

# NSF 25-500: Earth Sciences Postdoctoral Fellowships (EAR-PF)

## Program Solicitation

### Document Information

#### Document History

- **Posted:** October 2, 2024
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**U.S. National Science Foundation**

Directorate for Geosciences

Division of Earth Sciences

**Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitting organization's local time):

January 14, 2025

October 29, 2025

Last Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter



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## **Important Information And Revision Notes**

This program solicitation has been updated to reflect the change in award management. Awards will no longer be made directly to individuals but will be transferred to the host institution through a pre-award transfer. Postdoctoral fellows will be paid based on the U. S. Government Office of Personnel Management General Schedule (GS) salary scale.

Any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation should be submitted in accordance with the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) that is in effect for the relevant due date to which the proposal is being submitted. The NSF PAPPG is regularly revised and it is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that the proposal meets the requirements specified in this solicitation and the applicable version of the PAPPG. Submitting a proposal prior to a specified deadline does not negate this requirement.

## **Summary Of Program Requirements**

### **General Information**

#### **Program Title:**

Earth Sciences Postdoctoral Fellowships (EAR-PF)

#### **Synopsis of Program:**

The Division of Earth Sciences (EAR) awards postdoctoral fellowships to recent recipients of doctoral degrees to conduct an integrated program of independent research and professional development that address scientific questions within the scope of EAR's disciplinary portfolio. The program supports researchers for a period of up to two years with fellowships that can be taken to an eligible host institution. The program is intended to recognize beginning investigators of significant potential and provide them with research experience, mentorship, and training that will help establish them in leadership positions in the Earth Sciences community. Postdoctoral fellows should pursue research in directions or with tools that will diversify the expertise they gained during their doctoral studies and research. The fellowship should also enable broadening of the fellow's professional network. For these reasons, applicants are strongly encouraged to seek opportunities outside of their doctoral institution and their organization at the time of submission.

Fellowships will include participation in a professional development program that emphasizes development of mentoring skills. This program will coordinate the involvement of fellows in conferences and activities that are focused on increasing the engagement of underrepresented groups in science,

technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). We encourage input and participation from the full spectrum of diverse talent that society has to offer.

## **Broadening Participation In STEM**

NSF recognizes the unique lived experiences of individuals from communities that are underrepresented and/or under-served in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and the barriers to inclusion and access to STEM education and careers. NSF highly encourages the leadership, partnership, and contributions in all NSF opportunities of individuals who are members of such communities supported by NSF. This includes leading and designing STEM research and education proposals for funding; serving as peer reviewers, advisory committee members, and/or committee of visitor members; and serving as NSF leadership, program, and/or administrative staff. NSF also highly encourages demographically diverse institutions of higher education (IHEs) to lead, partner, and contribute to NSF opportunities on behalf of their research and education communities. NSF expects that all individuals, including those who are members of groups that are underrepresented and/or under-served in STEM, are treated equitably and inclusively in the Foundation's proposal and award process.

NSF encourages IHEs that enroll, educate, graduate, and employ individuals who are members of groups underrepresented and/or under-served in STEM education programs and careers to lead, partner, and contribute to NSF opportunities, including leading and designing STEM research and education proposals for funding. Such IHEs include, but may not be limited to, community colleges and two-year institutions, mission-based institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), women's colleges, and institutions that primarily serve persons with disabilities, as well as institutions defined by enrollment such as Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs), Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).

"Broadening participation in STEM" is the comprehensive phrase used by NSF to refer to the Foundation's goal of increasing the representation and diversity of individuals, organizations, and geographic regions that contribute to STEM teaching, research, and innovation. To broaden participation in STEM, it is necessary to address issues of equity, inclusion, and access in STEM education, training, and careers. Whereas all NSF programs might support broadening participation components, some programs primarily focus on supporting broadening participation research and projects. Examples can be found on the NSF [Broadening Participation in STEM](#) website.

### **Cognizant Program Officer(s):**

*Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.*

- Nicole M. Gasparini, telephone: (703) 292-8550, email: [earpf@nsf.gov](mailto:earpf@nsf.gov)
- Aisha R. Morris, telephone: (703) 292-7081, email: [earpf@nsf.gov](mailto:earpf@nsf.gov)

### **Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):**

- 47.050 --- Geosciences

### **Award Information**

**Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard Grant or Continuing Grant

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 8 to 10

Total of approximately 8 - 10 awards each year are anticipated, subject to availability of funds and the quality of proposals received. Each award has a two-year duration.

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$2,784,000

Funding amount pending the availability of funds and the quality of proposals received.

## Eligibility Information

### Who May Submit Proposals:

Earth Sciences Postdoctoral Fellowship proposals are submitted directly by the fellowship candidate to NSF. Each fellowship candidate must affiliate with a primary host institution. Awards will be made to the institution.

