



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Comment Request: National Science Foundation Proposal/Award Information - NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Request for Comment Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is announcing plans to request renewed clearance of this collection. The primary purpose of this revision is to implement 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance). NSF has requested and received from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to implement the Uniform Guidance through NSF's longstanding practice of implementing these requirements via use of a policy rather than regulation. In conjunction with the terms and conditions of the award, the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG), and its predecessors, have served as NSF's implementation vehicle for OMB Circular A-110 since its initial issuance in 1976.

The draft NSF PAPPG is now available for your review and consideration on the NSF website at

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/>.

To facilitate review, text has been highlighted in yellow throughout the document that implements the Uniform Guidance. Inclusion of this highlighting appears in the following cases:

- Use of specific references to the Uniform Guidance;
 - Direct replication of text from the Uniform Guidance;
- and
- NSF's implementation of requirements from the Uniform Guidance that are imposed on agencies.

NSF is formally requesting deviations from OMB from the Uniform Guidance in only two areas:

- Limitation to two months salary compensation for faculty; and
- Alternative to the Federal Financial Report.

Also highlighted throughout are policy changes that are being made independent of the Foundation's implementation of the Uniform Guidance. These changes are highlighted in blue.

In accordance with the requirement of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are providing opportunity for public comment on the PAPPG. NSF is

particularly interested in public comment on NSF's implementation of 2 CFR 200, as well as the policy changes that are identified in the PAPPG. Comments regarding the content of 2 CFR 200 should not be submitted, as the Uniform Guidance was formally issued by OMB as final guidance on December 26, 2013 (see <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-12-26/pdf/2013-30465.pdf>). After obtaining and considering public comment, NSF will prepare the submission requesting OMB clearance of this collection for no longer than 3 years.

In addition to the type of comments identified above, comments also are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Written comments should be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding the information collection and requests for copies of the proposed information collection request should be addressed to Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Rm. 295, Arlington, VA 22230, or by e-mail to splimpto@nsf.gov. The draft NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide may be found at: <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Plimpton on (703) 292-7556 or send e-mail to splimpto@nsf.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339, which is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (including federal holidays).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title of Collection: "National Science Foundation

Proposal/Award Information - NSF Proposal and Award

Policies and Procedures Guide"

OMB Approval Number: 3145-0058.

Expiration Date of Approval: July 31, 2015.

Type of Request: Intent to seek approval to extend with revision an information collection for three years.

Proposed Project: The National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (Public Law 81-507) sets forth NSF's mission and purpose:

"To promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense...."

The Act authorized and directed NSF to initiate and support:

- Basic scientific research and research fundamental to the engineering process;
- Programs to strengthen scientific and engineering research potential;
- Science and engineering education programs at all levels and in all the various fields of science and engineering;
- Programs that provide a source of information for policy formulation; and

- Other activities to promote these ends.

NSF's core purpose resonates clearly in everything it does: promoting achievement and progress in science and engineering and enhancing the potential for research and education to contribute to the Nation. While NSF's vision of the future and the mechanisms it uses to carry out its charges have evolved significantly over the last six decades, its ultimate mission remains the same.

Use of the Information: The regular submission of proposals to the Foundation is part of the collection of information and is used to help NSF fulfill this responsibility by initiating and supporting merit-selected research and education projects in all the scientific and engineering disciplines. NSF receives more than 50,000 proposals annually for new projects, and makes approximately 11,000 new awards.

Support is made primarily through grants, contracts, and other agreements awarded to approximately 2,000 colleges, universities, academic consortia, nonprofit institutions, and small businesses. The awards are based

mainly on merit evaluations of proposals submitted to the Foundation.

The Foundation has a continuing commitment to monitor the operations of its information collection to identify and address excessive reporting burdens as well as to identify any real or apparent inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, or disability of the proposed principal investigator(s)/project director(s) or the co-principal investigator(s)/co-project director(s).

Burden on the Public: The Foundation estimates that an average of 120 hours is expended for each proposal submitted. An estimated 50,000 proposals are expected during the course of one year for a total of 6,000,000 public burden hours annually.

Dated: May 6, 2014

Suzanne H. Plimpton,
Reports Clearance Officer,
National Science Foundation.

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