**NSF Research.Gov Checklist**

The checklist is designed for common National Science Foundation (NSF) Full Proposals. It should be used in conjunction with the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) and the specific solicitation if there is one. The checklist can easily be customized to accommodate specific opportunities. Be aware that the PAPPG is updated annually—make sure you are using the most current copy for your deadline.

The checklist helps preparers see at-a-glance the elements needed for a proposal as well as organize and delegate the work. It does NOT replace the detailed information in the relevant Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), the funding agency’s forms, instructions, and review criteria. Please refer to the FOA or contact your NSF program officer for any questions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | | |
| **Principal Investigator (PI):** | |  | |
| **RFA in response to (RFA/PA):** | |  | |
| **Deadline/Target Date:** | |  | |
| **Internal Deadline:** | |  | |
| **Title of Project:** | |  | |
| Check title prefix, if applicable (e.g., “Collaborative Research:”, “CAREER:”, “GOALI:” or per solicitation.) | | |
| **Co-Principal Investigator(s):** | |  | |
| **Senior Personnel:** | |  | |
| **Collaborative Proposal (Yes/No):** | |  | |
|  | **If Yes, is proposal submitted by multiple organizations? List organizations and lead:** |  |
| **If Yes, does proposal have subrecipients? List any subrecipients:** | |  | |
| **Vertebrate Animals (Yes/No):** | |  | |
| **Human Subjects (Yes/No):** | |  | |
| **PAPPG Instructions Link:**  **NSF Proposal Preparation Checklist:** | | <https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/table-of-contents>  <https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-exhibit-1> | |
| **Other Authorized User (Proposal Preparer):** | |  | |
| **SPO:** | |  | |
| **AOR (Submitter):** | |  | |
| **Internal Routing Number:** | |  | |

**About Research.gov**

Beginning January 2023, all new NSF proposals must be prepared and submitted in Research.gov.

**About Proposal Preparation**

[NSF Policy Office Outreach Events](https://nsfpolicyoutreach.com/events/)

[Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site](https://web.demo.research.gov/proposalprep/#/proposal-prep) (Must login. Provides view of **PI role** – other roles not available on the demo site. Includes setting up a proposal, uploading a document and compliance messaging, preparing proposal file updates/budget revisions)

[About Proposal Preparation and Submission/Proposal FAQ’s](https://www.research.gov/research-web/content/aboutpsm)

**Initiating the Proposal in Research.gov**

The principal investigator will need to have an NSF ID/account affiliated with the submitting institution and have the PI role in order to ‘prepare the proposal’. Find [detailed instructions here](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/How_PIs_Initiate_New_Rgov_Proposals_Final_508.pdf).

**Sharing the Proposal with an OAU (Other Authorized User)/Proposal Preparer**

the PI can add a proposal preparer to an initiated proposal. the proposal preparer will need to have an NSF ID/account with the OAU role. To add an OAU to your proposal, find [detailed instructions here](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/Adding%20or%20Removing%20an%20OAU_Final_508.pdf).

**Sharing the Proposal with the SPO (Sponsored Projects Officer) and/or the AOR (Authorized Organizational Representative)**

to provide access to the SPO/AOR find [detailed instructions here](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/How_PIs_Share_Access_with_SPO_AOR_Final_508.pdf). It’s recommended that in the early stages the PI only provide View access and wait to provide EDIT/Submit access until ready to submit. Check with your University SPO and/or AOR to see if they have a preference on when and how these permissions are provided.