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of sub-awards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.
- For-profit organizations: U.S.-based commercial organizations, including small businesses, with strong capabilities in scientific or engineering research or education and a passion for innovation.
- Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs) and NSF-funded FFRDCs, are ineligible as primary host organizations. Any federal agencies or federally funded centers, facilities or institutes are ineligible as primary host organizations. Foreign organizations are also ineligible as primary host organizations.

### Who May Serve as PI:

To be eligible to submit a proposal to the EAR-PF Program an individual must, as of the full proposal deadline, meet all the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident (i.e., have a "green card") at the time the proposal is submitted.
- Have earned the doctoral degree (PhD), or expect to have earned the doctoral degree prior to the required start date of the fellowship.
- Not have worked for more than a total of 24 full-time-equivalent months in positions that require the doctoral degree by the EAR-PF deadline date.
- Not have submitted concurrently the same project to another program at NSF.

**By signing and submitting the proposal, the fellowship candidate is certifying that they meet the eligibility criteria specified in this program solicitation. Willful provision of false information in this request and its supporting documents or in reports required under an ensuing award is a criminal offense (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001).**

### Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

### Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI: 1

Individuals may submit only one proposal per year.

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Not required
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not required

- **Full Proposals:**

- Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).
- Full Proposals submitted via Grants.gov: *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov* guidelines apply (Note: The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide)).

## **B. Budgetary Information**

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:**

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:**

Not Applicable

- **Other Budgetary Limitations:**

Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

## **C. Due Dates**

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitting organization's local time):

January 14, 2025

October 29, 2025

Last Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter

## **Proposal Review Information Criteria**

### **Merit Review Criteria:**

National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review criteria apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

### **Award Administration Information**

#### **Award Conditions:**

Additional award conditions apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

#### **Reporting Requirements:**

Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.


## **I. Introduction**

The Division of Earth Sciences (EAR) is in the Geosciences Directorate. EAR supports proposals for research geared toward improving the understanding of the structure, composition, and evolution of the Earth, the life it supports, and the processes that govern the formation and behavior of the Earth's materials. The results of this research will create a better understanding of the Earth's changing environments, and the natural distribution of its mineral, water, biota, and energy resources and provide methods for predicting and mitigating the effects of geologic hazards such as earthquakes,

volcanic eruptions, floods, and landslides. EAR awards postdoctoral fellowships that focus on any of the disciplinary or cross-disciplinary research areas supported by the division.

## II. Program Description

### A. Appropriateness for EAR Priorities

The EAR postdoctoral fellows are expected to propose a strong, coherent research program in or across any area of Earth Science within the scope of the disciplines covered in the Division of Earth Sciences (EAR) (<https://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=EAR>). Proposals that address interdisciplinary questions encompassed by one or more traditional EAR disciplines are also appropriate for this solicitation. The EAR Division supports proposals for research geared toward improving the understanding of the structure, composition, and evolution of Earth, the evolutionary history of the life it supports, and the processes that govern the formation and behavior of Earth materials. EAR is particularly interested in proposals that address the priority science questions outlined in A Vision for NSF Earth Sciences 2020-2030: Earth in Time (2020) (<https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/25761/a-vision-for-nsf-earth-sciences-2020-2030-earth-in> ) from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Candidates are encouraged to approach the fellowship as an opportunity to broaden their experience with research that moves beyond their previous research focus, and that takes a broad view of integrating disciplines, extending technical approaches to problems, or expanding collaborations. All proposals must include an earth science research effort; proposals that are solely focused on education will not be considered. The EAR Division has made it a priority to address the challenges in advancing culture that achieves outcomes of creating opportunities everywhere for everyone, and increasing belonging in the geoscience discipline. Proposers are encouraged to explicitly address this priority in their proposed activities. **Principal Investigators are strongly encouraged to contact the Program Director in their area of science (see <https://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=EAR>) to discuss the appropriateness of their research for EAR funding.**

In addition, fellowship proposers are expected to include a program of personal professional development activities as part of their proposal. Such activities may include training or experiences important for careers in academia, government, industry, and/or other career paths. As a rough guideline, fellows should plan on their professional development activities taking no less than 10% and no more than 25% of their time. Proposers are encouraged to discuss the proposed professional development activities with their proposed mentor(s) prior to proposal submission so that the professional development activities can be incorporated into the mentoring plan described in the letter(s).

### B. Host Organizations

The fellow must affiliate with a primary host organization. Eligible primary organizations include U.S. IHEs, non-profit, non-academic organizations, or for-profit research organizations that are eligible to receive NSF funding. Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs) and NSF-funded FFRDCs, are ineligible as primary host organizations. Any federal agencies or federally funded centers, facilities or institutes are ineligible as primary host organizations. Foreign organizations are also ineligible as primary host organizations. Multiple host organizations are permitted and may be appropriate for those looking to pursue interdisciplinary work, collaborative opportunities, and/or activities related to broadening participation. Regardless of the number of host organizations proposed, a primary host organization, which will receive and administer the award, must be identified.

