

# NSF Update



National Science Foundation  
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN

# Your Speaker!

- **Beth Strausser**

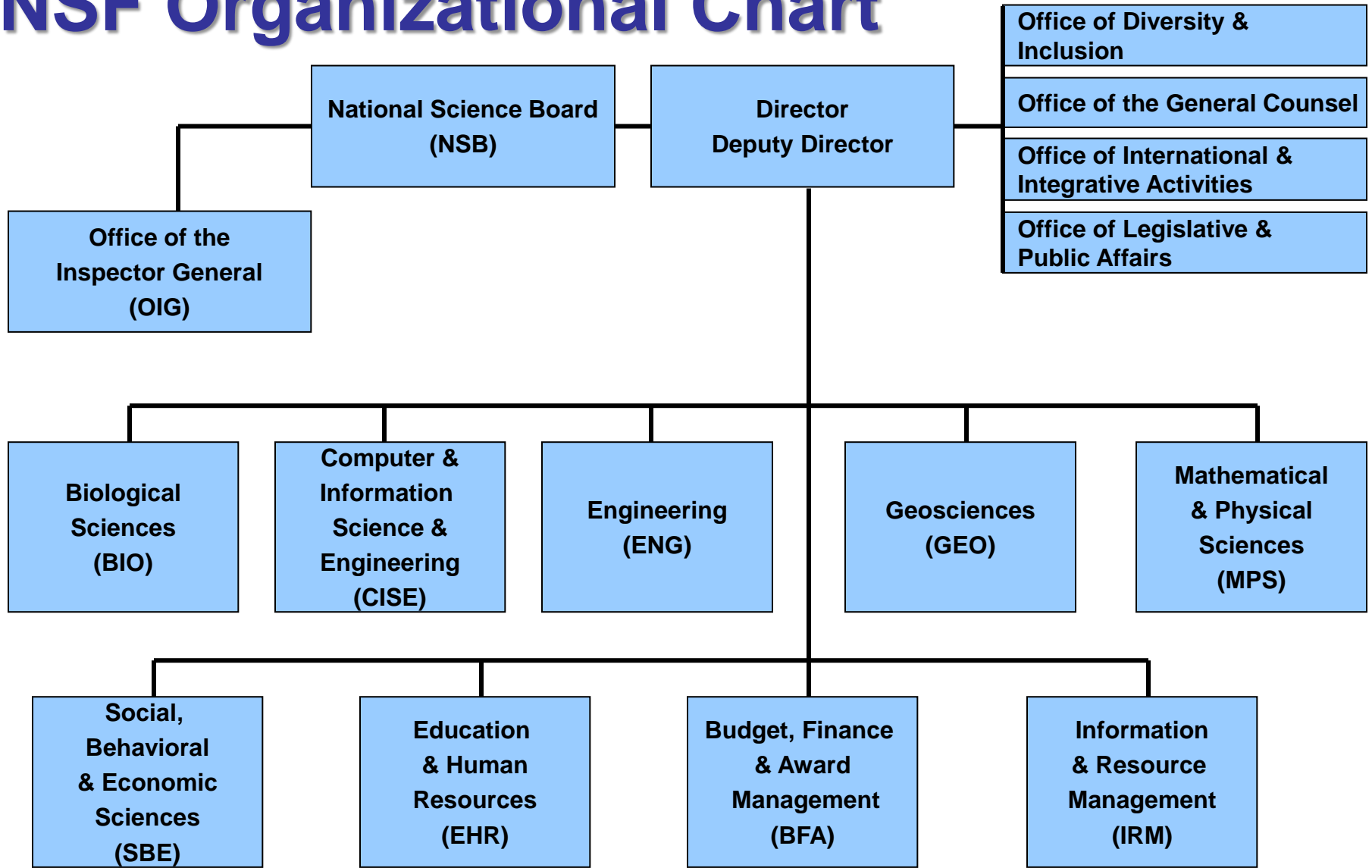
- Senior Policy Specialist, Policy Office
- Division of Institution & Award Support
- Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management
- [bstrauss@nsf.gov](mailto:bstrauss@nsf.gov);  
(703) 292-4574
- [policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov);  
(703) 292-8243



