Changes to the *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG) (NSF 13-1)

Effective January 14, 2013

The following is excerpted from the Grant Proposal Guide and specifies the changes made to the document. Note that this is only the summary. The actual document should be referenced for the full language of the changes. The full document is available at:


**Significant Changes to the GPG to Implement the Recommendations of the National Science Board’s Report entitled, “National Science Foundation’s Merit Review Criteria: Review and Revisions”**

- **Chapter II, Introduction**, 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. 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.

- **Chapter II.C.1.e, Proposal Certifications**, has been updated to include a new Organizational Support Certification to address Section 526 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act (ACRA) of 2010.

- **Chapter II.C.2.b, Project Summary**, has been revised to omit language regarding the inclusion of separate headings to address the two merit review criteria. In lieu of this approach, FastLane has been modified to display three separate text boxes in which proposers must provide an Overview and address the “Intellectual Merit” and “Broader Impacts” of the proposed activity. Because FastLane will enable the criteria to be separately addressed (still within one page), proposers will no longer need to include separate headings. Proposals that do not separately address the overview and both merit review criteria within the one-page Project Summary will be not be accepted or will be returned without review.

- **Chapter II.C.2.d, Project Description**, has been revised to implement changes related to the Content and Results from Prior NSF Support sections recommended by the National Science Board (NSB). 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. In the past, the Project Description needed to include a description of broader impacts as an integral part of the narrative. The Project Description must now contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities. This section also was updated to indicate that Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact activities must be described in two separate sections in the summary of Results from Prior NSF Support.
· Chapter III, NSF Proposal Processing and Review, has been revised to insert language in the introduction to Chapter III, 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.

· Chapter III.A, Review Criteria, has been renamed Merit Review Principles and Criteria and revised to incorporate recommendations from the NSB. New language has been added on merit review principles, and revised merit review criteria language was inserted. Language regarding evaluation of mentoring plans for postdoctoral researchers has been moved from the GPG Chapter III to the Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan instructions in Chapter II.C.2.j. References to the document containing examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts have been deleted. This was done to eliminate confusion over the document, which was often viewed as a prescriptive list of additional requirements instead of illustrative examples.

Other Significant Changes to the GPG

· Chapter I.G.3, Requirements Relating to Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Numbers and Registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), has been updated to replace the CCR with the System for Award Management. In July, 2012, the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system was discontinued. CCR was migrated into the new System for Award Management (SAM). For further information about the conversion to SAM and how it impacts the proposer community, see: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Clarifying language also has been added to this section regarding subawardees.

· Chapter II.C.1.e, Proposal Certifications, has been updated to include additional certifications on tax obligations/liability and felony conviction to be submitted by the Authorized Organizational Representative upon certification of the proposal. These certifications were added to implement provisions included in the Commerce, Justice, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2012.

· Chapter II.C.2.f(i)(c), Biographical Sketch(es), has been revised to rename the “Publications” section to “Products” and 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.

· Chapter II.C.2.g(viii), Indirect Costs, has been modified to clarify that, except as noted in GPG II.C.2.g(v) and II.D.9 or in an NSF program solicitation, the applicable indirect cost rate(s) negotiated by the organization with the cognizant negotiating agency must be used in computing indirect costs (F&A) for a proposal. The section now provides a hyperlink to instructions for preparing an indirect cost rate proposal. A statement also has been added that foreign grantees are not eligible for indirect cost rate recovery unless the foreign grantee has a previously negotiated rate agreement with a U.S. Federal agency that has a practice of negotiating rates with foreign entities. In consideration of these changes, the section of the GPG entitled, “Exceptions to Basic Policy” has been deleted.

· Chapter II.C.2.i, Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources, has been supplemented to indicate that an aggregated description of the internal and external resources that are, or will be available to the project (both physical and personnel) should be provided. A new format for
submission of the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources information will be available in FastLane when the PAPPG becomes effective in January 2013. The new format will assist proposers in complying with the NSF cost sharing policy.

Clarifications and Other Changes to the GPG

- **Overall document** has been modified to incorporate minor editorial changes throughout the document to either clarify or enhance the intended meaning of a sentence or section.

- **Chapter I.G.1, Electronic Requirements**, has been revised to omit special instructions for proposals containing high resolution graphics.

- **Chapter II, Introduction**, 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.C.2, Sections of the Proposal and Chapter IV.B, Proposals Not Accepted or Returned Without Review**, have been augmented to indicate that a proposal not accepted is defined as FastLane will not permit submission of the proposal.

- **Chapter II.C.2.d, Project Description**, has been revised to clarify that, in the Results from Prior NSF Support section, “prior” NSF support includes current NSF funding. This section also was updated to indicate that information should be included irrespective of whether or not the support was directly related to the proposal, or whether or not salary support was provided.

- **Chapter II.C.2.e, References Cited**, has been updated to specify that if there are no references cited, a statement to that effect should be included in this section of the proposal and uploaded into FastLane.

- **Chapter II.C.2.g(i)(c), Budget**, has been updated to describe a new functionality in FastLane regarding senior personnel and the budget. If no person months and no salary are being requested for senior personnel, they should be removed from Section A of the budget. This change was made for consistency with NSF’s cost sharing policy.

- **Chapter II.C.2.g(v), Participant Support**, has been augmented with language explaining that an allowance for indirect costs associated with participant support costs may be established or negotiated in advance when circumstances indicate that the grantee could be expected to incur significant expenses in administering participant payments (moved from Indirect Costs).

- **Chapter II.C.2.g(vi)(e), Subawards**, has been amended to state that foreign subawardees are not eligible for indirect cost recovery unless the subawardee 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.i, Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources, has been updated to specify that if there is no facilities, equipment and other resources information, a statement to that effect should be included in this section of the proposal and uploaded into FastLane.

Chapter II.C.2.j, Special Information and Supplementary Documentation, has been updated to include language regarding evaluation of postdoctoral mentoring plans (moved from Chapter III).

Chapter II.D.6, Proposals Involving Vertebrate Animals, has been supplemented to include guidance on review of wildlife research protocols. Also, instructions have been clarified for submission of IACUC approval information.

Chapter II.D.8., Proposals for Conferences, Symposia, and Workshops, was supplemented to clarify what information should be included in different sections of the proposal.

Chapter II.D.13, Projects Requiring High-Performance Computing Resources, Large Amounts of Data Storage, or Advanced Visualization Resources, has been updated to replace language on the TeraGrid project, which has become the XSEDE project.

Exhibit II-1, Proposal Preparation Checklist, has been modified to conform to the Grant Proposal Guide revisions.