



**OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION**

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)  
 2020 PROPOSAL AND AWARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDE (PAPPG)  
 FULL RESEARCH PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**

The NSF PAPPG ([NSF 20-1](#)) provides general proposal preparation guidelines covering all required sections of full research proposals submitted to NSF. Please note, when applying to a specific program solicitation, the proposal preparation instructions provided in the solicitation may deviate and will supersede the guidance outlined in the PAPPG. This checklist highlights, not replaces, the submission guidelines of the PAPPG. *Please consult the guidelines for complete instructions.*

**REQUIRED FORMATTING**

- Font: Arial, Courier New or Palatino Linotype @ 10pts or larger; Times New Roman @ 11 pts or larger; Computer Modern family of fonts @ 11 pts or larger (Note: A font size of less than 10 can be used for equations, figures/table captions, special characters or symbols-- must be readable) - No more than 6 lines of text per 1 inch of vertical space
- Pagination: each proposal doc must be individually paginated (FastLane does NOT paginate for you)
- Margins must be at least one inch in all directions

<b><i>Proposal Element</i></b>	<b><i>Instructions</i></b>
<b><i>Cover Page</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PI/Co-PIs all need NSF IDs</li> <li>• All subcontractors and Non-Leads must have their organizations registered in research.gov (Fastlane)</li> <li>• Collaborative Proposal titles must start with “Collaborative Research: Title” unless specified otherwise in the guidelines</li> <li>• Start date at least six months from deadline date</li> </ul>
<b><i>Project Summary</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited to 1 Page</li> <li>• MUST ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING in 3 separate text boxes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overview</li> <li>○ Intellectual merit of the proposed activity</li> <li>○ Broader impacts resulting from proposed activity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• May <b>ONLY</b> be uploaded as a Supplementary Document if use of special characters is necessary. 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.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Project Description</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 page limit</li> <li>• URLs are not permitted</li> <li>• <b>MUST</b> include a separate section <b><u>LABELED</u></b> “Broader Impacts”</li> <li>• <b>MUST</b> include a separate section <b><u>LABELED</u></b> “Results from Prior NSF Support” This applies to the PI and Co-PIs. If there is no Prior NSF Support (with an end date within the past 5 years – including NCE) to report, there must be a statement indicating so. If a PI or Co-PI has multiple prior NSF awards, report on the one award most closely related to the proposal with an award end date within the past 5 years or an award that is currently active..                The following information must be provided in this section:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSF award number, amount of award, and period of support;</li> <li>▪ Title of the project;</li> <li>▪ Summary of the results of the completed work, including accomplishments, separately described under two distinct headings, related to and <b><u>LABELED</u></b> Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts and include activities supported by the award;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