**General Format Requirements:**

Note - Research.gov will automatically paginate your proposal

[Proposal Font, Spacing and Margin Requirements](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2C2)

[Page Formatting](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2C3)

| Proposal Components | Elements to Complete | Notes | Person  Responsible | Internal Deadline | Final **✓** | NSF 23-1 PAPPG Link |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SINGLE PROPOSAL (WITH OR WITHOUT SUBAWARDS)** | | | | | | |
| Cover Sheet  Ch. II.D.2.a | * Requested start date & proposal duration * Related preliminary proposal #, if applicable * Prime organization * Primary place of performance * Other federal agencies   Other Compliance Information, if applicable:   * Beginning Investigator (Note: only applicable for proposals submitted to Biological Sciences Directorate) * Off-Campus/Off-Site Research * Disclosure of Lobbying Activities * Proprietary or Privileged Information * Special Exception to Deadline Date Policy * Historical Places * Vertebrate Animals * Human Subjects * Funding of an Int’l Branch Campus of a US IHE * Funding of a Foreign Organization or Foreign Individual * International Activities | Fields completed within Research.gov. |  |  |  | [Cover Sheet](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2a)  [Safe and Inclusive Working Environments](https://www.nsf.gov/bio/Safe%20and%20Inclusive%20Work%20Environments.mp4) |
| Project Summary  Ch. II.D.2.b | * Overview * Statement on the intellectual merit of the proposed activity * Statement on the broader impacts of the proposed activity | [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)**, Plus:**   * Max page length—**1 page** * Includes 3 sections (Tip: place heading on its own line, OR bold header if space is issue):   + Overview   + Intellectual Merit   + Broader Impacts   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [Project Summary](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2b) |
| Project Description  Ch. II.D.2.d | * Clear statement of work * Objectives * Relationship of work to the present state of knowledge in field, as well as work in progress by the PI under other support * General plan of work, including broad design of activities and clear description of experimental methods and procedures * Foreign collaboration, including subawards or consultants, must be explained/justified in project description | [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)**, Plus:**   * Separate section header for Broader Impacts. (Tip: place heading on its own line, OR bold header if space is issue): * Refer to FOA for page limit guidance. If not provided, use **15-page limit** * NO hyperlinks (URLs) * If the proposal has any subawards, this section must include a description of the work to be performed by the subrecipient(s) * Other criteria may be listed in solicitation/funding opportunity   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [Project Description](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2d)  [Use of URLs](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2dii) |
| References Cited  Ch. II.D.2.e | * + Names of all authors, in same sequence as they appear in publication   + Article title   + Journal title   + Book title   + Volume number   + Page numbers   + Year of publication | [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)**, Plus:**   * Use “et al.” for large consortia papers ONLY * Follow accepted scholarly practices * Include ONLY bibliographic citations * If the document is readily available electronically, the URL should be included   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [References Cited](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2e) |
| Budget(s)  Ch. II.D.2.f | * Budget for each year of requested support * If Postdoctoral Researchers are budgeted, a mentoring plan is required. * If Foreign Travel is budgeted, the International Activities field on the Cover Page should indicate relevant countries. If international destinations are TBD, select “Worldwide” (displays as “XX”). * Subcontract budgets and budget justifications also need to be loaded. Must be registered with NSF to load documents. | NSF Video: [How to Work on a Proposal Budget (2:30 minutes)](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/psmvideo3.html)  NSF Job Aid: [How to Enter Proposal Budgets](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/How%20to%20Enter%20Proposal%20Budgets_Final_508.pdf) |  |  |  | [Budget](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2f) |
| Budget Justification(s)  Ch. II.D.2.f | * Amounts for each line item must be documented and justified in budget justification | * Used by NSF in formulating total award amount and final award budget   [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)**, Plus:**   * Max page length—**5 pages** (per organization)   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [Budget Justification](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2f) |
| Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources  Ch. II.D.2.g | * Narrative description of facilities, equipment, and other resources * Include internal and external resources, both physical and personnel * Include senior personnel and postdoctoral researchers if no funds are being requested in budget | * Used to assess adequacy of internal and external resources provided by organization and collaborators * Resources not considered voluntary committed cost sharing per 2 CFR §200.1 * Do not include quantifiable financial information   [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)  [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2g) |
| Biographical Sketch  Ch. II.D.2.h.i  Senior Personnel Documents  Ch. II.D.2.h | * Use NSF-approved format, such as [SciENcv](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/) or [NSF Fillable PDF](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp) * Do not add Collaborators and Other Affiliations to this section. Instead, use Single Copy Document for each Senior Personnel who is a Collaborator or Other Affiliation | * Max page length—**3 pages** * Video: NCBI Tutorial: SciENcv for NSF Users: Bio Sketches ([YouTube](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK154494/)) * Note: Must use SciENcv for new proposals due on or after October 23, 2023. |  |  |  | [Biographical Sketch(es)](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2hi) |
| Current & Pending Support  Ch. II.D.2.h.ii  Senior Personnel Documents  Ch. II.D.2.h | * Use NSF-approved format, such as [SciENcv](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/) or [NSF Fillable PDF](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp) * Include ongoing projects and proposals, including current project, and any funding from continuing grants | * NSF-Fillable PDF only displays pages with data; Blank pages are removed, but pages are not renumbered * Uploaded SciENcv files display all pages   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions)  Video: NCBI Tutorial: SciENcv for NSF Users: Current and Pending Support ([YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhWQYvEEtJs)) |  |  |  | [Current and Pending Support](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2hii) |
| Collaborators and Other Affiliations (Single-Copy Document)  Ch. II.D.2.h.iii  Senior Personnel Documents  Ch. II.D.2.h | * Use [Collaborators and Other Affiliations template](https://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa.jsp) | Used to manage reviewer selection, and not seen by reviewers  View [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa/faqs_coatemplatemay18.pdf)  Video: [How to Upload a Collaborators and Other Affiliations Document (1:34 min)](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/psmvideo4.html)  Video: [How to Upload a Collaborators and Other Affiliations Document](https://www.research.gov/proposalprep/) (must log-in to Research.gov)  [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions)**, Except**   * Accepted file type: .xlsx * After selecting your template file, a preview will be displayed for your confirmation |  |  |  | [Collaborators and Other Affiliations](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2hiii) |
| Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan  (Supplementary Document)  Ch. II.D.2.i.i | * Describe mentoring provided to all Postdoctoral Researchers receiving proposal support, regardless of residence * Only one plan is loaded with lead submission for all collaborative proposals. | Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan is **not** required if:   * Listed in Budget Section A and functions as Senior Personnel * Not included in Budget and researcher’s contribution is included in Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section   [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)**, Plus:**   * Max page length—**1 page**   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2i-i) |
| Data Management Plan (Supplementary Document)  Ch. II.D.2.i.ii | * Describe how proposal conforms to [Dissemination and Sharing of Research Results](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22_1/pappg_11.jsp#XID4) * May include statement that no detailed plan is needed if accompanied by clear justification | * Must conform to [specific Directorate, Office, Division, Program or Other NSF unit](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp); If not provided, use PAPPG * Refer to [Proposal Font, Spacing, and Margin Requirements (PAPPG)](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22_1/pappg_2.jsp#IIB2) * Max page length—**2 pages**   [**Standard File Instructions**](#StandardFileInstructions) |  |  |  | [Data Management Plan](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2i-ii) |
| **OPTIONAL** | | | | | | |
| Other Personnel Biographical Sketches  (Supplementary Document)  Ch. II.D.2.h.i.b | * Use for Postdoctoral Associates, Other Professionals, and Students (Research Assistants) * Include Exceptional qualifications that merit consideration in proposal evaluation | [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)**, Plus:**   * May be freeform (This contrasts with NSF-approved format for Senior Personnel Biographical Sketches). * Biographical information clearly identified as "Other Personnel"   [**Other Supplementary Documents Instructions**](#OtherFileInstructions)or as directed in FOA |  |  |  | [Other Personnel Biographical Sketches](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2hib) |
