

## NSF Proposal Checklist and Guidelines for NSF Grant Proposal Guidelines 22-1

The following checklist is designed for most National Science Foundation proposals. The checklist is designed to help Principal Investigators (PIs) see the elements required for the proposal. Additional details on each proposal components are listed in the NSF PAPPG (Proposal & Award Policies and Procedures Guide) The Program Solicitations may have specific requirements that may not be included in this checklist, or the checklist may have more than is required for your project. For any questions, please refer to the Program Solicitation or contact your program director.

**Principal Investigator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Solicitation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Internal Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title of Project:** \_\_\_\_\_

### The Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, NSF 22-1

[https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22\\_1/nsf22\\_1.pdf](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22_1/nsf22_1.pdf)

### Collaborators and Other Affiliations instructions and form (required):

<https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa.jsp>

### NSF Resource Center

<https://nsfpolicyoutreach.com/resource-center/>

### NSF-Approved Formats for the Biographical Sketch

<https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp>

### NSF- Approved Formats for Current and Pending Support

<https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp>

### NSF Funding Opportunities:

<https://www.nsf.gov/funding/>

### NSF Directorates and Research Areas

[https://www.nsf.gov/about/research\\_areas.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/about/research_areas.jsp)

## Required Components for all proposals: Collaborative and Individual

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS	ELEMENTS TO COMPLETE	NOTES/GUIDEANCE (See Program Solicitation & PAPPG for details)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	Page Limit
Formatting		<p>Pagination: Proposers are advised that Fastlane does not automatically paginate a proposal. Each section of the proposal that is uploaded as a file must be individually paginated prior to being uploaded to the electronic system.</p> <p><b>Proposal Margin and Spacing Requirements:</b> The proposal must conform to the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use one of the following typefaces identified below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arial9, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger;</li> <li>• Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger; or</li> <li>• Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

		<p>A font size of less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figures, 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.</p> <p>b. No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.</p> <p>c. Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch. These requirements apply to all uploaded sections of a proposal, including supplementary documentation.</p> <p><b>Page Formatting</b></p> <p>Proposers are strongly encouraged to use only a standard, single-column format for the text.</p> <p>The guidelines specified above establish the minimum type size requirements; however, PIs are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal. <b>Small type size makes it difficult for reviewers to read the proposal; consequently, the use of small type not in compliance with the above guidelines may be grounds for NSF to return the proposal without review.</b> Adherence to type size and line spacing requirements also is necessary to ensure that no proposer will have an unfair advantage, by using smaller type or line spacing to provide more text in the proposal</p>		
<b>Cover Sheet</b>	Fillable Form	<p><b>There are four main components of the Cover Sheet in NSF Fastlane:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Awardee Organization/Primary Place of Performance</b></li> <li><b>2. Program Announcement/Solicitation /Program Description Number</b></li> <li><b>3. NSF Unit of Consideration</b></li> <li><b>4. Remainder of the Cover Sheet includes:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Title of Proposed project</li> <li>b. Budget and Budget Duration Information</li> <li>c. Announcement and Consideration Information</li> <li>d. PI information and Co-PI Information</li> <li>e. Previous NSF Award</li> <li>f. Consideration by Other Federal Agencies</li> <li>g. Awardee Organization Information</li> <li>h. Primary Place of Performance</li> <li>i. Other Information</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.a, page II-8</p>		
<b>Project Summary</b>	Text Boxes in NSF Fastlane	<p>Part 1. Overview</p> <p>Part 2. Statement on the Intellectual Merit of the proposed activity.</p> <p>Part 3. Statement on the Broader Impacts of the proposed activity.</p> <p>The Project Summary is typed into three separate text boxes in NSF Fastlane. The Project Summary should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, and,</p>		1 Page

		<p>insofar as possible, understandable to a broad audience within the scientific domain. It should not be an abstract of the proposal.</p> <p>A Project Summary with special characters may be uploaded to Supplementary Documents. Please note that the Project Summary may ONLY be uploaded as a Supplementary Document if use of special characters is necessary. Such Project Summaries must be formatted with separate headings for Overview, Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. Failure to include these headings will result in the proposal being returned without review.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG: Chapter II.C.2.b, page II-11</p>		
<b>Project Description (including Results from Prior NSF Support)</b>	Uploaded as a PDF document	<p>The Project Description should provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and must include the objectives for the period of the proposed work and expected significance; the relationship of this work to the present state of knowledge in the field, as well as to work in progress by the PI under other support. The Project Description should outline the general plan of work, including the broad design of activities to be undertaken, and, where appropriate, provide a clear description of experimental methods and procedures. Proposers should address what they want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified. These issues apply to both the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. <b>The Project Description has been revised to remove the requirement of separate section labelled “Intellectual Merit”. The Project Description also must contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a section labeled “Broader Impacts”.</b></p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.d, page II-11</p>		15 Pages
<b>References Cited</b>	Uploaded as PDF document	<p>Reference information is required. Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapters II.C.2.e, II.D.3.b; page II-13</p>		No Page Limit
<b>Biographical Sketches</b>	Uploaded as a PDF document	<p>A biographical sketch (limited to three pages) is required for everyone identified as senior personnel. Inclusion of additional information beyond that specified below may result in the proposal being returned without review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outline the experiences of the PI and co-PIs (three-page limit each person) using the PAPPG guidelines.</li> </ul> <p>This section also has been updated to include reference to a new table entitled NSF Pre-award and Post-award Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support. The table has been developed to assist users in completion of these sections of the proposal.</p>		2 Pages

