



Memorandum

To: NSF Community

Date: 12/19/2008 (Revised 4/27/2009)

From: Senior Vice Provost Pierre Hohenberg

Re: Revised NSF Grant Proposal Guidelines: America Competes Act Requirements for Mentoring of Postdoctoral Fellows

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has issued a revised version of the **NSF Proposal & Award Policies and Procedures Guide** (PAPPG, NSF 09-29) that will be effective for proposals received on or after April 6, 2009. A summary of all significant changes is posted on NSF's website at:

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf09_29/gpg_index.jsp.

1) The most significant change addresses the mandates of the American COMPETES Act, which directed the Foundation to implement new requirements for the mentoring of postdoctoral fellows. Proposals requesting support for postdocs must include, as a supplementary document of no more than one (1) page, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. The mentoring activities will be assessed in the merit review as part of the broader impacts criteria, and proposals that do not include such a section will be returned without review. Examples of mentoring activities include, but are not limited to: career counseling; training in preparation of grant proposals; publications and presentations; guidance on ways to improve teaching and mentoring skills; guidance on how to collaborate effectively with researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas; and training in responsible professional practices.

To help NYU investigators meet this new requirement, the University has

expanded and formalized its activities in support of postdoctoral (and graduate student) mentorship at Washington Square. This initiative is described briefly in the following paragraph, which should henceforth be incorporated into the NSF proposal Project Description, modified to include specific plans for mentoring of involved postdocs:

To supplement the all important personal mentoring provided by the research supervisor, NYU in partnership with the New York Academy of Science (NYAS) has created a two-part approach to mentoring of postdoctoral appointees. First, all postdoctoral fellows must participate in an on campus series entitled Workshop for Emerging Scientists. These workshops cover topics including: research misconduct, conflict of interest, mentor/trainee responsibilities, collaboration in science, publication practices and responsible authorship, ethical considerations in research with human subjects, ethical considerations in research with animal subjects, ownership, acquisition, storage and sharing of research data, and survival skills for a career in research. In addition, these workshops will be augmented with ongoing programs provided through the Science Alliance Program of the New York Academy of Sciences (<http://www.nyas.org/sa>), a consortium of universities and research institutions committed to advancing the next generation in science and technology. Along with a wide range of career mentoring activities, the Science Alliance also offers conferences, workshops, discussion groups, eBriefings, and encounters with industry representatives and other potential employers.

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding this new initiative, about which more detailed information will be provided under separate cover.

Others changes to the PAPPG worthy of note include:

2) In response to complaints from the higher education community, NSF is providing greater flexibility in charging faculty salaries. Total compensation from all NSF awards will continue to be limited to two months in any one year; however, the prior limitation to summer salary for those on nine-month appointments has been eliminated. This flexibility may help faculty to allocate salary more accurately to the different activities they engage in, particularly for faculty with administrative responsibilities. We plan to issue guidelines for time and effort reporting in the near future.

3) NSF has replaced the Small Grants for Exploratory Research (SGER) program with two new award mechanisms: Grants for Rapid Response Research (RAPID) will support quick-response research on natural or anthropogenic disasters and similar unanticipated events at up to \$200K for one year; concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) will support high-risk, exploratory and potentially transformative research for up to \$300K over two years.

Please refer any questions regarding the latter changes to your OSP Projects Officer.