“The Government should accept new responsibilities for promoting the flow of scientific knowledge and the development of scientific talent in our youth.”

Science, The Endless Frontier, 1945

1947: Congress Approves, Truman Vetoes: Agencies created in the meantime

1950: Compromise Bill Approved & Signed by Truman
NSF Act of 1950

“To promote the progress of science...”

NSB (24) and 1 Director, appointed by the President

Encourage & develop a national policy for the promotion of basic research and education in the math, physical, medical, biological, engineering and other sciences

Initiate & support basic scientific research in the sciences

Evaluate the science research programs undertaken by agencies of the Federal government

Provide information for S&E policy formation
NSF in a Nutshell

- Independent Agency
- Supports basic research & education
- Uses grant mechanism
- Low overhead (5% of total budget)
- Highly automated (leader in using IT)
- Discipline-based structure
- Cross-disciplinary mechanisms
- Use of Rotators/IPAs
- National Science Board
Grant Proposal Guide (GPG)

Provides guidance for preparation and submission of proposals to NSF – Done via FastLane
Typical single investigator proposals are limited to 15 pages – Larger proposals require permission

Specifies process for deviations including:
individual program solicitations; and
written approval of cognizant AD or designee

Describes process -- and criteria -- by which proposals will be reviewed

Outlines reasons why a proposal may be returned without review
GPG (cont’d)

Describes process for withdrawals, returns & declinations

Describes the award process and procedures for requesting continued support

Identifies significant award and administration processes
GPG (cont’d)

Details process for submission of collaborative proposals via:

Issuance of one proposal that contains a subaward from the proposer to the collaborating organization; and

Submission of separate proposals for collaborating organizations

Note: contact with cognizant NSF Program Officer is strongly encouraged prior to submission
MyNSF

On November 19, MyNSF was replaced with a new email alert service called "National Science Foundation Update." National Science Foundation Update includes subscription options for all of the document types that were available in MyNSF, and also allows you to subscribe to new content categories, such as Images and Videos, Events, and Upcoming Due Dates for Funding Opportunities. You can subscribe to National Science Foundation Update at http://service.delivery.com/service/mult_subscribe.html?code=UNSF&section_id=628. If you were a MyNSF subscriber, the subscriptions you set up in MyNSF have automatically been transferred to National Science Foundation Update.

The National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22230, USA
Tel: (703) 292-5111, FAX: (800) 877-8339 | TDD: (800) 281-8340
Celebrating 60 Years of Discovery

Last Updated:
Jul 30, 2009
What to Look for in a Program Announcement/Solicitation

Goal of program

Eligibility

Special proposal preparation and/or award requirements
Types of Proposal Submission

- No deadlines
- Deadlines
- Target dates

Submission Windows

- Preliminary proposals
- Letters of Intent
Sections of an NSF Proposal

Cover Sheet
Project Summary – Intellectual Merit & Broader Impact
Table of Contents
Project Description
References Cited
Biographical Sketch(es)
Budget
Current & Pending Support
Facilities, Equipment & Other Resources
Special Information & Supplementary Documentation
Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan
Data Plan
A Good Proposal

A good proposal is a good idea, well expressed, with a clear indication of methods for pursuing the idea, evaluating the findings, making them known to all who need to know, and indicating the broader impacts of the activity.
Proposal Development

Key Questions for Prospective Investigator

1) What do you intend to do?
2) Why is the work important?
3) What has already been done?
4) How are you going to do the work?

Avoid laundry lists – concentrate on what you want to do and describe it appropriately
Proposal Development Strategies
Individual Investigator

Determine your long-term research/education goals or plan

Develop your bright idea
Survey the literature
Contact Investigators working on topic
Prepare a brief concept paper
Discuss with colleagues/mentors
Proposal Development Strategies
Individual Investigator (cont’d)

- Prepare to do the project
- Determine available resources
- Realistically assess needs
- Develop preliminary data
- Present to colleagues/mentors/students

- Determine possible funding sources
- Understand the ground rules
Proposal Development Strategies
Individual Investigator (cont’d)

Ascertain overall scope and mission

Read carefully solicitation instructions
Determine where your project fits
Ascertain evaluation procedures and criteria
Talk with NSF Program Officer:

- Your proposed project
- Specific program requirements/limitations
- Current program patterns

Coordinate with your organization’s sponsored projects office
Budgetary Guidelines

Amounts
Reasonable for work – Realistic
Well Justified - Need established
In-line with program guidelines – See funded proposals

Eligible costs
Personnel
Equipment
Travel
Participant Support
Other Direct Costs (including subawards, consultant services, computer services, publication costs)
Budgetary Guidelines (cont’d)

Call your Program Officer!

All funding sources noted in Current and Pending Support

Help from Sponsored Projects Office
Getting Support in Proposal Writing

NSF Publications
Program Announcements/
  Solicitations
Grant Proposal Guide
Web Pages
Funded Project Abstracts
Reports, Special Publications
Targeted Workshops

Program Officers
  Incumbent
  Former "Rotators"
Mentors on Campus
Previous Panelists
Serve As Reviewer
Sponsored Research Office
Successful Proposals
Small Grants for Exploratory Research (SGER)

Novel untested ideas; new research areas; urgency

Abbreviated proposal; limited award amount

 Expedited review