In general, NSF expects that the fellowship will support work at an organization(s) other than the fellow's graduate institution or current affiliated institution because the fellowship objectives include broadening the perspectives and experiences of the fellows and promoting interdisciplinary research careers. Consequently, all candidates must present strong justification for their choice of host organization(s) and must clearly explain the benefits of this choice for their research and for their professional development goals. All proposals will be evaluated in the context of the potential benefits of the host organization to enable the proposed research, broader impacts, and career development of the PI.

PIs are encouraged to expand their network of collaborators and implement the fellowship at an organization new to the PI. However, PIs who choose to carry out the postdoctoral fellowship at the organization where they received their PhD or their current organization at the time of submission must present a strong justification with clear explanation of the

benefits of this choice to their research and career development goals. Proposals that fail to justify the reason for carrying out their fellowship at an organization that is not new to the PI will be returned without review.

### **C. Scientific Mentor(s)**

In addition to affiliation with a host organization(s), the candidate must identify a scientific mentor who will provide mentoring and guidance for the research and broader fellowship goals. PIs are encouraged, but not required in most cases (see paragraph below), to identify at least one additional scientific mentor and/or career mentor. Career mentors are scientists who can guide the fellow with career advice as well as scientific advice. Additional mentors do not have to work at the host institution and do not need to work at an institution that is eligible to receive federal funding. The support of the mentor(s) and their plan for mentoring the fellow will be part of the evaluation of the proposal. The candidate is responsible for making all arrangements with the host organization(s) and the mentor(s).

PIs who choose to carry out the postdoctoral fellowship at the organization where they received their PhD or their current organization at the time of submission must have at least two scientific mentors, one at the hosting organization and a second mentor at a different organization. The second mentor must be a new collaborator for the PI. If the primary mentor is already one of the PI's mentors, the PI must justify why continuing to work with a previously established mentor is the best choice for their research and career goals.

## **III. Award Information**

**Duration and Tenure:** Up to 24 full-time-equivalent months of support may be requested. Fellowship tenure must begin between August 1 of the year following the submission deadline date and July 1 of the subsequent year.

Within the fellowship period, one month per year of fellowship duration may be used for paid leave, including parental or family leave. Additional leave may be provided as part of the institutional benefits. This paid leave cannot be used to increase the level of NSF support beyond the duration of the fellowship. NSF enables career-life balance through a variety of mechanisms. For more information, please see <https://www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance/>.

Candidates selected to receive fellowships will be contacted by NSF and asked to provide additional information, such as forms required for a pre-award transfer to the initial (primary) host organization. Successful candidates who have not completed their PhD at the time of proposal submission must provide certification of the completion of all PhD degree requirements before the start date of the award.

Normally fellowships will be held at the primary host organization specified in the proposal, but under certain circumstances and with suitable justification, fellows may transfer the award during the tenure of the fellowship to a new organization contingent upon approval by NSF.

Fellowships are not renewable and are subject to availability of funds.

During the period of the fellowship, no additional appointment or fellowship may be held without prior permission of the cognizant NSF program officer.

If a fellow chooses to accept employment (i.e. a tenure-track position) during the first year of the fellowship, the fellowship award will be terminated upon the start of the new position. In such cases, the primary host organization is responsible for initiating procedures for a termination by mutual agreement in accordance with Chapter XII of the NSF PAPPG. Fellows who wish to accept a new position in Year 2 of the award must contact their EAR-PF program officer to discuss disposition of any remaining funds in the PF grant.

**Salary and Allowances:** If the proposal is recommended for award, the prospective fellow will be required to submit a revised budget with salary information for years one and two. The EAR-PF fellowship salary will be based on the U.S. Government Office of Personnel Management (OPM) General Schedule (GS). For Year 1 of the fellowship, the EAR-PF salary is set at GS-11 Step 1 for submission year and for the location of the primary host institution (see Locality Pay Tables for Geographic Areas at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>). Salary should be escalated by 3% for Year 2.

In the proposed budgets for both Year 1 and Year 2, \$15,000 each year should be included to cover expenses directly related to the conduct of the proposed research and professional development goals. These costs include but are not limited to, materials and supplies, equipment, computing resources, access to databases, domestic and international travel, publication charges, and subscription fees.

EAR would like to encourage a close partnership between the fellow and the primary host organization to allow the fellow access to organizational benefits such as healthcare and to permit the reduction of grant management tasks that would be placed on the fellow if an award was made directly to them. Therefore, EAR will review proposals as submitted by individuals, but all awards will be made to the primary host organization after the review process is complete using the Pre-award Transfer Process. Budgets and award documents will be adjusted to include organizational fringe benefits and overhead costs as part of the Pre-award Transfer Process described below.

