

## Protocol for Principal Investigators (PIs)

### Introduction

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us today. My name is Allison Smith, and I am part of a team conducting research for the National Science Foundation's (NSF's) Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) on the policies that NSF has developed to promote safe and harassment-free research and education environments. I am also joined by my colleague, \_\_\_\_\_, who will be taking notes during our conversation.

As part of this research, we are conducting interviews with NSF awardees across the United States. Given your current role on an active NSF award, we are very interested in learning about your perspectives on NSF's anti-harassment policies and their implementation and any opportunities or challenges they may present. We would also appreciate you sharing any recommendations related to these policies.

We will be audio-recording the conversation today to ensure that we capture your exact words and that our final report reflects all participants' views as accurately as possible. We will not share this recording or our notes from this interview with NSF or anyone outside the immediate project team, and both the recording and our notes will be deleted once the project is completed.

After completing all the interviews, we will analyze the data collected to identify major findings and recommendations. To ensure confidentiality, none of the findings or recommendations reported to NSF will be connected with the names of specific interview participants or their organizations.

This interview is completely voluntary, and you may skip any question or stop participating at any point. The interview should take less than an hour to complete. The OMB clearance number for this interview is 3145-XXXX. Before we begin, do you have any questions for us?

If you are ready to start, we will begin recording now. Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research.

### Background Questions

1. Could you tell me about your current NSF award?
2. Have you been a PI or co-PI on any previous NSF award(s)?
  - a. If so, how many previous awards have you received from NSF?
  - b. If so, when did you receive your first NSF award?
3. Have you been a PI or co-PI on an award from any other federal funding agency?
  - a. If so, which agency/ies?

## Questions Related to Communication and Knowledge of the T&C/Conference & Travel Policies

1. Are you aware of NSF's term and condition related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault?
  - a. If so, how did you learn about it? *[Probe for whether they learned about it from the office of sponsored research, etc.]*
2. *[Show the [T&C webpage](#) on the screen and give the participant time to look at it.]* What additional information, if any, would you like about the NSF term and condition? *[Probe for comments on the website, what, if any, additional information they would like, and how it could most effectively be disseminated.]*
3. Do you know if any other federal agencies have a term and condition related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault?
  - a. If so, which agencies?
  - b. If so, are these agencies' requirements different from NSF's?
    - i. If so, how? *[Probe for any differences in the requirements of the [NASA T&C](#), [NIH T&C](#), and/or other agencies' T&Cs and whether any of these agencies have more stringent requirements.]*
4. Are you aware of the policy requiring that NSF-funded conferences have a policy or code of conduct related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault, as well as reporting mechanisms?
  - a. If so, how did you learn about it? *[Probe for whether they learned about it from the office of sponsored research, etc.]*
5. *[Show the [conference policy](#) on the screen and give the participant time to read it. Mention that the policy also applies to conferences that awardees attend using NSF travel awards.]* What additional information, if any, would you like about the conference policy? *[Probe for what, if any, additional information they would like, and how it could most effectively be disseminated.]*
6. Do you know if any other federal agencies have a similar conference policy?
  - a. If so, which agencies?
  - b. If so, are these agencies' requirements different from NSF's?
    - i. If so, how? *[Probe for whether any of these agencies have more stringent conference policies.]*
7. If you had questions about the term and condition or conference policy, whom would you ask? *[Probe for whether they would ask the authorized agency representative (AOR) on the award, someone in a different campus office, someone at NSF, etc.]*

## Questions Related to Implementation of the T&C/Conference & Travel Policies

1. Do you know if your organization has had to institute any procedural or organizational changes in order to ensure compliance with the NSF term and condition related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault?
  - a. If so, what changes have been instituted?

- b. If so, how are these changes working? *[If the participant mentions challenges, probe for the nature of these challenges and how they might be addressed.]*
2. Are there any changes or revisions you would recommend making to the NSF term and condition?
  - a. If so, what changes and why? *[Probe for whether the participant thinks additional project personnel should be included under the notification requirements, etc.]*
3. Have you received a conference award from NSF in the past three years?
  - a. If so, can you tell me about the policy/code of conduct and reporting mechanism that were established for the conference/one of the conferences? *[Probe for details on policy/code of conduct, how it was disseminated, and the mechanism for reporting violations.]*
    - i. Did anyone at the conference report an issue?
      1. If so, how well did the process work? *[If the participant mentions challenges, probe for the nature of these challenges and how they might be addressed in the future.]*
  - b. If not, can you tell me how the NSF requirements would likely be met? *[Probe for details on how the policy/code of conduct would be developed, whether it could be modeled after one the organization already has established, how the policy/code of conduct would be disseminated, and what mechanism would likely be established for reporting violations.]*
4. Have any of the NSF-funded awards you've received in the past three years supported travel to a conference?
  - a. If so, can you tell me how you went about ensuring that the conference had established policies/codes of conduct related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault, as well as a reporting mechanism?
5. Do you think the NSF conference travel policy makes it more challenging to travel to a conference using NSF funding?
  - a. If so, why? *[Probe for difficulties related to ensuring that other conferences have policies/codes of conduct and reporting mechanisms.]*
    - i. If so, how could these challenges be addressed?
6. Are there any changes or revisions you would recommend making to the NSF conference policy or conference travel policy?
  - a. If so, what changes and why?

#### **Questions Related to Perceptions of the T&C/Conference & Travel Policies**

1. Do you think that all agencies that fund your organization should have a term and condition and conference policy similar to NSF's?
  - a. If so, why?
  - b. If not, why not?

2. Do you have any concerns about the NSF term and condition, conference policy, or conference travel policy?
  - a. If so, what are these concerns?
3. Do you think these types of policies help to prevent and address sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault in your organization? Why or why not?
  - a. If so, are there particular aspects of the policies that make them effective?
  - b. If not, what do you think could be done to make these policies more effective?
4. Are there other ways government funding agencies could help prevent and address sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault in your organization?
  - a. If so, how?
  - b. If not, why not?

### **General Questions**

1. If NSF asked you for advice on how they could improve the experience of working with NSF, what advice would you give? *[Probe for recommendations regarding changes in policies, communications, training, intra-agency coordination, etc.]*
2. Are there any other questions you feel we should have asked or any additional comments you would like to provide?

### **Conclusion**

We appreciate all of the valuable information you provided during this interview. We want to assure you that neither your name nor your organization will be connected with any of the findings or recommendations presented to NSF. If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to provide additional information in the future, please feel free to reach out to me at [allison@101research.com](mailto:allison@101research.com) or (202) 868-2151 at any time. Thank you again.