# Coverage

- Personnel and Organization Update
- Budget Update
- ARRA Update
- Recent Revisions to the *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG)
- Automated Compliance Checking for Required Proposal Sections
- Cost Sharing Update
- Implementation of the Research Performance Progress Report in Research.gov
- Implementation of the Award Cash Management Service in Research.gov
- National Science Board Task Force on Administrative Burdens

# NSF Organizational Chart



# Personnel Update

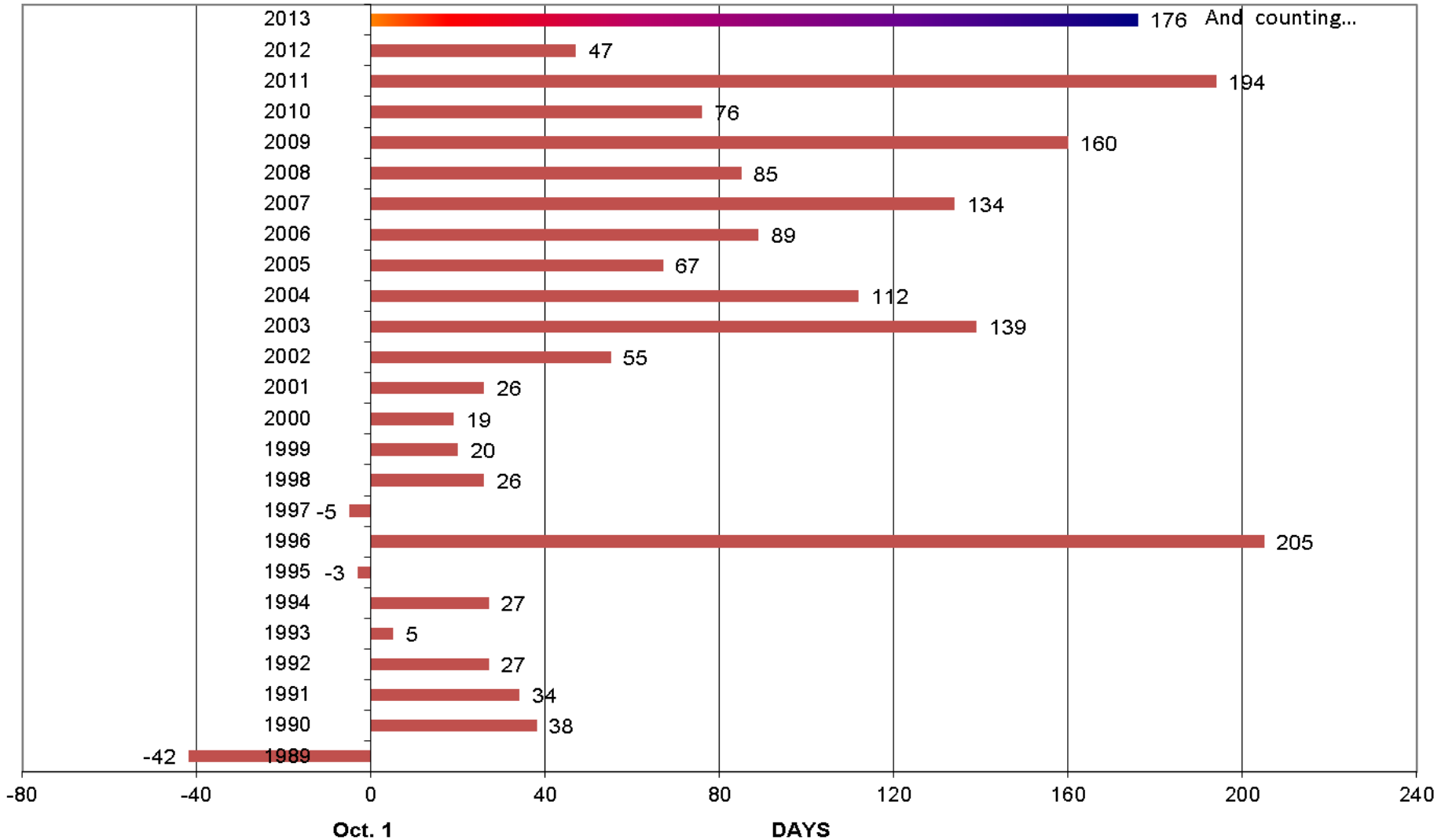
- **Dr. Cora Marrett appointed Acting Director, NSF**
- **Dr. Pramod P. Khargonekar appointed Assistant Director, Directorate for Engineering**
- **Dr. Roger M. Wakimoto appointed Assistant Director, Directorate for Geosciences**
- **Dr. F. Fleming Crim appointed Assistant Director, for Mathematical & Physical Sciences**
- **Dr. Wanda Ward appointed Head, Office of International & Integrative Activities**