**Pre-Award Transfer Process:** To process the Pre-award Transfer, the fellow, acting as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR), must submit to the cognizant EAR-PF Program Officer (PO) an e-mail concurring with the transfer of the proposal to the primary host organization. This documentation will be added to the proposal jacket by the PO as correspondence associated with the proposal. The cognizant PO will then request that the host organization submit to NSF the following revised documents:

- **Cover Sheet** (with the fellow named as the PI) and certification pages signed by the host organization AOR.
- **Budget and Budget Justification.** The fellow must be named as the PI and receive a monthly or bi-weekly salary in Year 1 equal to GS-11 Step 1 for the submission year and with locality pay for the location of the primary host institution (Locality Pay Tables for Geographic Areas at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>) plus organizational benefits. In Year 2 the salary should be increased by 3%. The primary host organization's budget is expected to include fringe benefit costs for the fellow. In the final budget, the \$15,000 per year for research costs may be distributed to cover other direct research costs, including but not limited to, materials and supplies, equipment, computing resources, access to databases, domestic and international travel, publication charges, and subscription fees. The applicable U.S. federally negotiated indirect cost rate(s) must be used in computing indirect costs (F&A). Organizations that do not have a current negotiated rate agreement with a cognizant federal agency may request indirect cost recovery up to the de minimis rate of up to 15% of modified total direct costs.

After receiving the revised documents, the PO will update the proposal system with the new organizational and budget data so that processing of the proposal award to the primary host organization can proceed. The fellow's original Cover Sheet and Certification pages will not be modified and will be retained for the historical record of how the proposal was submitted to NSF.

## IV. Eligibility Information

### Who May Submit Proposals:

Earth Sciences Postdoctoral Fellowship proposals are submitted directly by the fellowship candidate to NSF. Each fellowship candidate must affiliate with a primary host institution. Awards will be made to the institution.

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of sub-awards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.



- For-profit organizations: U.S.-based commercial organizations, including small businesses, with strong capabilities in scientific or engineering research or education and a passion for innovation.
- Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs) and NSF-funded FFRDCs, are ineligible as primary host organizations. Any federal agencies or federally funded centers, facilities or institutes are ineligible as primary host organizations. Foreign organizations are also ineligible as primary host organizations.

#### **Who May Serve as PI:**

To be eligible to submit a proposal to the EAR-PF Program an individual must, as of the full proposal deadline, meet all the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident (i.e., have a "green card") at the time the proposal is submitted.
- Have earned the doctoral degree (PhD), or expect to have earned the doctoral degree prior to the required start date of the fellowship.
- Not have worked for more than a total of 24 full-time-equivalent months in positions that require the doctoral degree by the EAR-PF deadline date.
- Not have submitted concurrently the same project to another program at NSF.

**By signing and submitting the proposal, the fellowship candidate is certifying that they meet the eligibility criteria specified in this program solicitation. Willful provision of false information in this request and its supporting documents or in reports required under an ensuing award is a criminal offense (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001).**

#### **Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:**

There are no restrictions or limits.

#### **Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI: 1**

Individuals may submit only one proposal per year.

#### **Additional Eligibility Info:**

Eligible primary host organizations include:

- **Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)** - Two-and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the U.S., acting on behalf of their faculty members.
- **Non-profit, non-academic organizations** - Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.
- **For-profit research organizations** - U.S. commercial organizations, especially small businesses with strong capabilities in scientific or engineering research or education.

Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs), including NSF-funded FFRDCs, are ineligible as primary host organizations. Government agencies, national centers, facilities or institutes funded by other federal agencies, and foreign organizations are also ineligible as primary host organizations.

If an award is recommended, the proposal will be transferred to the proposed primary host organization. The award will be issued to and administered by the primary host organization. See Section III for additional information about the Pre-Award Transfer Process.

## **V. Proposal Preparation And Submission Instructions**

### **A. Proposal Preparation Instructions**

**Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** Proposers may opt to submit proposals in response to this Program Solicitation via Research.gov or Grants.gov.

- Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG)*. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg). Paper copies of the PAPPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov). The Prepare New Proposal setup will prompt you for the program solicitation number.
- Full proposals submitted via Grants.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation via Grants.gov should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov*. The complete text of the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide)). To obtain copies of the Application Guide and Application Forms Package, click on the Apply tab on the Grants.gov site, then click on the Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions link and enter the funding opportunity number, (the program solicitation number without the NSF prefix) and press the Download Package button. Paper copies of the Grants.gov Application Guide also may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

In determining which method to utilize in the electronic preparation and submission of the proposal, please note the following:

Collaborative Proposals. All collaborative proposals submitted as separate submissions from multiple organizations must be submitted via Research.gov. PAPPG Chapter II.E.3 provides additional information on collaborative proposals.

See PAPPG Chapter II.D.2 for guidance on the required sections of a full research proposal submitted to NSF. Please note that the proposal preparation instructions provided in this program solicitation may deviate from the PAPPG instructions.

Proposals submitted to the EAR Postdoctoral Fellowship program must be submitted electronically through either Research.gov or Grants.gov. Only one proposal is permitted per individual per year. A full proposal consists of many parts and requires input from the fellowship candidate, the proposed mentor(s), and the proposed host institution(s). Proposers are advised to begin the proposal well in advance of the submission deadline and to submit as early as possible. Partially completed proposals may be saved for future completion and submission. The submission of incomplete or late proposals is not permitted.

