

NSF Update

Federal Demonstration Partnership



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Speaker

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Topics

- Automated Compliance Checking
- Proposal Submission Modernization
 - NSF Electronic Research Administration Forum
- Reducing Administrative Burden – Pilots
- Research Terms & Conditions Update



Proposal Compliance Checking

Over past three years, NSF has ramped up pre-submission automated proposal compliance checking. Goals are to increase competitive fairness and reduce burden on both NSF programs and the research community.

Results depend on the funding opportunity and/or mechanism chosen by submitter.

- Deadline Checks – (since Jan 2016) a warning in the last 24 hours before the deadline, and an error when past the deadline. So far, 99.5% of proposals submitted on time.
- Section Exists Checks – checks on 11 sections
- Page Count Checks – lengths are checked for five sections
- Budget Checks – eight checks on rules such as caps on amounts, duration, and amounts matching.
- Other Checks – five checks related to international travel and human or animal use rules.

http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/autocheck/compliancechecks_jan16.pdf



Automated Compliance Checking

AUTOMATED PROPOSAL COMPLIANCE CHECKS PERFORMED BY SYSTEM AS OF JULY 24TH, 2015.*

COMPLIANCE CHECK	FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TYPE	ERROR / WARNING	FUNDING MECHANISM TYPE								
			RESEARCH	RAPID	EAGER	IDEAS LAB	CONFERENCE	EQUIPMENT	INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL	FACILITY/CENTER	FELLOWSHIP
Proposal Section Exists Checks											
1. Project Summary is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Program Solicitation	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Project Description is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Program Solicitation	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. References Cited is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A		
	Program Solicitation	WARNING	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	✓	✓
4. Biographical Sketch(es) is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A		
	Program Solicitation	WARNING	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	✓	✓
5. Primary Budget is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Program Solicitation	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Budget Justification for the Primary Organization is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Program Solicitation	WARNING	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7. Budget Justification for each Subrecipient Organization that exists is required.	GPG Program Description Program Announcement	ERROR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Program Solicitation	WARNING	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/autocheck/compliancechecks_jan16.pdf



Proposal Submission Modernization

- PSM is a multi-year initiative to modernize the proposal submission capabilities currently in FastLane and implement new capabilities in Research.gov.
- Recent survey results indicate strong interest and support in the following areas:
 - Pre-populating proposals with existing data;
 - Allowing certain documents or approvals (e.g. data management plan, detailed budgets, Institutional Review Board approval) to be submitted after proposal submission;
 - Revising the format of NSF solicitations to identify the difference between solicitation-specific requirements and standard NSF proposal requirements;
 - Tailoring the proposal interface to reflect the requirements of a given funding opportunity;
 - Publishing and enforcing a NSF-wide list of proposal compliance requirements.



Proposal Submission Modernization Development

- NSF kicked off the IT project to modernize proposal preparation and submission
- Planning multi-year effort to improve existing functionality and migrate from FastLane to Research.gov
- Planning to use an iterative approach that will allow:
 - NSF to roll out features as they are developed
 - Incorporation of feedback from user community
 - Smooth transition for FastLane users

NSF Electronic Research Administration (ERA) Forum

- New initiative to gather opinions, perspectives and feedback around NSF ERA activities
- First Forum on April 27th from 1:00 – 2:30 ET
 - Proposal Submission Modernization
- More information at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/era_forum.jsp
- Sign up for forum notifications by sending an email to NSF-ERA-FORUM-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov



Reducing Administrative Burden

- In January 2015, NSF provided an update to the NSB Report, Reducing Investigators' Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research.
- NSF is identifying pilot projects to reduce PI and NSF staff administrative burden.
- Considerations are related to preliminary proposals, streamlined budgeting, just-in-time submissions, IRB and IACUC protocols, project reporting and proposal development.