### APPROPRIATIONS DRIFT

#### NSF Appropriations Dates versus Start of Federal Fiscal Year Oct. 1



# FY 2013 Sequestration Planning

- NSF Guiding Principles
  - Protect commitments to NSF’s core mission and maintain existing awards
  - Protect the NSF workforce
  - Protect STEM human capital development programs
  
- Administration Guidance
  - OMB Memorandum M-13-03
  - “Take into account funding flexibilities (i.e., reprogramming and transfer authority)”

# FY 2013 Sequestration: Potential Impacts

- No anticipated furloughs of NSF staff
- No anticipated reductions to continuing awards or ongoing construction projects
- Major impact on number of new research grants
  - Reduction of nearly 1,000 research grants
  - Impact on nearly 12,000 people supported by NSF

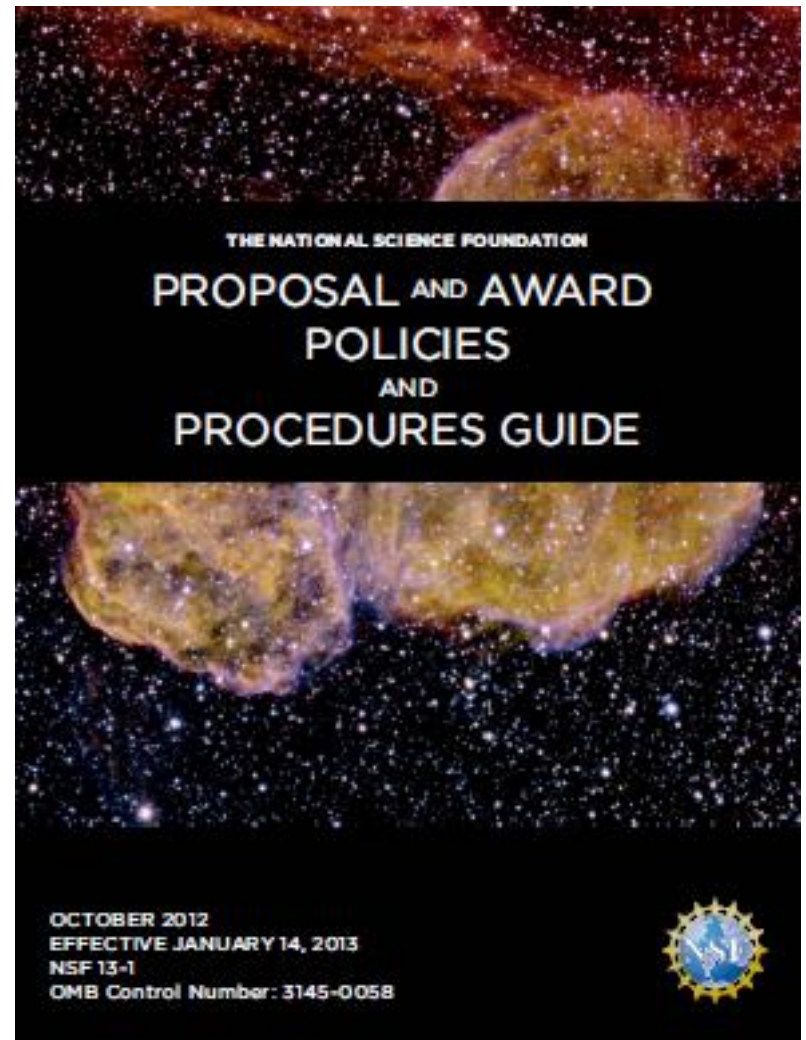


# ARRA Acceleration: What Recipients Need to Know

- E-mails sent to all Awardees/PIs in late September notifying them if award was or was not included on NSF waiver request list
- Awards on waiver request list
  - Extensions and other no-cost actions okay if consistent with scope and original terms of award
  - NSF received OMB approval for its full waiver list
- Awards NOT on waiver request list
  - Cannot be extended past 9/30/13
  - Other no-cost actions okay if consistent with scope and project completion by 9/30/13
  - Costs must be incurred by 9/30/13; all funds do not have to be drawn down – normal closeout (ACM\$)
- Questions: [NSFARRAReviewer@nsf.gov](mailto:NSFARRAReviewer@nsf.gov)

# Highlights of Significant Changes

- October, 4 2012  
Release
- January 14, 2013  
Implementation



# PAPPG Revision Process

- Federal Register Notices issued in January 2011 and May 2012 to alert the public to NSF's intent to revise PAPPG
- Disseminated draft document with changes highlighted to research community
- Comments submitted to OMB/NSF (were due July 12<sup>th</sup>)
- Updated PAPPG released October 4, 2012; effective for proposals submitted or due on or after January 14, 2013

# Merit Review Criteria – For Proposers

- Project Summary requires text boxes in FastLane not to exceed 4,600 characters and will include
  - Overview
  - Statement on Intellectual Merit
  - Statement on Broader Impacts