**Proposal preparation and submission through Research.gov is strongly encouraged because these fellowships contain unique requirements.** If the proposer elects to submit through Grants.gov, confirmation that ALL required documents have been successfully uploaded into NSF systems by the deadline date is recommended. Otherwise, the proposal will be considered incomplete or late and will be returned without review.

**Before starting proposal preparation, the proposer must be registered as an individual.** To register as a new individual in Research.gov, access the [Research.gov New Account Management System](#). To register as a new individual in Grants.gov, access Grants.gov Applicant Registration (<https://www.grants.gov/register>). Please note that if submitting via Grants.gov, you must also obtain an NSF ID in Research.gov.

**Fellowship proposals must be submitted by the fellowship candidate, not by the fellowship candidate's current or proposed organization's Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR).** The fellowship candidate serves as their own Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) and AOR for the purposes of any research administration functions in Research.gov or Grants.gov.

**Proposals must include all the required sections of a full research proposal submitted to NSF as specified in Chapter II.D.2 of the PAPPG.** In cases where requirements given in this solicitation supplement or deviate from the instructions provided in the PAPPG or the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide*, this solicitation takes precedence. All page limitations include pictures, figures, tables, graphics, etc. Proposers are urged to take special care to strictly adhere to

page limitations. Proposals that do not conform to the requirements will not be accepted or will be returned without review.

**Proposal Set-Up:** Select "Prepare New Full Proposal" in Research.gov. The fellowship candidate/PI must select the "I am a Postdoctoral Scholar (Postdoctoral Fellowship Proposals)" option to initiate a postdoctoral fellowship proposal.

Search for and select the title of this solicitation in Step 1 of the Full Proposal wizard. The information in Steps 2 and 3 is pre-populated by the system. In Step 4, add a descriptive title of the proposed research following the prepended text "Postdoctoral Fellowship: EAR-PF:"

**Personnel Documents:** The fellowship candidate is automatically designated as the PI in the Research.gov system. When preparing the Current and Pending (Other) Support section, please include current funding support for research and training. Under pending support, include this proposal, as well as any pending and planned applications to other fellowship or research programs. The research project submitted to this solicitation should not be concurrently under review by another program at NSF.

All mentor(s) must be identified in the proposal. If using Research.gov, this is done by going to the **Personnel Documents** section, clicking on the "Add Mentor/Advisor" tab, and entering the individual's NSF ID, email, or personnel name and organization. For each mentor, please submit a Biographical Sketch and COA information. Current and Pending (Other) Support documents are *not* required for the mentor(s).

Research.gov contains sections to upload the Biographical Sketch and COA for the mentor(s). For Grants.gov, the mentor(s) Biographical Sketch can be uploaded to "Other Supplementary Documents" and COA(s) to "Collaborators & Other Affiliations (COA)" as single copy documents.

The following instructions supplement or deviate from the guidance in the NSF PAPPG or the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide*:

**Cover Sheet:** A requested start date must be entered. Fellowship tenure must begin between August 1 of the year following the submission deadline and July 1 of the subsequent year. The proposed duration for a postdoctoral fellowship proposal is pre-populated, read-only (i.e., not editable), and aligns with the program solicitation selected when initiating the proposal in Research.gov. No co-PIs are permitted on the Cover Sheet.

In the Primary Place of Performance section enter host institution information. Complete any other sections as appropriate/applicable.

Grants.gov Users: The program solicitation number will be pre-populated by Grants.gov on the NSF Grant Proposer Cover Sheet. The title must start with "Postdoctoral Fellowship: EAR-PF:" followed by the descriptive title of the research.

**Project Summary:** The Project Summary must be no more than one page in length and include an overview of the project and separate statements that clearly address the intellectual merit and broader impacts of the proposed activity. In addition, the overview section of the Project Summary must identify the following:

- Proposed scientific mentor(s) and career mentor (if applicable)
- Proposed host organization(s)

**Project Description:** Please note this section **must** include a separate section header labeled, "Broader Impacts," and the heading must be on its own line with no other text on that line. The Project Description must not exceed 10 single-spaced pages (including any figures, pictures and tables) The Project Description must include the following:

- Research plan
- Justification for the choice of the host organization(s) and mentor(s). This justification relates to the proposed fellowship work, available expertise, available facilities, and available resources
- Description of the expected broader impacts, including a specific statement of commitment to broadening participation in science

- Description of the candidate's long-term career goals and the role of this postdoctoral experience in achieving them

Special certifications and permits may be required when projects involve human subjects, vertebrate animals, endangered species, hazardous materials, collecting in foreign countries, or other elements. The research plan should provide general information on these matters and address feasibility. If selected, candidates must submit required documentation to the NSF program officer before an award can be made.

