

# **NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION PROPOSAL and AWARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDE, OMB Clearance No. 3145-0058**

## **Part A. Justification**

1. **Background.** 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.

Over the years, NSF's statutory authority has been modified in a number of significant ways. In 1968, authority to support applied research was added to the Organic Act. In 1980, The Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act gave NSF standing authority to support activities to improve the participation of women and minorities in science and engineering. Another major change occurred in 1986, when engineering was accorded equal status with science in the Organic Act.

NSF has always dedicated itself to providing the leadership and vision needed to keep the words and ideas embedded in its mission statement fresh and up-to-date. Even in today's rapidly changing environment, 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 five decades, its ultimate mission remains the same.

The *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* is comprised of documents relating to the Foundation's proposal and award process. It has been designed for use by both our customer community and NSF staff and consists of two parts:

- Part I is comprised of NSF's proposal preparation and submission guidelines -- the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* and the NSF *Grants.gov Application Guide*. Both the *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG) and *Grants.gov Application Guide* provide guidance for the preparation and submission of proposals to NSF, whether by the NSF Fastlane System or Grants.gov. Some NSF programs have program solicitations that modify the general provisions of these Guides, and, in such cases, the guidelines provided in the solicitation must be followed.

- Part II is comprised of the documents used to guide, manage, and monitor the award and administration of grants and cooperative agreements made by the Foundation. Coverage includes the NSF award process, from issuance and administration of an NSF award through closeout. Guidance regarding other grant requirements or considerations that either is not universally applicable or which do not follow the award cycle also is provided.

**Significant Changes to the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide, effective January 2013**

**PAPPG Part I, Grant Proposal Guide**

Notes 1-8: These revisions are the result of NSF's proposed implementation of the recommendations of the National Science Board's Task Force on Merit Review. For more detailed information on this revision, please see the corresponding number on the attached document, *Significant Policy Issues Addressed in the Implementation of the Board's Revised Review Criteria*.

- **Chapter I.G.1, Electronic Requirements**, page I-6, has been revised to omit special instructions for proposals containing high resolution graphics.
- **Chapter I.G.3, Requirements Relating to Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Numbers and Registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)**, page I-7, has been updated to replace the CCR with the System for Award Management. In July, 2012, the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system is going away. CCR will be migrated into the new System for Award Management (SAM). For further information about the conversion to SAM and how it will impact the proposer community, see: <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/NewsDetail.aspx?id=2012&type=N>
- **Chapter II, Introduction**, page II-1, has been modified regarding the period of time after which an organization is considered a "new awardee". Organizations that have not had an active NSF award within the last five years (formerly two years) should be prepared to submit basic organization and management information and certifications.
- **Chapter II, Introduction**, page II-1, has been supplemented with information regarding the Foundation's core strategies from the NSF 2011-2016 strategic plan. Similar language regarding integration of research and education and integrating diversity previously appeared in Chapter III.A. The language was moved and updated to align with NSF's current strategic plan.<sup>1</sup>
- **Chapter II.C.1.e, Proposal Certifications**, page II-5, has been updated to include additional certifications on organizational support<sup>2</sup>, tax delinquency, and felony conviction to be submitted by the Authorized Organizational Representative upon certification of the proposal.

- **Chapter II.C.2.b, Project Summary**, page II-8, has been revised to omit language regarding the inclusion of separate headings to address the two merit review criteria. In lieu of this approach, the FastLane system will be modified to provide two separate text boxes to address “Intellectual Merit” and “Broader Impacts” of the proposed activity.<sup>3</sup>
- **Chapter II.C.2.d, Project Description**, page II-8, has been revised to implement changes related to the Content and Results from Prior NSF Support sections recommended by the National Science Board’s Task Force on Merit Review.<sup>4</sup> The Results from Prior NSF Support section also includes a clarification that “prior” NSF support includes “current” NSF support.
- **Chapter II.C.2.e, References Cited**, page II-10, has been updated to include instructions for use in preparation of this section of the proposal when no references are cited.
- **Chapter II.C.2.f(i)(c), Publications**, page II-11, has been renamed “Products” and updated to amend terminology and instructions accordingly. This change makes clear that products may include, but are not limited to, publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights. Note: This change was previously reviewed and approved by SMaRT.
- **Chapter II.C.2.g(v), Participant Support**, page II-14, has been updated to emphasize that this budget category is eligible for application of indirect costs only when specified in the negotiated rate agreement.
- **Chapter II.C.2.g(vi)(e), Subawards**, page II-16, and **Chapter II.C.2.g(viii), Indirect Costs**, page II-16, have been updated to clarify that foreign subawardees are not eligible for indirect cost recovery, unless the entity has a previously negotiated rate agreement with a U.S. Federal agency that has a practice of negotiating rates with foreign entities.
- **Chapter II.C.2.g(viii), Indirect Costs**, page II-16, has been revised to clarify NSF’s policy on indirect cost recovery. In accordance with Federal guidelines, awardees are entitled to reimbursement from award funds for indirect costs (F&A) allocable to the NSF share of allowable direct costs of a project.
- **Chapter II.C.2.i, Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources**, page II-19, has been supplemented to indicate that the description of resources that are, or will be available to the project should cover both physical and personnel resources.
- **Chapter II.C.2.j, Special Information and Supplementary Documentation**, page II-19, has been updated to include language regarding evaluation of postdoctoral mentoring plans (moved from Chapter III).<sup>5</sup>
- **Chapter II.D.6, Proposals Involving Vertebrate Animals**, page II-26, has been supplemented to include guidance on review of wildlife research protocols.