- Proposals with special characters may upload Project Summary as a PDF document
- Text boxes must be filled out or a project summary must be uploaded or FastLane will **not** accept the proposal.

# Merit Review Criteria – For Proposers

- Project Description
  - Must contain a separate section with a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities
  - Results from Prior Support (if any) must address intellectual merit and broader impacts
- New certification regarding Organizational Support
  - Requires AOR certification that organizational support will be made available as described in the proposal to address the broader impacts and intellectual merit activities to be undertaken
- Annual and Final Project Reports
  - Must address activities intended to address the Broader Impacts criterion that are not intrinsic to the research
- FastLane help updated for proposers

# Merit Review Criteria – For Reviewers

- Guiding Principles, Revised Review Criteria, and five review elements incorporated into GPG Chapter III
- Reviewer and Panelist Letters
  - Give due diligence to the three Merit Review Principles
  - Evaluate against the two Merit Review Criteria
  - Consider the five review elements in the review of both criteria
- Panel and Proposal Review Form in FastLane
  - Updated to incorporate consideration of review elements in addressing the two criteria
  - Text box added for reviewers to address solicitation-specific criteria



# Merit Review Criteria – Resources

- NSF Merit Review Website
  - [www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit\\_review/](http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/)
- Resources for the Proposer Community
  - [www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit\\_review/resources.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/resources.jsp)
    - Fact Sheets
    - Webcast
    - Presentations
    - FAQs

# Biographical Sketch(es)

- The “Publications” section to of the Biosketch has been renamed “Products”.
  - This change makes clear that products may include, but are not limited to, publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights.
  - If only publications are identified, the heading “Publications” may be used in this section of the biosketch.