**Budget and Budget Justification:** In Research.gov, the Budget section includes a pre-populated amount of \$1 on line F.1 for years one and two. Prior to award recommendation, a revised budget will be submitted to reflect the locality-based amount as described in this solicitation. The budget section will also include the \$15,000 fellowship allowance on line F.4. The Budget section is not displayed on the proposal main page after the proposal has been created but can be viewed by clicking, "Print Proposal." When the PI submits the proposal, the budget will display as read-only and will be accessible from the proposal main page. The budget section is editable during a proposal file update/budget revision.

Grants.gov users: Enter \$1 in Participant Support Costs for years one and two on line E.2 and the \$15,000/year fellowship allowance on line E.5. Enter (1) as the total number of participants. No other budget lines should be used for fellowship proposals. An annual budget must be submitted for each of the two years of the fellowship support.

A Budget Justification of no more than two pages must list and justify estimated expenditures under the annual fellowship allowance.

*Pre-Award Transfer:* Should a proposal be recommended for award, the primary host organization will be required to submit a revised budget and budget justification that allocates the proposed direct costs to the appropriate NSF budget line item(s) and includes the submission year OPM GS-11 Step 1 locality pay for the host institution location for year 1 and a 3% increase in Year 2. Organizational fringe benefits and indirect costs will also be added to the budget during the pre-award transfer in accordance with the guidance provided in Section III above.

**Data Management and Sharing Plan:** As specified in the PAPPG, all proposals must include a Data Management and Sharing Plan. This plan will either describe plans for data management and sharing of the physical and virtual products of research or assert the absence of the need for such plans. The fellow is also required to adhere to the EAR data policy available on the NSF website. See EAR guidelines at <https://www.nsf.gov/geo/geo-data-policies/ear/index.jsp>. The Data Management and Sharing Plan must not exceed two pages.

**Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources,** If applicable, insert text or upload a document that states: "See Letter(s) of Collaboration from the prospective host organization(s)."

### Other Required Sections

**PhD Abstract:** Abstract of the candidate's PhD thesis (limited to one page).

**Host Institution Letter(s):** A letter(s) from the prospective host organization(s), signed by the department chair (or equivalent) and the Sponsored Research Office, certifying that adequate facilities and support will be provided for the fellow that accommodate the proposed activities. This letter(s) must also certify plans to appoint the fellow as project PI if an award is recommended. Should the applicant propose to hold the fellowship concurrently or sequentially at more than one organization during the two-year tenure, host institution letters of collaboration must be provided from all organizations. The primary host organization's letter must specifically acknowledge that:

- The organization is aware that award recommendations will require a pre-award transfer of the proposal to the primary host organization.
- The organization will submit all documents required for a pre-award transfer, including a new cover page that lists the fellow as the PI and a budget that adds funding for organizational fringe and overhead costs to support the fellow's benefits.
- The organization will administer the award to provide the fellow's salary, benefits and proposed research activities.

If a host organization is not the primary host organization and if the organization is eligible to receive NSF funding, the letter must acknowledge that the organization is willing to administer the award in the event that the fellow transfers to the organization. Awards cannot be transferred to foreign organizations or government agencies. If the host organization has not received prior NSF funding, the organization will need to submit "New Awardee" documentation, which will be subject to NSF's evaluation before an award can be made or transferred.

#### **Other Supplementary Documents:**

- A signed letter(s), not to exceed two pages each and uploaded to the Supplementary Documents, from the proposed scientific mentor(s) (and career mentor if applicable) certifying that the fellowship proposal has been read and approved. This letter(s) must also include discussion of:
  - The role the proposed scientific mentor(s) and career mentor will play in the professional development of the fellow.
  - The opportunities for research and professional development at the host organization that will be of particular benefit to the fellow.
- Additional letters of collaboration: Any additional letter(s) of collaboration must follow the guidance in the PAPPG and adhere to the language provided in the PAPPG, included below.
  - "If the proposal submitted by Dr. [insert the full name of the Principal Investigator] entitled [insert the proposal title] is selected for funding by NSF, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal."
- Collaborators and Other Affiliations (COA) information: COA information for the PhD advisor must be uploaded into the **Additional Single Copy Documents** section using the format specified in the PAPPG.

**Letters of recommendation will not be considered. Letters from proposed host organizations, scientific mentor(s), career mentor, and the candidate's current graduate advisor should not reflect a letter of recommendation and should make *no subjective statements* regarding either the candidate or their proposed activities.**

#### **B. Budgetary Information**

##### **Cost Sharing:**

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

##### **Other Budgetary Limitations:**

Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

#### **C. Due Dates**

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitting organization's local time):
  - January 14, 2025
  - October 29, 2025
  - Last Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter

#### **D. Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements**

##### **For Proposals Submitted Via Research.gov:**

To prepare and submit a proposal via Research.gov, see detailed technical instructions available at: <https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?>

[\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=research\\_node\\_display&\\_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationa](#)  
For Research.gov user support, call the Research.gov Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or e-mail [rgov@nsf.gov](mailto:rgov@nsf.gov).  
The Research.gov Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the Research.gov system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

#### **For Proposals Submitted Via Grants.gov:**

Before using Grants.gov for the first time, each organization must register to create an institutional profile. Once registered, the applicant's organization can then apply for any federal grant on the Grants.gov website. Comprehensive information about using Grants.gov is available on the Grants.gov Applicant Resources web page: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants>. In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide (see link in Section V.A) provides instructions regarding the technical preparation of proposals via Grants.gov. For Grants.gov user support, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or by email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Grants.gov Contact Center answers general technical questions related to the use of Grants.gov. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this solicitation.