- **Exhibit II-1, Proposal Preparation Checklist**, page II-30, and **Chapter III.A, Review Criteria**, page III-1, have been modified to omit the reference to a document containing examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts.<sup>6</sup>
- **Chapter III, Introduction**, page III-1, has been revised to include language regarding NSF core strategies.<sup>7</sup>
- **Chapter III.A, Review Criteria**, page III-1, has been renamed Merit Review Principles and Criteria and revised to incorporate recommendations from the NSB's Task Force on Merit Review.<sup>8</sup>

### **PAPPG Part II, Award & Administration Guide**

- **Chapter III, Financial Requirements and Payments**, has been revised to implement, during FY 2013, the Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$). ACM\$ will replace the current FastLane Cash Request service and end the cash pooling method of award payments. Under ACM\$ awardees will submit award level detail with each payment request. Upon implementation of ACM\$, NSF will discontinue the requirement for awardees to submit the quarterly NSF Federal Financial Report.
- **Chapter IV.A, Conflict of Interest Policies**, has been modified to specify that, when the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) is notified of an unmanageable conflict of interest (COI) via the NSF FastLane system, OGC will contact the institution making the report, obtain a copy of that institution's policy, and follow up with the institution regarding what actions the institution will take with respect to the reported COI.
- **Chapter VI.B., Protection of Living Organisms**, has been supplemented with:
  - o a new Section entitled, Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC). This new section addresses unclassified research that, based on current understanding, can be **reasonably** anticipated to provide knowledge, products, or technologies that could be directly misapplied to pose a threat to public health and safety, agriculture, plants, animals, the environment, or materiel and describes the organization's responsibilities to assess such research prior to submission to NSF. This section is currently being developed consistent with the discussion at SMaRT on 05/08/2012, and will be disseminated to SMaRT members when available; and
  - o additional guidance in Section 3, Vertebrate Animals, which addresses wildlife research.

## **Significant Policy Issues Addressed in the Implementation of the Board's Revised Review Criteria**

1. Moved language regarding integrating research and education and broadening participation from the NSF Proposal Processing and Review chapter of the *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG) to the introductory section of GPG Chapter II on Proposal Preparation Instructions, page II-1. The purpose of this change is to help eliminate internal and external confusion regarding whether these two core strategies are additional review criteria, while at the same time, reiterating their importance as core strategies that are addressed in NSF's strategic plan.
2. Added a new Organizational Support Certification, page II-5, for the Authorized Organizational Representative to address Section 526 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act (ACRA) of 2010. This section of the ACRA:

“(5) requires principal investigators applying for Foundation research grants to provide evidence of institutional support for the portion of the investigator’s proposal designed to satisfy the Broader Impacts Review Criterion, including evidence of relevant training, programs, and other institutional resources available to the investigator from either their home institution or organization or another institution or organization with relevant expertise.”

When initially briefing this section of the ACRA to the research administration community, there was concern expressed that inclusion of this new section of the proposal by PIs was a means to reopen the cost sharing discussion by having PIs describe their organization’s contributions to the project, as proposed. This alternative approach is intended to eliminate this concern. The certification affirms that the organization will support the performance of the grant-supported activity that it agrees to undertake upon acceptance of an award. This concept is suitable to the research administration community, as it conforms to their expectations when a proposal is submitted, i.e., if funded, the organization will provide the support necessary to ensure that the proposed activities are implemented successfully. The certification is not meant to create additional organizational requirements.

