Part I of the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 13-1), effective January 14, 2013, is the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), which provides detailed guidance for the preparation and submission of proposals to the National Science Foundation (NSF) and should be reviewed in advance on NSF’s website at: http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf13001/gpgprint.pdf

A proposal may be submitted only once to NSF, even if the PI envisions review by multiple programs. The submission of duplicate or substantially similar proposals concurrently for review by more than one program without prior NSF approval may result in return of the redundant proposals.

General information about NSF programs and specific funding opportunities are available on NSF’s website at: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/aboutfunding.jsp

The following is a summary of GPG proposal instructions:

How to Submit
Conformance with Instructions
What to Submit
When to Submit
Special Considerations
Additional Support

How to Submit

Proposals to NSF may be submitted electronically via FastLane or Grants.gov, unless otherwise indicated in a specific program notice. Please note that Collaborative Proposals must be submitted via Fastlane at this time. Proposals via Grants.Gov should use Cayuse 424 and select the Research.Gov** schema. Questions about which option to use and/or how to initiate the proposal may be referred to a departmental administrator or your OSP Projects Officer. All proposals, regardless of submission method, should begin in Cayuse SP.

**NSF is incrementally moving FastLane’s post award functionality to Research.gov. Annual and Final Project Reports are expected to transition in early 2013 and FastLane’s proposal development and submission process will then follow. As with all other NYU proposals, the advantages to using Cayuse 424 in preparing and submitting an NSF proposal include immediate system validations, internal electronic routing and approvals, direct linking of proposal and award data, and storage of all related files and information for on-line retrieval and reporting.**

The guidelines which follow specifically mirror FastLane’s proposal development process, but the same content requirements are generally translatable to the Cayuse-to-Research.gov process as well.

For FastLane instructions, see: https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/NSFHelp/flashhelp/fastlane/FastLane_Help/fastlane_help.htm

For access to Cayuse resources, see: http://www.nyu.edu/research/resources-and-support-offices/getting-started-withyourresearch/registration-for-electronic-submissions/cayuse-resources.html
PIs who plan to submit a proposal for the first time must request an account on OSP’s eRA website: http://www.nyu.edu/research/resources-and-support-offices/getting-started-withyourresearch/registration-for-electronic-submissions.html

The actual submission of the final proposal is done by OSP, once the proposal is fully uploaded by the PI, OSP has been granted access to review and submit, and institutional approvals are in place.

Conformance with Instructions

Proposals must be prepared in strict conformance with GPG instructions. Proposals that deviate may be returned without review by NSF, unless prior authorization has been granted. Deviations may be authorized in one of two ways: 1) by a formal program solicitation which contains instructions departing from these standards, or 2) with the approval of the cognizant NSF Assistant Program Director or his/her designee. Deviations are rarely granted.

Proposal Format

All pages of the proposal must:

1. have one inch (2.5cm) margins on all four sides
2. use one of the following fonts (in black):
   Arial (10 points or larger)
   Helvetica (10 points or larger)
   Palatino Linotype (10 points or larger)
   Computer Modern (11 points or larger)
   Times New Roman (11 points or larger)
3. there should be no more than 6 lines to the vertical inch

Now that many reviews are conducted electronically, proposals should use only a standard, single-column format for the text. Page limits for each section must also be observed (e.g., the Project Description is limited to 15 pages). Each section of the proposal that is uploaded as a file must be individually paginated in advance. Use of URLs to provide information necessary to the review of the project description is discouraged, as reviewers are under no obligation to view such sites.

What to Submit

The following are the standard components of an NSF proposal:

Cover Sheet
For unsolicited proposals, choose Grant Proposal Guide from the drop-down menu and “no closing date”; otherwise, select the applicable program announcement, solicitation or program description. Preliminary proposals should be identified here where indicated, as should the related number if this is a full proposal that has been invited as a result of a preliminary submission.
Project Summary (limited to one page)
Written in the third person, and suitable for publication, describe the activity that would result if the proposal were funded, stating the objectives and methods to be employed. Note here, as well as in the Project Description, the PI must provide an overview, and must clearly address in separate statements, both NSF review criteria, 1) the intellectual merit of the proposed activity, and 2) the broader impacts resulting from the proposed activity.

Table of Contents (automatically generated)

Project Description (15-page limit, including results from prior NSF support and visual materials including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations). Include objectives for the period of the proposed work and expected significance; relation to long-term objectives, to present state of knowledge, to works in progress by the PI and to work elsewhere. Outline the statement of work, including the broad design of activities to be undertaken, and, where appropriate, describe experimental methods and procedures, as well as plans for preservation, documentation and sharing of data, samples, physical collections, curriculum materials and other research and education products.

The Project Description must also contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a description of the broader impacts expected to result from the proposed activities, such as the integration of research and education, the participation of underrepresented groups, and increased partnerships with industry and others, as well as potential benefits for society at large, such as enhancement of the infrastructure for research and education, improved national security, and increased economic competitiveness.

Results of prior NSF support (during past five years). If any, provide:
- NSF award number, amount and period of support
- title of project
- summary of results, including both intellectual merit and broader impacts
- resulting publications
- brief description of research products, such as data, samples, physical collections, and their availability
- if this is a renewal, a description of the relationship of the completed work to the proposed work.

References Cited (required). If none are cited, a statement to that effect must be included in this section. If the reference material is available electronically, the website address should be included.