**Submitting the Proposal:** Once all documents have been completed, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit the application to Grants.gov and verify the desired funding opportunity and agency to which the application is submitted. The AOR must then sign and submit the application to Grants.gov. The completed application will be transferred to Research.gov for further processing.

The NSF [Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov informational page](#) provides submission guidance to applicants and links to helpful resources including the NSF [Grants.gov Application Guide](#), [Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov how-to guide](#), and [Grants.gov Submitted Proposals Frequently Asked Questions](#). Grants.gov proposals must pass all NSF pre-check and post-check validations in order to be accepted by Research.gov at NSF.

When submitting via Grants.gov, NSF strongly recommends applicants initiate proposal submission at least five business days in advance of a deadline to allow adequate time to address NSF compliance errors and resubmissions by 5:00 p.m. submitting organization's local time on the deadline. Please note that some errors cannot be corrected in Grants.gov. Once a proposal passes pre-checks but fails any post-check, an applicant can only correct and submit the in-progress proposal in Research.gov.

Proposers that submitted via Research.gov may use Research.gov to verify the status of their submission to NSF. For proposers that submitted via Grants.gov, until an application has been received and validated by NSF, the Authorized Organizational Representative may check the status of an application on Grants.gov. After proposers have received an e-mail notification from NSF, Research.gov should be used to check the status of an application.

## **VI. NSF Proposal Processing And Review Procedures**

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program for acknowledgment and, if they meet NSF requirements, for review. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF either as *ad hoc* reviewers, panelists, or both, who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal. In addition, Program Officers may obtain comments from site visits before recommending final action on proposals. Senior NSF staff further review recommendations for awards. A flowchart that depicts the entire NSF proposal and award process (and associated timeline) is included in PAPPG Exhibit III-1.

A comprehensive description of the Foundation's merit review process is available on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit\\_review/](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/).

Proposers should also be aware of core strategies that are essential to the fulfillment of NSF's mission, as articulated in *Leading the World in Discovery and Innovation, STEM Talent Development and the Delivery of Benefits from Research - NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2026*. These strategies are integrated in the program planning and implementation process, of which proposal review is one part. NSF's mission is particularly well-implemented through the integration of research and education and broadening participation in NSF programs, projects, and activities.

One of the strategic objectives in support of NSF's mission is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions must recruit, train, and prepare a diverse STEM workforce to advance the frontiers of science and participate in the U.S. technology-based economy. NSF's contribution to the national innovation ecosystem is to provide cutting-edge research under the guidance of the Nation's most creative scientists and engineers. NSF also supports development of a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce by investing in building the knowledge that informs improvements in STEM teaching and learning.

NSF's mission calls for the broadening of opportunities and expanding participation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines, which is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

## **A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria**

The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes." NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.

### **1. Merit Review Principles**

These principles are to be given due diligence by PIs and organizations when preparing proposals and managing projects, by reviewers when reading and evaluating proposals, and by NSF program staff when determining whether or not to recommend proposals for funding and while overseeing awards. Given that NSF is the primary federal agency charged with nurturing and supporting excellence in basic research and education, the following three principles apply:

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals. These "Broader Impacts" may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified.
- Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects. If the size of the activity is limited, evaluation of that activity in isolation is not likely to be meaningful. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these activities may best be done at a higher, more aggregated, level than the individual project.

With respect to the third principle, even if assessment of Broader Impacts outcomes for particular projects is done at an aggregated level, PIs are expected to be accountable for carrying out the activities described in the funded project. Thus,

individual projects should include clearly stated goals, specific descriptions of the activities that the PI intends to do, and a plan in place to document the outputs of those activities.

These three merit review principles provide the basis for the merit review criteria, as well as a context within which the users of the criteria can better understand their intent.

## 2. Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board approved merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. **Both** criteria are to be given **full consideration** during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria. (PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.d(i). contains additional information for use by proposers in development of the Project Description section of the proposal). Reviewers are strongly encouraged to review the criteria, including PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.d(i), prior to the review of a proposal.

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to
  - a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
  - b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Proposers are reminded that reviewers will also be asked to review the Data Management and Sharing Plan and the Mentoring Plan, as appropriate.