600 Suffolk Street, Suite 212  
 Lowell, Massachusetts 01854  
 tel. 978.934.4750  
 fax: 978.934.2027

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List of all publications resulting from the NSF award. A complete bibliographic citation for each publication is required either in this section or in References Cited. If no publications, state, “No publications were produced under this award.”</li> <li>▪ 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</li> <li>▪ If renewal, description of the relation of the completed work to the proposed work.</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	No page limit – FULL REFERENCES, “et al” is NOT to be used
<b>Biosketches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 page limit – Provide for PI, Co-PIs, and Senior Personnel</li> <li>• Must use an NSF-approved format such as the <a href="#">NSF fillable template</a> or <a href="#">SciENcv</a> (effective 10/5/2020)</li> <li>• Appointments should include any titled academic, professional, or institutional position, whether or not remuneration is received.</li> <li>• Synergistic Activities must be list of up to five <b><i>DISTINCT</i></b> examples – Cannot use categories with multiple examples listed. Research Ready Video discussing Synergistic Activities is available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must draft budget using <a href="#">ORA Internal Budget Template</a> which you will data enter in portal once ORA approves</li> <li>• If includes equipment, specify the type and provide a quote</li> <li>• Absolutely no cost share unless solicitation requires</li> <li>• Research Ready Video discussing Budgeting Basics is available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Budget Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more than 5 pages for the lead plus up to 5 additional pages per subcontract, if applicable</li> <li>• Do not include unfunded personnel - Describe unfunded personnel role(s) in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal and provide corresponding letter of collaboration.</li> </ul>
<b>Current and Pending</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for PI, Co-PIs, and Senior Personnel</li> <li>• Must use an NSF approved format such as the <a href="#">NSF fillable template</a> or <a href="#">SciENcv</a> (effective 10/5/2020)</li> <li>• Includes all resources available to an individual in support of his/her research endeavors</li> <li>• Proposed and active NSF support should not exceed 2 months, NSF policy limits senior personnel to 2 months support.</li> <li>• Must include “this proposal” in the pending section</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborators and Other Affiliations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must use the <a href="#">NSF template</a> which must be saved and uploaded as a .xlsx file</li> <li>• The top of the template may be deleted and rows may be inserted as needed to provide additional names – all other formatting must remain the same</li> </ul>
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No page limit</li> <li>• Describe the internal and external resources (both physical and personnel) that the organization and its collaborators will provide to the project, should it be funded.</li> <li>• Include only resources directly applicable to the proposal.</li> <li>• Description of unfunded collaborations. Corresponding Letters of Collaboration must be included in Other Supplementary Documents section.</li> <li>• Description of unfunded senior personnel role(s) on project.</li> </ul>
<b>Data Management Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 page limit</li> <li>• Data Management Plan Tool (DMPTool) available <a href="#">here</a></li> <li>• One combined Data Management Plan for collaborative proposals and proposals that include subawards.</li> <li>• A valid Data Management Plan may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed with a clear justification</li> </ul>
<b>Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 page – <b>Only include if budgeting for Post Doc</b></li> </ul>



600 Suffolk Street, Suite 212  
 Lowell, Massachusetts 01854  
 tel. 978.934.4750  
 fax: 978.934.2027

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION**

<p><b>Letters of Collaboration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If applicable, letters should <u>only state the following</u>:            “If the proposal submitted by Dr. <i>(Insert full name of the PI)</i> entitled <i>(Insert the proposal title)</i> 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.”</li> </ul> <p><i>*Departure from this format may result in the proposal being returned without review</i></p> <p><i>**There can be solicitation specific updates to this letter. Be sure to review the solicitation.</i></p>
<p><b>List if Suggested Reviewers (optional)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May include a list of suggested reviewers (including email address and organizational affiliation)</li> <li>• May designate persons they would prefer not to review the proposal</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendices are not permitted unless specifically required by the solicitation</li> <li>• BIO directorate classification form and DUE classification form to be included (if applicable)</li> </ul>

**Collaborative Proposal from Multiple Organizations  
 Non-Lead Organization(s) – Required Documents**

- Cover Sheet
- Table of Contents (automatically generated)
- [Biographical Sketches](#) (for all Senior Personnel)
- [Current and Pending Support](#) (for all Senior Personnel)
- [Collaborators & Other Affiliations](#) (for all Senior Personnel)
- Budget and Justification
- Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources
- BIO directorate classification form (if applicable)
- DUE classification form (if applicable)
- Letters of Collaboration (if applicable) should be emailed to Lead for upload

*Non-Lead must upload all required documents to the portal and provide Lead with temporary proposal ID and PIN. Lead will link proposals.*

**Collaborative Proposal from One Organizations  
 Subcontract Organization(s) – Required Documents**

- Subrecipient Commitment Form (with 3b1 and 3b2-if applicable) or FDP Letter of Intent (if organization is registered in the FDP Clearing House)
- Statement of Work
- Budget (NSF format) and Justification
- [Biographical Sketches](#) (for all Senior Personnel)
- [Current and Pending Support](#) (for all Senior Personnel)
- [Collaborators & Other Affiliations](#) (for all Senior Personnel)
- Facilities, Equipment and Other resources (to be combined with UML doc)
- Letters of Collaboration (if applicable)
- BIO directorate classification form (if applicable)
- DUE classification form (if applicable)

**IMPORTANT:** *Non-Lead and Sub organizations must be registered in [research.gov](http://research.gov)- PI & Co-PIs must have individual NSF accounts with PI role associated with their institution.*