



National Science Foundation  
OFFICE OF INFORMATION & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

# NSF Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Program

Discussion with the Federal Demonstration Partnership  
January, 2017

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## IPA Program Provides Significant Value to NSF

- IPAs bring fresh perspectives and deep expertise that keep NSF nimble.
- Combining IPAs with experienced federal employees creates the synergy required to support fundamental research at the frontiers of science.
- IPAs enable a close connection with the community, building and nurturing trust, and serve as ambassadors.

*Authority: Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (5 U.S.C. 3371 - 3376)*



# Performance and Accountability

- Congressional and Inspector General interest in NSF's use of IPAs
  - IPA performance plans and assessments
  - Training and development activities
- IPA Steering Committee
  - Opportunity to articulate overall use of IPAs within a strategic workforce framework
  - Opportunity to identify cost savings in context of NSF mission accomplishment and recruitment/retention of IPAs



# FY 2016 Facts and Figures

- 175 IPAs
  - ~12% of NSF workforce; ~ 25% of NSF scientific staff
- IPA agreement costs: \$42.2M
  - Salary, benefits, per diem, lost consulting
- Requested cost-share was 15%; actual cost-share overall was 6%



# Policy Changes Affecting New IPAs

- Cost Sharing
  - NSF is piloting a required 10% cost sharing of the IPA's academic-year salary and fringe benefits.
- Lost consulting - no longer a reimbursable cost element
- NSF-funded IPA travel to the home institution under the Independent Research and Development program is limited to twelve trips per year.
  - Additional trips using non-NSF funds permitted.



# Cost Sharing Pilot Assessment

- Principal Questions of Interest:
  - To what extent have the new IPA policy changes impacted the quality of the IPA program?
  - What have been the cost implications associated with the pilot?
- Engage with our partners to gather information
- Assessment will continue throughout FY 2017





## Discussion Questions

- Have the new policies (cost sharing, lost consulting, NSF-supported IR/D trips home) influenced IPA's decisions to come to NSF, thus far?
- What are your recommendations to streamline the IPA administrative processes between institutions and NSF?
- How does the IPA program add value for your institution?