## **Additional Solicitation Specific Review Criteria**

In addition to the standard NSF review criteria for 1) Intellectual Merit and 2) Broader Impacts, the following review criteria will be used to evaluate fellowship proposals:

- Qualifications of the candidate and their potential for continued professional growth and leadership in the field
- Previous work in and/or commitment to efforts to broaden participation in science
- Suitability of the mentor(s) and available facilities, equipment and other resources

## **B. Review and Selection Process**

Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to evaluate proposals using two National Science Board approved merit review criteria and, if applicable, additional program specific criteria. A summary rating and accompanying narrative will generally be completed and submitted by each reviewer and/or panel. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF strives to be able to tell proposers whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. Large or particularly complex proposals or proposals from new recipients may require additional review and processing time. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director acts upon the Program Officer's recommendation.

After programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements or the Division of Acquisition and Cooperative Support for review of business, financial, and policy implications. After an administrative review has occurred, Grants and Agreements Officers perform the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

Once an award or declination decision has been made, Principal Investigators are provided feedback about their proposals. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers or any reviewer-identifying information, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

## **VII. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Notification of the Award**

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

### **B. Award Conditions**

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award notice, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award notice; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1)\*; or Research Terms and Conditions\* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by

reference in the award notice. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

\*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at [https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award\\_conditions.jsp?org=NSF](https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF). Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the NSF *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).

## **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

### **Build America, Buy America**

As expressed in Executive Order 14005, [Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers](#) (86 FR 7475), it is the policy of the executive branch to use terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance awards to maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States.

Consistent with the requirements of the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58, Division G, Title IX, Subtitle A, November 15, 2021), no funding made available through this funding opportunity may be obligated for infrastructure projects under an award unless all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. For additional information, visit NSF's [Build America, Buy America](#) web page

### **Special Award Conditions:**

The inclusion of co-PIs or other senior personnel are not allowed in EAR-PF proposals.

A fellow may transfer to another eligible host organization at any time during the award period. The primary host organization will facilitate the transfer of the award using NSF's standard PI Transfer process. Before such a transfer will be approved by NSF, the fellow's new organization must supply to the cognizant NSF Program Officer documentation required of a primary host organization that is detailed in Section V of this solicitation. Transfer of an award issued under this solicitation to a substitute PI is not permissible, and the awardee cannot terminate the award without NSF's agreement.

If a fellow chooses to accept employment (i.e. a tenure-track position) during the first year of the fellowship, the fellowship award will be terminated upon the start of the new position. In such cases, the primary host organization is responsible for initiating procedures for a termination by mutual agreement in accordance with Chapter XII of the NSF PAPPG. Fellows who wish to accept a new position during Year 2 of the award should contact the EAR-PF Program Officer to discuss disposition of any remaining funds in the PF grant.

## **C. Reporting Requirements**

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer no later than 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require submission of more frequent project reports). No later than 120 days following expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final annual project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final annual project reports, or the project outcomes report, will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for all identified PIs and co-PIs on a given award. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through Research.gov, for preparation and submission of annual and final annual project reports. Such reports provide information on accomplishments, project participants (individual and organizational), publications, and other specific products and impacts of the project. Submission of the report via Research.gov constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report also must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg).

## VIII. Agency Contacts

*Please note that the program contact information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.*

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Nicole M. Gasparini, telephone: (703) 292-8550, email: [earpf@nsf.gov](mailto:earpf@nsf.gov)
- Aisha R. Morris, telephone: (703) 292-7081, email: [earpf@nsf.gov](mailto:earpf@nsf.gov)

For questions related to the use of NSF systems contact:

- NSF Help Desk: 1-800-381-1532
- Research.gov Help Desk e-mail: [rgov@nsf.gov](mailto:rgov@nsf.gov)

For questions relating to Grants.gov contact:

- Grants.gov Contact Center: If the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of application, please contact via telephone: 1-800-518-4726; e-mail: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

## IX. Other Information

The NSF website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, "NSF Update" is an information-delivery system designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF [Grants Conferences](#). Subscribers are informed through e-mail or the user's Web browser each time new publications are issued that match their identified interests. "NSF Update" also is available on [NSF's website](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <https://www.grants.gov>.

## About The National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 55,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Arctic and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

*Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED)* provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* Chapter II.F.7 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090 and (800) 281-8749, FIRS at (800) 877-8339.

The National Science Foundation Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at <https://www.nsf.gov>.

- **Location:** 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
- **For General Information** (NSF Information Center): (703) 292-5111
- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired):** (703) 292-5090
- **To Order Publications or Forms:**
  - Send an e-mail to: [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov)
  - or telephone: (703) 292-8134
- **To Locate NSF Employees:** (703) 292-5111

## Privacy Act And Public Burden Statements

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; and project reports submitted by proposers will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to proposer institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies or other entities needing information regarding proposers or nominees as part of a joint application review process, or in

order to coordinate programs or policy; and to another Federal agency, court, or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See [System of Record Notices, NSF-50](#), "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," and [NSF-51](#), "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records." Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

Suzanne H. Plimpton  
Reports Clearance Officer  
Policy Office, Division of Institution and Award Support  
Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management  
National Science Foundation  
Alexandria, VA 22314

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[Plain language](#) |



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Tel: (703) 292-5111,