Reducing Administrative Burden: Pilot Programs

- “Just-in-Time” budget process for selected core programs in MPS/DMS, MPS/PHY, and SBIR/STTR
 - Require only a textual description of the resources necessary to complete the project.
 - Require detailed budget only if the proposal is recommended for an award.
 - Allows reviewers and NSF staff to focus on the science.
- Reducing Deadlines – Reducing Proposal Numbers in GEO/EAR
 - Question: Does an increased number of deadlines increase the number of proposals submitted?
 - Two core programs switching to no deadlines to assess proposal pressure



Reducing Administrative Burden: Pilot Programs

- “One-Plus” practice for select SBE/SES and SBE/BCS programs
 - Two programs with large volume of proposals invite “promising proposals” that were not recommended to submit in the next review cycle.
 - Strategy to invite promising, though declined proposals, in the subsequent review cycle.
- Improving the IACUC process – award to PRIM&R
 - Award is to develop a Train-the-Trainer IACUC Institute
 - Goal is to improve oversight of animal care and use programs nationwide by ensuring IACUC accurately apply current regulatory standards
 - Funding also provided by NIH, FDA, USDA & VA



Research Terms and Conditions

Participating Agencies

- Department of Agriculture: NIFA
- Department of Commerce: NIST/NOAA
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Energy
- Department of Transportation: FAA
- Environmental Protection Agency
- NASA
- NIH – co-Chair
- NSF – co-Chair

Research Terms and Conditions

High Level Concept

- The Research Terms and Conditions Overlay will:
 - Incorporate the entire Uniform Guidance by reference and provide additional clarity for select provisions.
 - Incorporate the OMB Frequently Asked Questions, which have the full force and effect of the Uniform Guidance.
 - Apply to an award when included as part of the award or when incorporated in the award by reference.
 - Apply to research and research-related grants made by the participating agencies to institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations.



Research Terms and Conditions

Federal Register Comments

- The Request for public comment on the Draft Research Terms and Conditions Overlay was published in the Federal Register on October 14, 2015.
- The comments period closed December 14, 2015.
- 122 comments were received from over a dozen organizations/ entities.



Research Terms and Conditions

Federal Register Comments: Themes

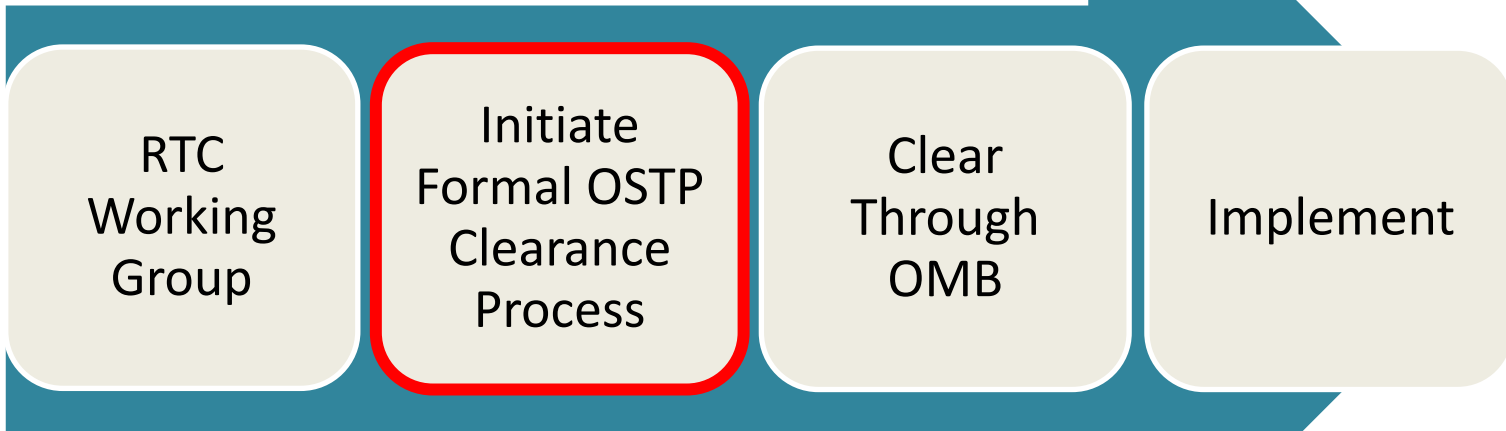
Requests for:

- Additional clarification
- Deviations from the Uniform Guidance
- Incorporation of technical changes to the Uniform Guidance from September 2015



Research Terms and Conditions

High Level Next Steps....



RTC working Group has reconvened to consider and resolve comments.	RBM SBE Research Subcommittee Committee on Science	OMB/OFFM will conduct Regulatory Review of the Final RTCs.	Each agency will implement according to the agency implementation plan.
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For More Information

Ask Early, Ask Often!

[nsf.gov/staff](https://www.nsf.gov/staff)

[nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp)

[nsf.gov/about/career_opps/rotators/index.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/about/career_opps/rotators/index.jsp)

