<u>NSF Notes</u>

<u>Requirements for an NSF Proposal:</u>

Please make sure to refer to the instructions in the program's specific announcement as there are often special program requirements.

Full text of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide is available here:
http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg

o   Proposals will be submitted through the NSF FastLane system (www.fastlane.nsf.gov)

- Every PI (and Co-PI) will need an NSF FastLane account. If you do not have a FastLane account please contact your Proposal Administrator at the Sponsored Research Services.

o   Upon entering the proposal in FastLane, the PI or proposal administrator will be prompted to select information describing the nature and type of proposal being developed

- 1. Whether the proposal is:

    - A collaborative proposal from one organization (single proposal submitted containing subcontracts)
    - A collaborative proposal from multiple organizations – Title **MUST** begin with **Collaborative Research:**
    - Not a collaborative proposal

- 2. The type of proposal being developed

    - Research – other than RAPID or EAGER
    - RAPID
    - EAGER
    - Ideas Lab
    - Conference
    - Equipment
    - International Travel
    - Facility/Center
    - Fellowship

o   **Use one of the following typefaces identified below:**

- **Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger**

- **Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger**

- **Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger**

o   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.

o   **No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.**

o   **Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch.**

o   **Each section of the proposal that is uploaded as a file must be individually paginated prior to upload to the electronic system. NSF does not automatically do this.**

o   **Requested effective (start) dates must allow at least six months for NSF review, processing, and decision.**

Proposal Sections:

o **Single-Copy Documents:** These categories of information that are submitted in conjunction with a proposal are for "NSF Use Only". As such, the information is not provided to reviewers for use in the review of the proposal.

- **Collaborators & Other Affiliations Information (REQUIRED):** The following information regarding collaborators and other affiliations **must be separately provided for each individual identified as senior project personnel**:

  - Collaborators and co-Editors. A list of all persons in alphabetical order (including their current organizational affiliations) who are currently, or who have been collaborators or co-authors with the individual on a project, book, article, report, abstract or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of the proposal. Also include those individuals who are currently or have been co-editors of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings during the 24 months preceding the submission of the proposal. If there are no collaborators or co-editors to report, this should be so indicated.

  - Graduate Advisors and Postdoctoral Sponsors. A list of the names of the individual's own graduate advisor(s) and principal postdoctoral sponsor(s), and their current organizational affiliations, if known.

  - Thesis Advisor and Postgraduate-Scholar Sponsor. A list of all persons (including their organizational affiliations, if known), with whom the individual has had an association as thesis advisor. In addition, a list of all persons with whom the individual has had an association within the last five years as a postgraduate-scholar sponsor.

- **Authorization to Deviate from NSF Proposal Preparation Requirements (If Applicable)**
- **List of Suggested Reviewers or Reviewers not to include (Optional)**
- **Proprietary or Privileged Information (If Applicable)**

  The information is used to help identify potential conflicts or bias in the selection of reviewers.

o Sections of proposal (for specific guidelines of each section see the NSF Guidebook pages II-9 through II-34)

- **Cover sheet** – PI or Proposal Administrator will enter in information and the page will automatically generate.

  - **Awardee & Project/Performance Site Primary Location**
    - Check the Awardee information to be sure that it correlates to the correct system part that will be submitting the proposal
    - The Project/Performance Site should be the address of the PIs department where the research will be performed.

  - **Project Title**
    - The title should be brief, scientifically or technically valid and suitable for use in the public press. *There is a character limit of 180 characters, including spaces and punctuation.*

  - **Budget and Duration Information**
    - The duration for which the support is requested should be consistent with the nature and complexity of the proposed activity. The requested start date **should allow at least six months** for NSF review, processing and decision.

- **Project Summary** – Each proposal must contain a summary of the proposed project not more than one page in length. The Project Summary consists of an overview, a statement on

the intellectual merit of the proposed activity, and a statement on the broader impacts of the proposed activity.

The overview includes a description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded and a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. The statement on intellectual merit should describe the potential of the proposed activity to advance knowledge. The statement on broader impacts should describe the potential of the proposed activity to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The Project Summary should be written in the third person, informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, and, insofar as possible, understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader. It should not be an abstract of the proposal.