3. Revised the Project Summary section, page II-8, to omit the instruction to include separate headings within the one-page document for Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. In lieu of this approach, the intent is to add an enhancement to the FastLane system to provide separate sections into which proposers would be required to enter statements on Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. Because the FastLane system will enable the criteria to be separately addressed (still within the one page) proposers will no longer need to include separate headings – and program staff would no longer be required to assess this as part of the compliance review. The section continues to state that proposals that do not separately address both merit review criteria within the one-page Project Summary will be returned without review.

4. Revised the Project Description section of Chapter II, page II-8. The content instructions were updated to provide contextual information about proposal preparation and to include revised language related to broader impacts of the proposed activities from the ACRA and the Board's report. The Results from Prior NSF Support section was updated to indicate that Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact activities must be described in two separate sections in the summary of results.
5. Moved language regarding evaluation of mentoring plans for postdoctoral researchers from the NSF Proposal Processing and Review chapter to the Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan instructions in Chapter II, page II-19.
6. Omitted references to the document containing examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts. The purpose of this change is to eliminate internal and external confusion over this document, which was often viewed as a prescriptive list of additional requirements instead of illustrative examples. The intent is to include an example of broader impacts in an FAQ. Also, significant contextual information related to broader impacts is now included in the Project Description section of Chapter II, page II-8.
7. Inserted language in the introduction to Chapter III, page III-1, regarding NSF core strategies. The purpose of this change is to reiterate the importance of integration of research and education and broadening participation as core strategies as outlined in NSF's strategic plan.
8. Revised the merit review criteria section of Chapter III, page III-1, to include language directed from the NSB report related to both merit review principles and criteria.

## 2. **Use of Information.**

The information collected is used to help the Foundation fulfill this responsibility by initiating and supporting merit-selected research and education projects in all the scientific and engineering disciplines. NSF receives more than 55,000 proposals annually for new or renewal support for research in math/science/engineering education projects and makes approximately 10,500 new awards. The Foundation exercises its authority primarily by making merit-based grants and cooperative agreements and providing other forms of assistance to individual researchers and groups, in partnership with over 2800 colleges, universities and other institutions – public and private, state, local and federal – throughout the United States. The information collected on gender, race, ethnicity or disability is used in meeting NSF needs for data to permit response to congressional and other queries into equity issues. Demographic data allows NSF to gauge whether our programs and other opportunities in science and technology are fairly reaching and benefiting everyone regardless of demographic category; to ensure that those in under-represented groups have the same knowledge of and access to programs and other research and educational opportunities; and to assess involvement of international investigators in work supported by NSF.

The information collected on the proposal evaluation forms is used by the Foundation in applying the following criteria when awarding or declining proposals submitted to the agency: (1) intellectual merit; and (2) the broader impacts of the proposed activity.

The information collected on reviewer background questionnaires is used by managers to maintain an automated database of reviewers for the many disciplines represented by the proposals submitted to the Foundation. Information collected on gender, race, ethnicity and disability status is used in meeting NSF needs for data to permit response to congressional and other queries into equity issues. These data are also used in the design, implementation, and monitoring of NSF efforts to increase the participation of various groups in science, engineering, and education.

### **3. Use of Automation.**

Since its inception in 1994, the purpose of the FastLane System has been to experiment with ways to use the internet to facilitate end-to-end electronic business transactions and the exchange of information between the National Science Foundation and its client community including researchers, reviewers, research administrators, and others doing business with NSF. The FastLane functions are accessed by using Web browsers that support file upload and forms capabilities. FastLane modules cover every major interaction between NSF and the science and engineering research and education community including:

- communicate the Foundation's strategic priorities to proposer and awardee communities;
- proposal preparation & submission, including electronic signatures;
- proposal reviews;
- panel travel initiation;
- panel electronic funds transfer information;
- interactive panel system for panel meetings (including proposal ranking and submission and approval of panel summaries);
- proposal and award status inquiries (proposal status includes release of reviews to PIs and co-PIs);
- revised proposal budget preparation and submission;
- supplemental funding request preparation and submission including electronic signatures;
- annual and final technical project reports;
- access to award letters for use by PIs, Co-PIs, and Sponsored Project Offices;
- quarterly Federal Financial Reports (SF 425);
- cash requests;
- post award administrative notifications and requests for NSF approval;
- organizational management; and
- review and/or revision of organizational information.