		<p>The requirement to use an NSF-approved format for preparation of the biographical sketch will go into effect for new proposals submitted or due on or after October 5, 2020. I <b>NSF-Approved Formats for the Biographical Sketch</b>  <a href="https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp">https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp</a></p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.f., page II-14</p>		
<b>Budget</b>	Fillable form	<p>Follow the directions in the PAPPG and the NSF Program solicitation.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.g, page II-15</p>		
<b>Budget Justification</b>	Uploaded as a PDF document.	<p>Each proposal must contain a budget for each year of support requested. The budget justification must be no more than five pages per proposal. The amounts for each budget line item requested must be documented and justified in the budget justification as specified below. For proposals that contain a subaward(s), <b>each subaward</b> must include a separate budget justification of no more than five pages. See Chapter II.C.2.g.(vi)(e) for further instructions on proposals that contain subawards. The proposal may request funds under any of the categories listed so long as the item and amount are considered necessary, reasonable, allocable, and allowable under 2 CFR § 200, Subpart E, NSF policy, and/or the program solicitation. For-profit entities are subject to the cost principles contained in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, Part 31. Amounts and expenses budgeted also must be consistent with the proposing organization's policies and procedures and cost accounting practices used in accumulating and reporting costs.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.g, page II-15</p>		5 Pages
<b>Current &amp; Pending Support</b>	Fillable form or uploaded as a PDF document	<p>Must list this proposal as pending. All current project support should be listed in this section of the proposal, including internal funds allocated toward specific projects. It is no longer allowable for the current and pending support of all senior personnel to be grouped together in a single PDF file. Current and pending support must now be uploaded separately for everyone identified on the proposal as senior personnel.</p> <p><b>NSF- Approved Formats for Current and Pending Support</b>  <a href="https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp">https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp</a></p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.h., page II-24</p>		
<b>Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources</b>	Uploaded as PDF document	<p>In narrative style, provide a description of available facilities (internal and external resources- both physical and personnel) that the organization and its collaborators will provide to the project. Please note that this section is a required part of the proposal. If not applicable, the proposer should enter "Not applicable" in the Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources section of the proposal.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.i., page II-25</p>		

Special Information & Supplementary Documentation	A. Data Management Plan- uploaded as word or PDF document	<p>A Data Management Plan must be included as a supplementary document and is required for all proposals. The plan should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results. The plan should be commensurate with the scope and size of the proposal and follow both NSF-wide and Directorate-specific criteria. Information can be found at the following link. <a href="https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp">https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp</a></p> <p>Collaborative proposals should include only one Data Management plan that will be submitted by the lead organization.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG, Chapter II.C.2.j. page II-26</p>		2 Pages
	B. Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan. The document should be uploaded as word or PDF document	<p>Must be included as a supplementary document if funding to support a postdoctoral researcher is requested.</p> <p>NSF PAPPG, Chapter II.C.2.j. page II-26</p>		1 Page
	C. Letters of Collaboration. Uploaded as a pdf document.	<p><b>All Letters of Collaboration MUST</b> follow the single-sentence format: "If the proposal submitted by Dr. [insert full name of the PI] entitled [insert proposal title] is selected for funding by the NSF, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment or Other Resources section of the proposal."</p> <p>Letters of support or recommendation are NOT permitted unless specifically listed in the program solicitation.</p>		1 Page
Single Copy Documents		<p><b>Collaborators &amp; Other Affiliations (COA)</b> The following information regarding collaborators and other affiliations (COA) must be separately provided for each individual identified as senior personnel on the project. The COA information must be provided through use of the COA template. The information in the tables is not required to be sorted, alphabetically or otherwise. For additional information please refer to the frequently asked questions on the COA template page. Information specified in the PAPPG should be submitted using the instructions and spreadsheet template found on the Collaborators and Other Affiliations Information website at <a href="https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa.jsp">https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa.jsp</a></p> <p>Please see the COA website for updated guidance.</p> <p>See NSF PAPPG Chapter II.C.1.e, page II-6</p>		