Biographical Sketches (limited to two pages each)
For all senior project personnel, list only (NO personal information):
- Professional degrees and training, from undergraduate to postdoctoral, indicating institution, major or area and year
- Academic/professional appointments, beginning with the present
- Five products (publications, data sets, software, patents, copyrights) most closely related to the project, and five others
Up to five examples of “synergistic activities” which integrate and transfer knowledge, such as innovations in teaching and training, development/refinement of research tools, problem-solving methods, databases, or service on national boards or committees. Collaborators (with institutional affiliations) within last 48 months, including co-editors (on a journal, compendium or conference proceeding) during the preceding 24 months. Graduate and postdoctoral advisors, with current institutional affiliations. Thesis advisees and postdocs sponsored during past five years, with total number advised or sponsored.

**Budget and Justification**
The major cost categories are as follows: Salaries and Wages, Fringe Benefits, Equipment, Travel, Participant Support, Other Direct Costs (e.g. materials and supplies, publication, consultant services, computer services, subawards, and other), and Facilities and Administrative (F&A/indirect) costs. Prepare a budget for each year of support requested. A cumulative budget will be automatically generated. A budget justification of up to three pages should also be included. The budget justification should describe in detail the basis for the items included in the cost estimates and the need for the items in relation to the proposed activities (e.g. salaries should be justified with a description of the role and responsibilities each person has with regard to the scope of work, travel should be itemized by destination and cost for airfare, lodging, per diem, etc.)

Note that salary compensation for senior project personnel is limited to two months per year from all NSF-funded grants, whether during the academic year or summer. **Note also that as voluntary cost-sharing is now prohibited as a matter of NSF policy, there should be no costsharing indicated on line M of the budget form except in proposals responding to a program solicitation mandating that the University share a portion of total project costs, and budget justifications should be free of any quantified, unbudgeted effort. If no salary is requested for senior personnel, they should not be listed in the personnel budget.**

**Current and Pending Support**
List outside support from all sources (Federal, State, private, etc.) for the PI and other senior personnel, even if no salary is charged. The total award amount for each project must be disclosed, as well as the number of person-months per year devoted to each project. Also include a list of all current proposals under consideration, by NSF or other sponsors.

**Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources** (required). **If there are none, a statement to that effect must be included in this section.**

**Special Information & Supplementary Documentation**
This section is not an appendix, but will not be considered part of the 15-page limit for the Project Description either. In addition to the following, include in this section any letters of commitment documenting collaborative efforts; information about the use of human subjects, recombinant DNA, hazardous materials or vertebrate animals; authorization for work in foreign countries, etc. Do not include letters of support unless required by the program solicitation, as reviewers are under no obligation to review them.

**Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan.** Proposals requesting support for a postdoc must include, in
Data Management Plan (required). All proposals must also describe plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, or assert the absence of the need for such plans, in a supplementary document of no more than two pages labeled “Data Management Plan”. FastLane will no longer permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Data Management Plan, and the Plan will be reviewed by NSF as an integral part of the proposal, coming under Intellectual Merit or Broader Impacts criteria or both, as appropriate to the scientific community of relevance.

Such plans may address:

- the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the research
- the standards to use for data and metadata format and content
- policies for access and sharing, including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements
- policies and provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
- plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of access to them.

As practices for data management sometimes vary by discipline, individual NSF Directorates, Divisions or Programs may develop specific data management requirements, for reference at: http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp. Where no specific guidance exists, the above elements should be considered when preparing a proposal plan. A set of related FAQs is also accessible at this same url. Though NSF allows as how not all research is expected to generate data or samples, the proposal must nevertheless include a supplementary document asserting this. Collaborative proposals and those including subawardees must include a single, combined Data Management Plan. No plan is required for proposals requesting supplemental support.

Appendices may not be included unless a deviation has been authorized as indicated above.

Some sections of the proposal are for “NSF Use Only” and therefore the information is not provided to reviewers during the peer review process. These are single-copy documents:

- Information about Project Investigators/Project Directors (and co-PIs/PDs)
- Deviation Authorization (if applicable)
- List of Suggested Reviewers or Reviewers Not to Include (optional). Refer to the GPG for NSF criteria for excluding reviewers for Potentially Disqualifying Conflicts of Interest.
- Proprietary or Privileged Information (if applicable).
When to Submit

Unsolicited proposals should be submitted at least six months in advance of the requested start date for review and processing by NSF, if no target date has been established by the cognizant program. For a complete listing of target dates and deadlines, see http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_list.jsp?org=NSF&ord=date.

To ensure timely institutional review, as per current NYU deadline policy, PIs should upload all portions of the proposal and grant OSP access to proposal-in-progress at least 10 working days in advance of the target date or deadline. As with all NYU submissions, the approval of the Department Chair (as appropriate) and Dean is required before OSP may release the proposal.

Special Considerations

All projects involving either vertebrate animals (including studies of wildlife in the field) or human subjects must be reviewed and approved (or, for human subjects, be found eligible for exemption from approval) by the appropriate University oversight committees. For more information about the process for review and approval of research involving humans, visit the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects (UCAIHS) website. Contact the Office of Veterinary Resources about animal protocols. Proposals involving the use of vertebrate animals must include sufficient information within the project description to enable reviewers to evaluate the choice of species, number of animals to be used, and any necessary exposure of animals to discomfort, pain or injury.

Additional Support

Renewal proposals must also be submitted at least six months before additional funding is required. A traditional renewal proposal must conform to the same requirements as a new proposal. Alternatively, with approval by the NSF Program Officer, an Accomplishment-Based Renewal Proposal may be prepared, in which no more than six reprints of publications may be submitted in lieu of a Project Description, in addition to a brief (not to exceed four pages) summary of plans for the proposed period of support.

Incremental (usually annual) funding for continuing grants is based on NSF review of an Annual Project Report for each increment and does not require submission of a new proposal. The Annual Project Report must be submitted electronically via FastLane’s electronic reporting system at least three months prior to the end of the current funding period. These reports are submitted directly by the PI and do not require OSP review and approval.