In FY 2011, there were 93,720 organizations that were registered users of the NSF FastLane system. In FY 2011, 59,373 proposals were submitted electronically to NSF, either through the NSF FastLane system or via Grants.gov. Electronic submission accounts for 99.9% of all proposals submitted to NSF.

In addition, 224,514 reviews were submitted via FastLane, in FY 2011. Our users represent a diverse group of proposer and grantee organizations including major U.S universities, small colleges, community colleges and non-profit organizations. The Proposal Evaluation module in the NSF FastLane System contains the electronic format (attached and available electronically at: [https://www.fldemo.nsf.gov/jsp/homepage/prop\\_review.jsp](https://www.fldemo.nsf.gov/jsp/homepage/prop_review.jsp)) used in the evaluation of proposals for the NSF. This FastLane module permits persons reviewing NSF proposals to submit ratings and comments electronically using this application. The reviewer uses a special review PIN (specific to that proposal) to access a template that can be used to "copy and paste" reviewer comments and to record other required information.

### **Relationship to Grants.gov Activities:**

Grants.gov provides a common Website to simplify competitive discretionary grants management and eliminate redundancies. There are 26 Federal grant-making agencies and over 1000 grant programs that award over \$500 billion in grants each year. The grant community, including state, local and tribal governments, academia and research institutions, and not-for-profits, need only visit one website, Grants.gov, to access the annual grant funds available across the Federal government. Grants.gov provides:

- A single source for finding grant opportunities.
- A standardized manner of locating and learning more about funding opportunities.
- A single, secure and reliable source for applying for Federal grants.
- A simplified grant application process with reduction of paperwork.
- A unified interface for all agencies to announce their grant opportunities, and for all grant applicants to find and apply for those opportunities.

Since the inception of Grants.gov, NSF has been an active partner in Federal-wide electronic grant efforts. NSF continues to work with representatives from Federal research agencies under the auspices of the Research and Related subcommittee, to maintain and update the SF 424 (R&R), a standardized application for use with research and research-related proposals. NSF continues this leadership role by participating in the various Grants related committees, such as the Grants Policy Committee, Grants Executive Board, Research & Related Subcommittee (Chair), Grants.gov User Group, and Grants.gov Stakeholders Meetings.

Proposers are authorized to submit proposals to NSF via either Grants.gov or the NSF FastLane system. Until such a time, however, as Grants.gov is able to accept all types of NSF proposal formats through the Grants.gov portal, a separately cleared application format for use by NSF applicants remains necessary.

#### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication.**

FastLane's forms automatically pull in information about the proposing organization and Principal Investigators that is already available in the NSF database thereby reducing the need to re-enter previously provided data. NSF is expanding its efforts in this area by making use of the FastLane system to fully integrate data, where possible and appropriate. NSF is able to take



advantage of FastLane's database orientation to assure that the duplication of information is kept to a minimum.

No duplication exists in the evaluation process since each proposal is evaluated on its own merits. A centralized database is maintained containing the names, background data, and reviewer history of all individuals evaluating proposals for NSF. It also contains the names of potential reviewers. This database can be accessed, and new reviewers added, by any program officer needing reviewers. Program officers cannot remove names from the database once they have been asked to review a proposal. The names and related information about reviewers are maintained in the system indefinitely to account for disclosures under the Privacy Act and to fulfill NSF's policy on releasing the names of all individuals who have reviewed proposals.

**5. Small Business Considerations.**

Proposals from small businesses are solicited in accordance with the NSF Act of 1950, as amended, and the Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982, as amended. Small businesses are expected to submit proposals in accordance with NSF guidelines governing that particular program. These guidelines contain NSF standard proposal formats, with the addition of specific information required by Federal regulations.

**6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection.**

Proposers may submit as many proposals as they deem appropriate. Since each proposal is evaluated on its own merits by selected reviewers, proposers are required to furnish separate proposals; each developed in accordance with standardized electronic formats.

Most continuation proposals do not require external review. The reviews submitted at the time of the initial proposal submission, along with annual project performance reports are used as the basis for making awards. The major part of the review process consists of the review of new proposals submitted to the agency. No information is available for new proposals.

**7. Collection Inconsistent with Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.**

Evaluators of NSF proposals are given a pledge of confidentiality that their names will not be released in connection with their comments (see paragraph "10" below).

