



**National Science Foundation**

4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22230

Questions and NSF Responses on Program Solicitation [NSF 07-542](#)

**Question:** Is it acceptable to include website links in the preliminary and final proposals?

**NSF Response:** URLs that provide information related to the proposal or the proposing organization are not permitted.

**Question:** Is it acceptable to include pictures in the preliminary and final proposals?

**NSF Response:** In accordance with the NSF Grant Proposal Guide, visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are included in the page limitation.

**Question:** Can you give us guidance on the difference between key personnel and named personnel?

**NSF Response:** Key personnel are considered essential to the overall successful performance of the organization in fulfilling its responsibilities under the agreement; prior to diverting those individuals to other activities or programs, NSF approval would be required. These include director, co-director, and senior managers designated as Key by the proposing organization. Biographical sketches must be provided for these individuals in the Biographical Sketches section. Biographical sketches for other individuals identified by name in the proposal but not specified by the proposing organization as Key should be provided in an appendix; if they were to be reassigned the awardee would be required to notify NSF but the agency's approval would not be required.

**Question:** It is difficult to predict what specific subcontracts will be required over the 5 year performance period, including with regard to funding that may come through the cooperative agreement from other federal agencies and given the need to compete these subcontracts. Is it acceptable to do a sample of subcontracts over \$250, 000 based on history?

**NSF Response:** Identify and provide separate budgets for those subawards and subcontracts exceeding \$250,000 that the proposing organization knows at the time of proposal submission that it will require for successful performance of its obligations. All subawards/ subcontracts exceeding \$250,000 that are not known at the time of proposal submission will be subject to the prior approval requirements of Article 49, "Subaward Requirements" of the Cooperative Agreement Supplemental Financial & Administrative Terms and Conditions for Managers of Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), available at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/cafadc/cafaffrdc906.pdf>.

**Question:** Is there a definition of "professional employees"? (see page 13, second bulleted point)

**NSF Response:** The term applies to all employees who, in accordance with the organization's policy, are entitled to receive compensation including salaries, wages, director's and executive committee member's fees, incentive awards, fringe benefits, pension plan costs, allowances for offsite pay, incentive pay, location allowances, hardship pay, and cost of living differentials. If the organization offers a tiered system of benefits, provide that information for each level in the organization.

**Question:** We are unclear on the inclusion or exclusion of references. The Solicitation says that the FastLane form for References should not be submitted. Is it acceptable to use footnotes for references?

**NSF Response:** References are not required, but may be provided within the project description provided the proposal conforms with requirements for proposal preparation and page limit.

**Question:** With regard to Biographical Sketches, the solicitation says that "the GPG guidelines on order and format do not apply for this section of the proposal." Should we follow the GPG guidelines on content?

**NSF Response:** The content provided in Biographical Sketches should be appropriate to the management of an organization and scientific research programs rather than limited to standard academic biographical sketches.