# Proposals Not Accepted

- Formally recognizes a new category of non-award decisions and transactions: Proposal Not Accepted
- Is defined as “FastLane will not permit submission of the proposal”
- This new category currently applies to:
  - Data Management Plans
  - Postdoctoral Mentoring Plans
  - Project Summaries

# GPG-Required Sections of the Proposal

- Project Summary \*
- Project Description
- References Cited
- Biographical Sketch(es)
- Budget
- Budget Justification
- Current and Pending Support
- Facilities, Equipment & Other Resources
- Supplementary Documentation
  - Data Management Plan \*
  - Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan (if applicable) \*

\* **These proposal sections are already being auto-compliance checked.**

# What FastLane Will / Will Not Check

- FastLane will check for the presence of GPG required sections of the proposal
- If a section is not included, FastLane will not permit submission of the proposal
- FastLane will not check:
  - Formatting
  - Page Length (except for Project Summary)
  - Content

# Auto-Compliance Checking

- Biographical Sketches & Current and Pending Support
  - FastLane permits the biosketch and current and pending support sections to be uploaded as a single PDF for the PI, co-PI and senior project personnel.
  - For FastLane to accept the proposal, proposers must insert text or upload a document that states, “Not Applicable” for any co-PI or senior person



# Auto-Compliance Checking

- Proposal submission instructions that deviate from the GPG will require special attention:
  - Conferences, symposia or workshops
  - International travel grants
  - Program solicitations, where applicable
- If solicitation submission instructions do not require one of the sections, proposers will need to insert text or upload a document in that section of the proposal that states, “Not Applicable”
  - This will enable FastLane to accept the proposal.

# Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals

## Lead Organization: Required Sections

- Project Summary
- Project Description
- References Cited
- Biographical Sketch(es)
- Budget
- Budget Justification
- Current and Pending Support
- Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources
- Supplementary Documentation
  - Data Management Plan
  - Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan (if applicable)

## Non-Lead Organization: Required Sections

- Biographical Sketch(es)
- Budget
- Budget Justification
- Current and Pending Support
- Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources

# Auto-Compliance Checking

- Principal Investigators (PI)
  - Will receive warning messages if any of the GPG required sections are missing
  - Will be able to forward proposal to their institution's SPO
- Sponsored Projects Office (SPO)
  - FastLane will prevent submission from the SPO if any of the GPG-required sections is missing

# Auto-Compliance Checking

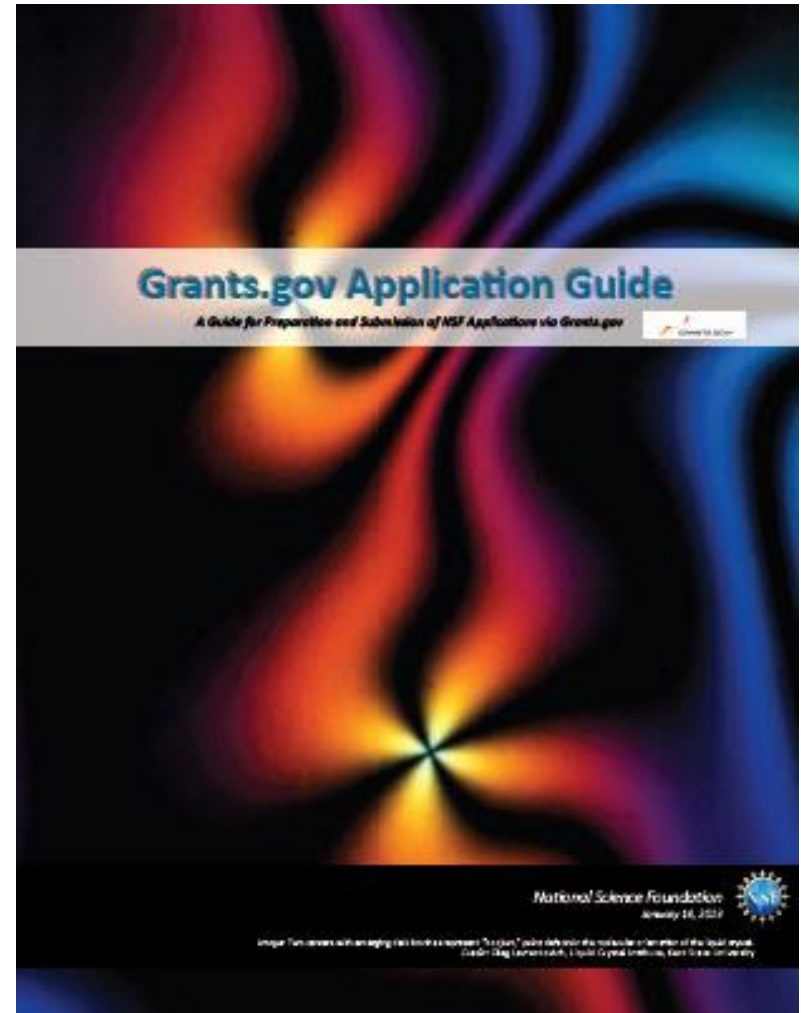
- Automated compliance checking will not be applied to:
  - Preliminary Proposals
  - Supplemental Funding Requests