The project summary is entered into three (3) text boxes, Overview, Intellectual Merit, and Broader Impacts. Information must be entered into all three text boxes, or the proposal will not be accepted. *There is a character limit of 4,600 characters, including spaces, for the total of all three text boxes.*

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.*

- Table of Contents – automatically generated by FastLane

- **Project Description** – **15 page limit (unless otherwise noted)**
    - The Project Description **MUST** contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a section labeled "**Broader Impacts**".

    - Visual Materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are to be included in the 15-page limitation. PIs are cautioned that the Project Description must be self-contained and that URLs **must not** be used because: 1) the information could circumvent page limitations; 2) the reviewers are under no obligation to view the sites; and 3) the sties could be altered between the time of submission and the time of review

    - **Results of Prior NSF Support**
      If any PI or co-PI identified on the proposal has received NSF funding with a start date (previously referred to as the effective date) in the past five years (including any current funding and no cost extensions), information on the award is required for each PI and co-PI, regardless of whether the support was directly related to the proposal or not. In cases where the PI or co-PI has received more than one award (excluding amendments to existing awards), they need only report on the one award most closely related to the proposal. Funding includes not just salary support, but any funding awarded by NSF. NSF awards such as standard or continuing grants, Graduate Research Fellowship, Major Research Instrumentation, travel, conference, and center awards, etc., are subject to this requirement.

      The following information must be provided:

      a) The NSF award number, amount and period of support;

      b) The title of the project;

      c) A summary of the results of the completed work, including accomplishments, supported by the award. The results must be separately described under two distinct headings: Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts;

      d) A listing of the publications resulting from the NSF award (a complete bibliographic citation for each publication must be provided either in this

section or in the References Cited section of the proposal); if none, state "No publications were produced under this award."

e) Evidence of research products and their availability, including, but not limited to: data, publications, samples, physical collections, software, and models, as described in any Data Management Plan

f) If the proposal is for renewed support, a description of the relation of the complete work to the proposed work.

- **References Cited** – required; no page limitation. 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. If the proposer has a website address readily available, that information should be included in the citation, but this is optional. References should not include et. al., author name,…,author name or _____, journal name, etc. *Failure to comply with NSF guidance will result in the proposal being returned without review.*

- **Biographical Sketch(es)** – **2 page limit per individual**
    - The following information must be provided in the order and format specified below. *Inclusion of additional information beyond that specified below may result in the proposal being returned without review.*

    - **Do not submit any personal information in the biographical sketch.** This includes items such as: home address; home telephone, fax, or cell phone numbers; home e-mail address; drivers' license numbers; marital status; personal hobbies; and the like. Such personal information is not appropriate for the biographical sketch and is not relevant to the merits of the proposal. NSF is not responsible or in any way liable for the release of such material.

        - **Professional Preparation** – A list of the individual's undergraduate and graduate education and postdoctoral training (including location) as indicated below:

Undergraduate Institution(s)	Location	Major	Degree & Year
Graduate Institution(s)	Location	Major	Degree & Year
Postdoctoral Institution(s)	Location	Area	Inclusive Dates (years)

        - **Appointments** – A list, **in reverse chronological order**, of all the individual's academic/professional appointments beginning with the current appointment.

    - **Products (Maximum allowed is 10 products)** - A list of: (i) up to five products most closely related to the proposed project; and (ii) up to five other significant products, whether or not related to the proposed project. Acceptable products must be citable and accessible including but not limited to publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights. Unacceptable products are unpublished documents not yet submitted for publication, invited lectures, and additional lists of products. Only the list of 10 will be used in the review of the proposal.

      Each product must include full citation information including (where applicable and practicable) names of all authors, date of publication or release, title, title of enclosing work such as journal or book, volume, issue, pages, website and Uniform Resource Locator (URL) or other Persistent Identifier.

      If only publications are included, the heading "**Publications**" may be used for this section of the biographical sketch.

