

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposal Preparation Checklist and Resources

This is intended as a quick reference guide. For full details on each component, follow the link to the relevant section of the most recent NSF [Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#).

In this Guide:

[Submission Methods](#)

[General Proposal Instructions](#)

[Optional Proposal Materials](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

**The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will include specific instructions and forms for submitting your application. The instructions of the NOFO supersede this checklist.*

**If an NSF deadline date falls on a Federal Holiday or weekend, the deadline is extended to the following business day*

Submission Methods

All proposals should be submitted in [Research.gov](#). Other submission methods are possible, but utilizing research.gov ensures the best possible review as it has the most validations and cross-references.

The University of Florida is registered in Research.gov, but every PI/key person needs their own account, which will be affiliated with UF. More information on NSF and registering in research.gov can be found [here](#) on DSP's website

General Proposal Instructions

Review the Following:

- [Format requirements](#)
- [Getting Started with NSF](#)

Each section below must be completed using research.gov.

- [Cover Sheet](#)
 - Proposal title contains any necessary prefix
 - For renewal, the previous NSF award number has been entered
 - Indications for Human or Animal Subjects, international and off-site activities checked as applicable (see [special processing instructions](#) below for details)
 - Note: off-site activities do not mean the proposal's indirect cost rate should be budgeted at the off-campus rates. Barring exceptions, the off-campus IDC rate should only be applied if the activity is conducted in buildings that are not owned and maintained by UF, and which rent is directly allocated to the project.
- [Project Summary](#)
 - 1 page maximum
 - Contains: Overview, Intellectual Merit, Broader Impacts
- [Project Description](#)
 - 15 page maximum (including charts, graphs, maps, photographs, etc.)
 - Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation
 - Can **not** include any URLs
 - Must contain narrative sections labeled "Intellectual Merit" and "Broader Impacts"
 - Must include results from [Prior NSF Support](#) within the past five years for each PI and co-PI (no more than 5 pages, which counts against the Project Description's maximum page limit)
- [References Cited](#)
 - Follow accepted scholarly practices for format
 - URLs are not required in citation
 - Should not include parenthetical information to expand on Project Description
- [Budget\(s\)](#)
 - [UF DSP Budget guidelines](#)
 - [NSF budget guidelines](#)
 - UFIRST and research.gov should match as closely as possible
- [Budget Justification\(s\)](#)
 - 5 page maximum
 - Must include each line item from the budget
 - Any compensation for senior personnel more than 2 months total effort on active NSF awards should be disclosed and justified

- Each subaward or collaborative organization needs its own justification (5 page maximum)
- [Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources](#)
 - Must be narrative in nature
 - Do not include quantifiable financial information
 - Required for all proposals
- [Senior/Key Personnel Documents](#)
 - Biographical Sketch created via [SciENCv](#)
 - Current & pending via [SciENCv](#)
 - [Collaborators and Other Affiliations](#)
 - [Synergistic Activities](#) - should not exceed 1 page and 5 activities
- [Data Management and Sharing Plan](#)
 - 2 page maximum
 - Visit the [UF Library DMS site](#) for more information and templates
- [Mentoring Plan](#)
 - Required if project funds support grad students or postdocs
 - 1 page maximum

Optional Proposal Materials

- [Letters of Collaboration](#) (*Upload in 'Supplementary Documents' section*)
 - Do **not** include letters of support unless required by your specific NOFO (letters of support are different than letters of collaboration)
 - Should not contain endorsements or evaluation of the proposed project
 - PAPPG template: "If the proposal submitted by Dr. [insert the full name of the Principal Investigator] entitled [insert the proposal title] is selected for funding by NSF, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal."
 - **While the template above is labeled 'suggested,' NSF reserves the right to return proposals whose letters do not follow the template.**
- [Other Single-Copy Documents](#)
 - *As applicable, may include:*
 - Authorization to Deviate from NSF Proposal Preparation Requirements
 - List of Suggested Reviewers or Reviewers Not to Include
- **Special Processing Instructions**
 - [Collaborative Proposals:](#)

- Collaborative Proposal from one organization: single proposal with [subawards](#) from the lead organization to collaborators
- Collaborative Proposal from multiple organizations: simultaneous linked proposal submissions from multiple organizations with one lead submitting most of the materials.
- [Linking Collaborative Proposals](#)
 - Non-lead organizations will provide lead with their Temporary ID Number (found at the top of the proposal workspace)
 - Lead organization will send a proposal link request using the Temporary ID Number
- [Proposals Involving Live Vertebrate Animals](#)
 - Box for Live Vertebrate Animals on the Cover Sheet must be checked
 - Review [University of Florida IACUC Protocols](#)
 - Include [Animal Welfare Assurance Number](#)
- [Proposals Involving Human Subjects](#)
 - Must check “Human Subjects” box on the Cover Sheet
 - IRB approval is not required at the proposal stage, but must be approved before DSP can set up the award
 - Review [University of Florida IRB Approval details](#)
 - Include [FWA Number](#)
- [International Activities](#)
 - Proposals with international research/education/training activities must list countries involved on the Cover Sheet
 - If there is a foreign subaward included, justification must be included in the project summary
 - International conference
 - If there is travel to a scientific conference directly related to this grant, enter the country/countries of the conference on the Cover Sheet
 - if the specific location is not yet known, enter “Worldwide”
- [Safe and Inclusive Working Environments for Off-Campus or Off-Site Research](#)
 - Must be developed for **all proposals involving off-site research activities**
 - Only submitted to NSF if required in the program specific solicitation. If not required to submit to NSF, include in the ‘internal documents’ section of your UFIRST proposal record
 - For collaborative proposals or proposals with subawards, only one plan is developed (or submitted if required) by the lead organization

- UF specific template may be found [here](#)
- [NSF FAQ page](#) on the Safe and Inclusive plan

Additional Resources

- [Creating an account in research.gov](#)
- [Creating Proposal Workspace in research.gov](#)
- Granting access to the proposal in research.gov
 - [Instructions](#) to add unit staff (Research Administrator, etc.) as an Other Authorized User on the proposal
 - [Instructions](#) to grant access to Division of Sponsored Programs (required for submission)
- [Research.gov account FAQs](#)