# What is the impact on Grants.gov proposals?

- The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* specifies the same general content requirements for proposal submission.
- Grants.gov may allow a proposal to be submitted even if one of the required sections is missing.
- If a section is missing, a proposal may be returned without review.

# Grants.gov Application Guide - Revisions

- Revisions made for consistency with those released in the PAPPG
- For applications submitted or due on or after January 14, 2013





# Grants.gov Application Guide - Revisions

- Project Summary/Abstract contents must include three separate statements covering (1) Overview; (2) Intellectual Merit; (3) Broader Impacts
- Revised instructions for attachments
  - Facilities & Other Resources
  - Equipment Documentation
  - Other Attachments – Data Management Plan
  - Biographical Sketch
  - Current & Pending Support
- Budget – Total Direct Costs modified per PAPPG changes
- Other Information – High Resolution Graphics

# Cost Sharing Update

- As recommended by the National Science Board and implemented by NSF, inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited in solicited & unsolicited proposals, unless approved in accordance with agency policy.
- Only 7 programs have been approved to require cost sharing:
  - Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI);
  - Robert Noyce Scholarship Program;
  - Engineering Research Centers (ERC);
  - Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRC);
  - Experimental Programs to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR);
  - Innovation Corps (I-Corps); and
  - Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)



# Cost Sharing Update

- Removal of PI from Budget
  - If no person months are requested for senior personnel, they should be removed from the budget.
  - Their names will remain on the Cover Sheet.
  - Role should be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal.

# Cost Sharing Update

- Facilities, Equipment & Other Resources
  - New format will assist proposers in complying with NSF cost sharing policy and is a required component of the proposal.
  - Provides an aggregated description of the internal and external resources (both physical and personnel) that the organization and its collaborators will provide to the project.
  - No reference to cost, date of acquisition, and whether the resources are currently available or would be provided upon receipt of award.
  - If there are no resources to describe, a statement to that effect should be included in this section of the proposal and uploaded into FastLane.

# NSF Implementation of the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR)

- Compliant with new RPPR format and data dictionary
- New service in Research.gov for PIs, co-PIs, SPOs
- Replaces annual, interim, and final project reports in FastLane
- Structured data collection
- Minimal changes for NSF staff



# NSF Report Components

- Accomplishments: What was done? What was learned?
- Products: What has the project produced?
- Participants & Other Collaborating Organizations: Who has been involved?
- Impact: What is the impact of the project? How has it contributed?
- Changes/Problems
- Special Reporting Requirements (where applicable)
- Appendix 1: Demographic Information for Significant Contributors



# Key Differences of the New Project Report System

- Project reporting dashboard
- Pre-populated report sections
- Structured collection of data
- PDF upload to support images, charts, and other complex graphics
- Improved citation search through Thomson Web of Science

# Key Differences of the New Project Report System

- Special reporting requirements are controlled by solicitation
- PI no longer provides demographic information on significant participants
  - Pilot: 53% of participants are entering demographic information compared to 43% in FastLane ( for calendar year 2012).