**8. Federal Register Notice.**

Public Notice was published in the *Federal Register*, January 27, 2011, at 76 FR 4947. No comments were received.

## **Outside Consultation.**

The process for announcing the availability of support and the process for receiving proposals and making awards has been developed over the course of the Foundation's history, with assistance from many external sources. These sources include other Federal agencies as well as from proposing organizations. The Foundation also has participated in the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) since its inception. The Federal Demonstration Partnership is a cooperative initiative among nine federal agencies and over 100 institutional recipients of federal funds; its purpose is to reduce the administrative burdens associated with research grants and contracts. The interaction between FDP's 300 or so university and federal members takes place in FDP's 3 annual meetings and, more extensively, in the many collaborative working groups and task forces that meet often by conference calls in order to develop specific work products. The FDP is a unique forum for individuals from universities and nonprofits to work collaboratively with federal agency officials to improve the national research enterprise. At its regular meetings, FDP members hold spirited, frank discussions, identify problems, and develop action plans for change. Then these new ways of doing business are tested in the real world before putting them into effect. Since its inception, the FDP has served as an important mechanism to solicit input and suggestions for improving the NSF proposal and award process.

Another important note is that a large percentage of NSF program officers, who are responsible for making funding recommendations, are from the research community. These individuals are well aware of the burden associated with the submission of a competitive proposal to NSF and have provided significant input on how the process can be streamlined and improved.

Additionally, a special initiative has taken place over the last two years that has significant implications on NSF proposals. The National Science Board (NSB) established a Task Force in February 2010 to examine the merit review criteria that have been used by NSF since 1997 to evaluate proposals. Their charge was to examine if the merit review criteria remained appropriate for accomplishing NSF's mission. As part of their efforts, the Task Force gathered data on how the Merit Review Criteria were being used. Input was solicited from stakeholder groups, both internal and external to NSF. NSF contracted with outside firms to gather input, which helped ensure the integrity of the information gathering and analysis process. This input was critical to the Task Force's work.

SRI International asked for input on the use and utility of the NSF Merit Review Criteria as applied to the proposal and award process. Solicited parties included Principal Investigators (PIs), institutions that submit grant proposals, reviewers of proposals, NSF staff (which include program officers who are rotators from the research community), and Advisory Committee members. Input was gathered through in-person interviews, phone interviews, and web surveys. SRI analyzed the 4,516 responses, from which six major themes emerged.

NSB contracted the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI) to provide an analysis of responses to a public request for information related to the Merit Review Criteria. Five questions were posed to the public, and STPI coded and analyzed the over 2,200 comments to refine key themes emergent throughout the data.

NSF programs are reviewed once every three years by Committees of Visitors (COVs), external experts who are convened for the purposes of assessing the integrity of the review process as carried out by individual programs and the quality of the resulting portfolio of awards. The COV produces a public report, which is housed on the NSF website. All COV reports for the period 2001-2009 (195 in total) were analyzed by NSF staff for any issues raised by the COVs related to the use of the merit review criteria.

Topicseek, LLC was enlisted to help examine how Broader Impacts had been applied and discussed within a set of archived proposals. They conducted topic modeling and analysis on 150,000 proposal project summaries that were submitted to NSF over a three-year period.

After reviewing all of the data, the Task Force drafted a set of guiding Principles and proposed revisions of the Merit Review Criteria. These drafts were made available for public comment. STPI helped code and analyze the 278 responses. These data were used to prepare the Task Force's final recommendations, which were released in an NSB report in December 2011, *National Science Foundation's Merit Review Criteria: Review and Revisions*.

**9. Gifts or Remuneration.** Not applicable.

**10./11. Confidentiality/Sensitive Questions.**

The Foundation is committed to monitor and identify any real or apparent inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, or handicap of the proposed principal investigator(s)/project director(s) or the co-principal investigator(s)/co-project director(s). Although submission of these data is voluntary, we strongly urge all proposers to provide it so that the quality of the database can be improved. NSF retains these as an integral part of its Privacy Act Record System, NSF 50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records." The information is not released to proposal reviewers. Information from this format will be made available only to a person conducting official business for NSF and will be treated as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

Information concerning the reviewers/panelists is maintained in accordance with the requirement of the Privacy Act of 1974 (NSF System of Records, NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File"). Information from this "System of Records" may be released to other government agencies seeking reviewers.

Verbatim but anonymous copies of reviews are sent to principal investigators/project directors. Subject to this NSF policy and applicable laws, including the Freedom of Information Act, reviewers' comments will be given maximum protection from disclosure.