- **Synergistic Activities: limited to 5 activities** – A list of up to five examples that demonstrate the broader impact of the individual's professional and scholarly activities that focuses on the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as its creation. Examples could include, among others: innovations in teaching and training (e.g., development of curricular materials and pedagogical methods); contributions to the science of learning; development and/or refinement of research tools; computation methodologies, and algorithms for problem-solving; development of databases to support research and education; broadening the participation of groups underrepresented in STEM; and service to the scientific and engineering community outside of the individual's immediate organization.

- **In FastLane, biographical sketches for senior personnel may no longer be grouped together and uploaded in a single PDF file associated with the PI. Each individual's biographical sketch must be uploaded as a single PDF file or inserted as text associated with that individual.**

- **Other Personnel** – For the personnel categories listed below, the proposal also may include information on exception qualifications that merit consideration in the evaluation of the proposal. Such information should be clearly identified as "Other Personnel" biographical information and uploaded as a single PDF file in the Other Supplementary Documents section of the proposal.

  Postdoctoral Associates, Other professionals, Student (research assistants)

- **Budget and Budget Justification (3 page limit for justification)**

  - As a general policy, NSF limits the salary compensation requested in the proposal budget for senior personnel to no more than two months of their regular salary in one year. This limit includes salary compensation received **from all NSF-funded grants**. *If anticipated, any compensation for such personnel in excess of two months must be disclosed in the proposal budget, justified in the budget justification, and must be specifically approved by NSF in the award notice budget.*

  - **Budget Justification** –
    - The budget justification should detail the rates of pay by individual for senior personnel, postdoctoral associates and other professionals.

    - List time effort in calendar months, not as a percentage.

    - If no person months and no salary are being requested for senior personnel, they should be removed from Section A of the budget and their role should be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal.

    - Travel and its relation to the proposed activities must be specified, itemized and justified by destination and cost. Funds may be requested for field work, attendance at meetings and conferences and other travel associated with the proposed work, including subsistence.

    - **Participant Support** - Exempt from indirect. Refers to direct costs items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with NSF-Sponsored conferences or training projects. Any additional categories of participant support costs must be justified in the budget justification, and such costs will be closely scrutinized by NSF.

    - DO NOT include any type of cost sharing, unless specifically requested through the RFP.

- **<u>Current and Pending Support</u>** – required for all key personnel (no page limit) – must list "this" proposal under pending support.

- **<u>Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources</u>** – no page limit. This should be uploaded as a PDF file.
    - Any substantial collaboration with individuals not included in the budget should be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal land documented in a letter of collaboration from each collaborator.

- **<u>Proposal Classification (if applicable)</u>** – this section is only applicable to certain proposals. If the section is viewable on the "Form Preparation" page, this section MUST be completed.

- **<u>Special Information and Supplementary Documentation</u>**
    - **Postdoc Mentoring Plan** – **cannot exceed 1 page in length. If a collaborative proposal, ALL postdocs from every institution should be combined included in the 1 page limit. This document should only be uploaded into the lead institution's proposal and not in any non-lead collaborative institution/organization.**

    - **Data Management Plan** – **2 page limits** – **Should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results.**

    - **Appendices may not be included unless a deviation has been authorized**.

Special Characters Guidance for the FastLane Project Summary

The text boxes in the Project Summary section will take all "Allowed Characters" shown in the table below.

If "Special Characters" are necessary, the proposer must upload the Project Summary as a Supplementary Document.

	Allowed Characters	**Special Characters**
	[**A-Z**] [**a-z**] [**0-9**] [**`~!@#$%^&*()_+=-{},./<>?:;'"|**] Carriage Return Line Feed (CRLF) and Enter -- ASCII Control Characters	ä ,ë, ï, ¼, ß, ©, Ā, ã, ë, µ, ¶, §, etc. Any mathematical symbols Greek letters
What happens if these characters are copied and pasted, or typed into the Project Summary text boxes from **Word, RTF,** etc.?	The Allowed Characters may be copied and pasted, or typed into the Project Summary text boxes.	If Special Characters are copied and pasted, or typed into the Project Summary text boxes, they will not display properly in the proposal. If use of Special Characters is necessary, the proposer **must** upload the Project Summary as a Supplementary Document.