# Key Implementation Dates

- Project Report Pilot conducted with 19 research organizations submitting project reports on Research.gov
- Final Launch Date: March 18, 2013
  - All NSF awards and institutions
  - NSF awardees were asked to stop submitting project reports in FastLane starting on February 1, 2013
  - Program Officers must approve all FastLane-submitted reports by March 15, 5 PM EST

# More Information and Help

- Research.gov Webinar Series
  - For directions, email [webinars@research.gov](mailto:webinars@research.gov)
- Research.gov Website: [Project Report Info Page](#) (for PIs and SPOs)
- Research.gov Help Desk
  - [Rgov@nsf.gov](mailto:Rgov@nsf.gov) or 1-800-381-1532

# Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$)

- The Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$) is a new approach to award payments and post-award financial processes
  - ACM\$ will transition financial processing of award payments from the current “pooling” method and transition to submission of award level payments
  - This will require the submission of award level payment amounts each time funds are requested
  - Eliminates quarterly Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

New Service  
in  
Research.gov

# Key Implementation Dates

- ACM\$ was released on January 4th to pilot organizations, a group comprised of [38 research organizations](#) including small and large organizations and "large facility" organizations.
  - These 38 research organizations represent 20% of the total award base for NSF
  - ACM\$ was released to all NSF awardees in April 2013 on Research.gov

# NSB Task Force on Administrative Burdens

## Request for Information (RFI): Reducing Investigator's Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research

Over the past decade two Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Faculty Workload Surveys (2005 and 2012) indicate that administrative burdens associated with Federal research funding are consuming roughly 42% of an awardee's available research time. To help address these issues, the National Science Board (Board) recently created a Task Force on Administrative Burdens. The Task Force is seeking recommendations from principal investigators for reducing the administrative workload associated with their Federal awards. Responses to this RFI will be considered as the Board develops recommendations to ensure investigators' administrative workload is at an appropriate level.

National Science Foundation  
National Science Board  
7555-01

**Request for Information (RFI): Reducing Investigator's Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research**

RFI Number: NSB-12-345  
Request Date: May 20, 2013  
Response Due: May 24, 2013

**Request for Information (RFI): Reducing Investigator's Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research**

The NSF offers principal investigators and Federal research funding the opportunity to provide feedback on administrative burdens associated with their administrative workload. The information provided by you will be used to help the Board develop recommendations to ensure investigators' administrative workload is at an appropriate level.

**Request for Information**

The Task Force is seeking responses to the questions below. Please indicate the question number to which you are responding.

[Request for Information: Reducing Investigator's Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research](#)  
(Full RFI; PDF)

There are two ways to respond: (1) You can send your response in an email or as an attached text document (e.g., Word document) to [Administrative-Reform@nsf.gov](mailto:Administrative-Reform@nsf.gov) OR (2) you can enter your responses directly into the RFI PDF using the following instructions:

1. Download and save the fillable [RFI](#) to your computer.
2. Enter your responses directly into the PDF and save your completed PDF to your computer.
3. Send the completed PDF as an attachment to [Administrative-Reform@nsf.gov](mailto:Administrative-Reform@nsf.gov)

**Responses to this RFI will be accepted through May 24, 2013.** Email addresses will be anonymized and responses kept confidential consistent with our obligations to comply with a judicial or administrative subpoena, or a FOIA request pursuant to 5 USC § 552. *Please note that any personal information contained within the body of the email/response (i.e. signature lines) will be retained if not deleted by the sender.* Any questions or inquiries should be sent to: [Administrative-Reform-Inquiries@nsf.gov](mailto:Administrative-Reform-Inquiries@nsf.gov).

For more information about the **Taskforce on Administrative Burdens**, please visit the [Taskforce home page](#).

2013 MAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

[Administrative-Reform-Inquiries@nsf.gov](mailto:Administrative-Reform-Inquiries@nsf.gov)