While listings of panelists' names are released, the names of individual reviewers, associated with individual proposals, are not released.

The Foundation also collects gender, race, ethnicity and disability data from PIs/PDs identified on the proposal. This demographic data allows NSF to gauge whether our programs and other opportunities in science and technology are fairly reaching and benefiting everyone regardless of

demographic category; to ensure that those in under-represented groups have the same knowledge of and access to programs and other research and educational opportunities; and to assess involvement of international investigators in work supported by NSF.

## **12. Burden on the Public.**

It has been estimated that the public expends an average of approximately 120 burden hours for each proposal submitted. Since the Foundation expects to receive approximately 51,500 proposals in FY 2013, an estimated 6,180,000 burden hours will be placed on the public.

The Foundation has based its reporting burden on the review of approximately 51,500 new proposals expected during FY 2013. It has been estimated that anywhere from one hour to 20 hours may be required to review a proposal. We have estimated that approximately 5 hours are required to review an average proposal. Each proposal receives an average of 3 reviews, resulting in approximately 772,500 burden hours each year.

The information collected on reviewer background questionnaire (NSF 428A) is used by managers to maintain an automated database of reviewers for the many disciplines represented by the proposals submitted to the Foundation. Information collected on gender, race, and ethnicity is used in meeting NSF needs for data to permit response to Congressional and other queries into equity issues. These data also are used in the design, implementation, and monitoring of NSF efforts to increase the participation of various groups in science, engineering, and education. The estimated burden for the Reviewer Background Information (NSF 428A) is estimated at 5 minutes per respondent with up to 10,000 potential new reviewers for a total of 833 hours.

The aggregate number of burden hours is estimated to be 6,953,333. The actual burden on respondents has not changed.

## **13. Annualized Cost to Respondents.**

There is no cost to respondents reviewing proposals electronically or by mail. Those respondents who review proposals by panel are reimbursed for their expenses.

## **14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government.**

The cost estimate for development of the new NSF *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide*, which we anticipate will be issued in October, 2012, is \$189,262. The main method of accessing and printing this new Guide will continue to be via download from the NSF website. The Foundation will print a limited number of copies at our in-house printing facility at a cost of \$1,068. The following supporting documentation is the basis used to develop the estimate of the cost to gather information, develop, coordinate and review the Guide. Individuals and/or offices instrumental in this process were polled to determine the staff estimates used. In FY 2011, NSF expended approximately \$29,038,131 for panel-related costs. This amount indicates travel costs and reimbursements for expenses for panelists.

**Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA)**

Policy Head                    3 months x AD-5 = \$39,225  
Policy Specialist                1 month x GS-13 = \$7,876  
3 Policy Specialists        2 weeks x GS-14 (avg.) = \$13,911  
Policy Office IPA        2 months x GS-13 (avg.) = \$15,699  
Other BFA staff                1 week x GS-14 (avg.) = \$2,318

**Merit Review Criteria Working Group Members**

14 people at 5 days each = \$44,380

**Office of the General Counsel (OGC)**

Assistant General Counsel    3 days = \$1914  
Assistant General Counsel    1 day = \$638  
Legal Analyst                3 days x GS-14 (avg.) = \$1391

**Division of Administrative Services (DAS)**

DAS Staff                    2 days x GS-12 (avg.) = \$660

**Division of Information Systems (DIS)**

Division Director                1 day = \$634  
Branch Chief                3 days x GS-15 (avg.) = \$1628  
Computer Specialists        2 days x GS-14 (avg.) = \$928

**Other NSF Staff Offices**

30 people at 3 days each = \$57,060

**Total Salaries: \$189,262**

**Estimated printing costs:** .06 per page x 89 page document = \$5.34

\$5.34 x 200 copies = **\$1,068**

**15. Changes in Burden.**

Since the burden hours reported are based on the number of proposals expected in any given year, this estimate is considered to be uncontrollable. The burden is expected to increase proportionately for both the proposal and review processes as the receipt of proposals increases.

16. **Publication of Collection.** Not applicable.
17. **OMB Expiration Date.** Not applicable.
18. **Exceptions for Certifications.** Not applicable.

**B. STATISTICAL METHODS.** Not applicable.

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT, INCLUDING CORRESPONDING INSTRUCTIONS**

See Exhibit 1

**ATTACHMENTS:**

National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (Public Law 81-507)  
NSF Form 1  
NSF Form 428 A