



National Science Foundation (NSF) Proposal Checklist

This checklist is intended to serve as a supplementary document to NSF guidance, particularly the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) and solicitation guidelines. The following represents a list of the standard elements of an NSF proposal, but more detailed guidelines for each section (e.g., biographical sketches) can be found in the GPG and solicitation-specific guidelines (e.g., specific title for certain programs) should be referenced for further information.

Please keep in mind that this checklist does not replace a thorough reading of the applicable GPG sections or solicitation.

General

- Font:** Arial¹¹, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype (10pt or larger); Times New Roman (11pt or larger); Computer Modern family (11pt or larger); no more than six lines of text within vertical space of one inch
- Margins:** At least 1 inch in all directions
- Formatting:** Single column formatting
- Pagination:** Each section uploaded as a separate file is individually paginated
- For all required sections, if there is a specific reason a section has not been included, a statement explaining this has been uploaded.

Cover Sheet

- Program Announcement/Solicitation Number**
- NSF Organization Unit** (for consideration)
- Primary Place of Performance:** Address is the location where the proposed work will be performed
- Title:** 180 character limit (including spaces); if proposal is collaborative, title begins with “Collaborative Research”
- Budget:** Requested amount, proposal duration, and requested starting date
- As applicable:**
 - Human Subjects Assurance:** FWA 00001549
 - Animal Welfare Assurance:** A3283-01

Project Summary

- 1 page limit / maximum of 4,600 characters
- Includes three separate text boxes/sections: (1) Overview, (2) Intellectual Merit, and (3) Broader Impacts

Project Description

- 15 page limit
- Broader Impacts** are addressed in separate section
- Results from Prior NSF Support:** Limited to 5 pages (as part of overall limit); included for all PIs/Co-Is with NSF funding in past 5 years; includes separate sections for each project addressing Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts
- No URLs included

References Cited

- Includes bibliographic citations only and no parenthetical information outside of 15-page project description
- All authors are listed (no “et al.”s)

Biographical Sketches

- 2 page limit per person
- Included for all senior/key personnel

Budget & Budget Justification

- Senior/key personnel salaries match proposed effort and salaries in Northwestern FASIS
- All direct costs are allowable per federal (OMB A-21) and NSF guidelines
- Indirect costs have been budgeted appropriately and applicable federal F&A rate was used
- Justification:** 3 page limit
- Justification includes explanation for all direct costs, applicable inflation rates, and standard fringe benefit and F&A language.
- Justification includes additional explanation of non-standard direct costs proposed that represent unlike circumstances

Current and Pending Support

- Included for all senior/key personnel
- This proposal is listed as “pending”

Facilities, Equipment & Other Resources

- Describes resources that are directly applicable to the proposed work; all resources listed are currently provided or available should the proposal be funded
- Description is narrative in nature and does not include any quantifiable financial information

Supplementary Documents

- Data Management Plan:** 2 page limit
- Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan:** Required if postdocs are proposed; 1 page limit
- Project Summary w/ Special Characters:** Required if special characters are necessary for project summary
- Other Supplementary Documents:** As applicable

OSR Internal Requirements

- Proposal Routing Form & Necessary Approvals**
- Required FCOI Disclosures:** All senior/key personnel have disclosed in FASIS within 1 year prior to submission
- As applicable:**
 - Subrecipient Commitment Package(s)
 - Cost Share Documentation
 - Other Documentation