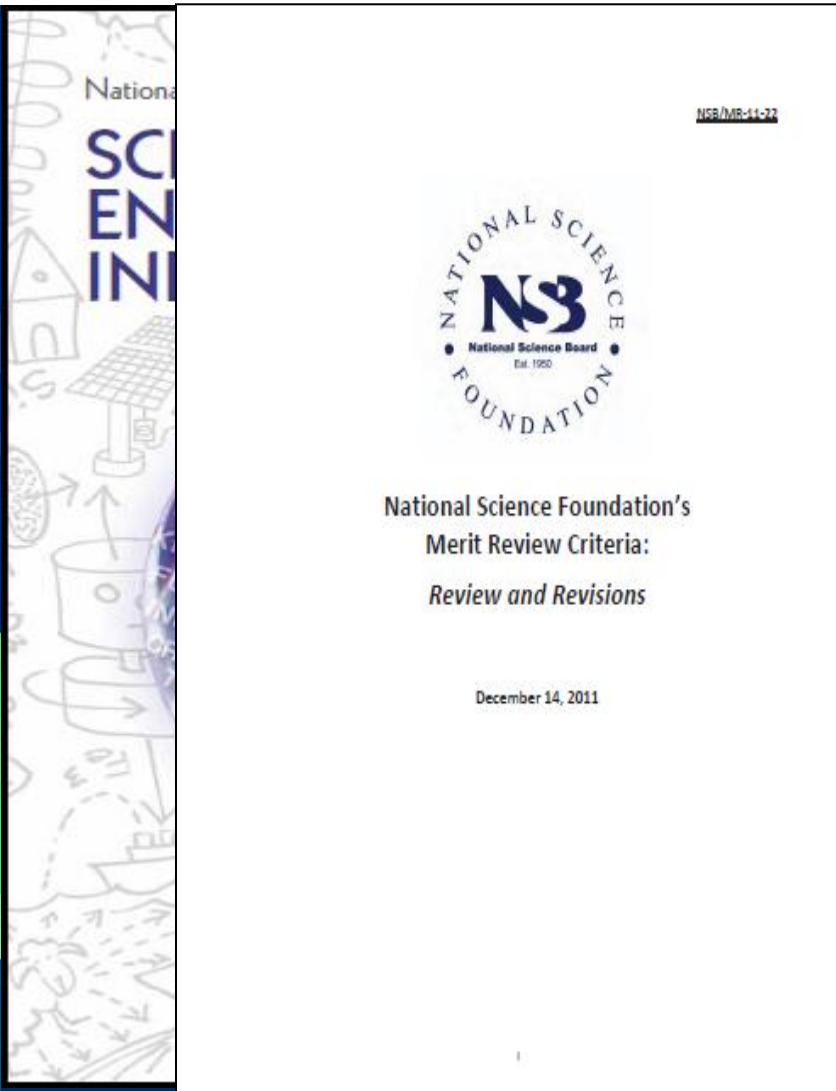
[http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/committees/ab/tskforce\\_ab\\_rfi.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/committees/ab/tskforce_ab_rfi.jsp)



# National Science Board (NSB) Task Force on Administrative Burdens

- Charged with examining administrative burden imposed on federally-supported researchers and identify opportunities to reduce burden.
- Request for Information asking for feedback covering:
  - Sources of administrative work and recommendations for reductions;
  - IRB and IACUC processes;
  - Proposal preparation;
  - Agency specific requirements;
  - Reform efforts currently proposed by OMB
- RFI available through May 24<sup>th</sup> at:  
[http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/committees/ab/tskforce\\_ab\\_rfi.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/committees/ab/tskforce_ab_rfi.jsp)

# Key Documents



- ***Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)***
- **FY 2013 Budget Request to Congress**
- **Science & Engineering Indicators**
- **Report to the NSB on NSF Merit Review Criteria**

# Key Document Sites

- ***Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide***

[http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=papp](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp)

- **Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request**

<http://www.nsf.gov/about/budget/fy2013/index.jsp>

- **NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011-2016**

[http://www.nsf.gov/news/strategicplan/nsfstrategicplan\\_2011\\_2016.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/news/strategicplan/nsfstrategicplan_2011_2016.pdf)

- **NSB Report on Merit Review**

<http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/publications/2011/meritreviewcriteria.pdf>

**For More Information**

**Ask Early, Ask Often!**

**[policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov)**

**[nsf.gov/staff](http://nsf.gov/staff)**

**[nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp](http://nsf.gov/staff/orglist.jsp)**

**[nsf.gov/about/career\\_opps/rotators/index.jsp](http://nsf.gov/about/career_opps/rotators/index.jsp)**