Agreement, and communication with the NSF, LTER community, other cooperating agencies, and the general public. The Executive Director will implement programmatic recommendations of the Executive Board, consistent with the Cooperative Agreement with the NSF. The Executive Director supervises Senior Staff of the Office, conducts annual reviews of performance for Senior Staff, and meets with them several times each year to update and revise goals.

**Senior Staff:** The four senior staff members, along with the Executive Director, constitute the management team of the Office. Under the supervision of the Executive Director, senior staff members have responsibility for the four categories of activities described in the proposal and supervise the technical staff assigned to these activities. They advise the Executive Director on matters pertaining to their areas of expertise and work with the Executive Director and other staff to further the goals of the LTER Network. They may assume the duties of the Executive Director in his absence. Senior Staff:

- Director for Synthesis Support\*
- Chief Information Officer\*
- Director for Development and Outreach\*\*
- Senior Program Manager\*\*\*

- \* Co-PIs, with appointments as research faculty
- \*\* Co-PIs, with appointments as faculty
- \*\*\* Regular staff member at institution

2. **Program/Project Description:** The Long-Term Ecological Research Network Office (LNO), was established in 1993 to provide critical services in support of the research and education goals of the LTER network, represent the network in its interactions with other scientific networks and centers, facilitate the operation of the network as a cohesive research entity, and foster new, broadly-based initiatives that extend LTER science, education, and cyberinfrastructure to new communities. Significant changes in the vision for LTER network science have taken place since the last renewal in 2003, based on decadal strategic planning by the LTER community. New collaborations are envisioned between ecologists and social scientists to create a new body of theory that draws on and incorporates information technology and the most advanced educational approaches to amplify the societal impact of this vision. As a result, the LNO also identified needs for additional support to address new network research, cyberinfrastructure, and governance goals. Proposed activities address new cyberinfrastructure goals, including completion of a network information system, management of increased numbers of network databases, creation of new synthetic databases, and increased training opportunities for information managers and scientists. The LNO proposes to carry out 13 activities reflecting four groups of functions, support for research synthesis, cyberinfrastructure, core services, and development and outreach.

The impact of the LNO extends well beyond the bounds of LTER to include broader social-ecological and informatics communities. By supporting research working groups, the LNO encourages interactions between ecologists and social scientists and provides opportunities for increasing synthesis and expanding collaborations. These developing collaborations encourage broader-scale transdisciplinary activities. Additional impacts result from development of distributed data services and their use for new synthetic research, co-development of standards of practice for ecological information management, development of new cyberinfrastructure tools, increased access to data for education and underserved groups, and collaboration with other environmental observing networks to plan a robust and efficient national cyberinfrastructure for ecological research.

3. **Project Governance:** The Awardee will ensure efficient and effective performance of all project responsibilities by the governing components throughout the award period and that there is an efficient and effective project governing structure in place throughout the award period to support all critical or significant project activities.

Among the governing components, the Awardee shall:

- a. Be responsible for the management, staffing, operation and self-assessment of the LTER Network Office. To ensure the success of the Network Office, it is expected that the Awardee will carry out the specific activities described in the proposal and subsequent modifications.
  - b. Maintain a uniform database of activity and progress.
  - c. Coordinate meetings as necessary between the Network Office Director, NSF staff, the LTER Executive Board, and the LTER National Advisory Board, as described in the proposal and directed by NSF, to review the management and operations of the LTER Network Office.
4. **Reporting Requirements:** The Awardee will provide ad hoc and regular reports as designated by the NSF cognizant Program Official with content, format, and submission time line established by the NSF cognizant Program Official. The Awardee will submit all required reports via FastLane using the appropriate reporting category; for any type of report not specifically mentioned in FastLane, the Awardee will use the “Interim Reporting” function to submit reports.
5. **Ongoing Management and Oversight:** The Awardee will ensure full commitment and cooperation among the governing structure components, including all project staff during all ongoing NSF project management and oversight activities. The Awardee will ensure availability of all key institutional partners during any desk or on-site review as well as timely access to all project documentation.

**Site Visits:** NSF will conduct one comprehensive on-site review of the LTER Network Office during the third year of the six year duration of the award to determine the effectiveness of the office in meeting its stated goals and objectives according to NSF’s two merit criteria. This review will determine whether or not the LTER Network Office is being operated effectively, whether or not the LTER Network Office is providing appropriate service to the LTER community, and whether or not the LTER Network Office is developing outreach activities to research communities outside the LTER Network Office as proposed.