| Other Supplementary Documents  Ch. II.D.2.h.i.b | Other Supplementary Documents include:   * Documents **without** their own separate upload pages. See list of [documents **with** upload pages](https://www.research.gov/proposalprep/) * Documents as specified in FOA | Unlike Single Copy Documents, Other Supplementary Documents **are** viewable by the reviewers.  [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)  [**File Instructions for Other Supplementary Documents**](#OtherFileInstructions) |  |  |  |  |
| List of Suggested Reviewers  (Single-Copy Document)  Ch. II.D.1.b | * Suggested proposal reviewers—first name, middle initial, last name, e-mail address, and organization affiliation | The cognizant Program Officer may contact proposer before making decision.  [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)  **[File Instructions for Additional Single Copy Documents Instructions](#OtherFileInstructions)** or as directed in FOA |  |  |  | [List of Suggested Reviewers](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D1b)  Refer to when creating list [Potentially Disqualifying Conflicts of Interest (Exhibit II-2)](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-exhibit-2) |
| List of Reviewers Not to Include  (Single-Copy Document)  Ch. II.D.1.b | * Suggested individuals’ to not include as reviewers—first name, middle initial, last name, e-mail address, and organization affiliation | The cognizant Program Officer considers suggestions and may contact proposer before making decision.  [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)  [**File Instructions for Additional Single Copy Documents Instructions**](#OtherFileInstructions)or as directed in FOA |  |  |  | [List of Suggested Reviewers](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D1b)  Refer to when creating list [Potentially Disqualifying Conflicts of Interest (Exhibit II-2)](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-exhibit-2) |
| Deviation Authorization  (Single-Copy Document)  Ch. II.A.1 | * Provide name, date, and title of NSF official authorizing deviation | Use if need to deviate from standard proposal preparation requirements  Authorized in advance of proposal submission via written approval  May cover a particular program or programs or, in rare instances, an individual deviation for a particular proposal  [**File Instructions for Additional Single Copy Documents Instructions**](#OtherFileInstructions)or as directed in FOA |  |  |  | [Deviation Authorization](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2A1) |
| Additional Single Copy Documents | Single Copy Documents include:   * Documents as specified in FOA * Documents **without** their own separate upload pages. See list of [documents **with** upload pages](https://www.research.gov/proposalprep/) | For NSF only. Reviewers do not see Single Copy Documents  [**Standard Content Instructions**](#StandardContentInstructions)  [**File Instructions for Additional Single Copy Documents Instructions**](#OtherFileInstructions)or as directed in FOA |  |  |  | [Deviation Authorization](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2A1)  [List of Suggested Reviewers Not to Include](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D1b) |
| **SEPARATELY SUBMITTED COLLABORATIVE PROPOSALS** | | | | | | |
| Collaborative ProposalsChapter II.E.3 | * Lead organization's proposal must have all required sections as Single proposal. * Title must begin with Collaborative Research   Only the lead submits the following files for all organizations involved.   * Project summary * Project description * References * Data management plan * Postdoc mentoring plan   **Note:** Once collaborative status of proposal is selected, it cannot be changed. The proposal will need to be deleted and restarted to change status.  Both lead and non-lead organizations can upload Supplementary Documents and Single Copy Documents. | Non-lead organizations must ensure they enter the following information identical to the lead.   * Proposal Title that begins with Collaborative Research * Funding Opportunity * Where to Apply * Proposal Type * Submission Type * Requested Start Date * Proposal Duration * Due Date   Non-lead organizations submit the following files:   * Cover Sheet * Budget and Budget Justification * Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources * Biographical Sketches * Current & Pending Support * Collaborators & Other Affiliations Information |  |  |  | [Collaborative Proposals](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2E3) |
| **Collaborative Proposals with SUBAWARDS** | | | | | | |
| Subaward Budget(s) and Budget Justification(s)  (Line G on the Proposal Budget) | For proposals that contain a subaward(s), **each subaward** must include a separate budget justification of no more than five pages. | For collaborative proposals submitted by multiple organizations, each organization must include a separate budget justification of no more than five pages.  Each subaward organization must be registered. |  |  |  | [Subaward Budgets](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2D2fvie)  [How to Enter Proposal Budgets](https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/How%20to%20Enter%20Proposal%20Budgets_Final_508.pdf) |

**Standard Content Instructions**

* Document must conform to solicitation-specific and PAPPG instructions
* Refer to the [Proposal Font, Spacing, and Margin Requirements (PAPPG)](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22_1/pappg_2.jsp#IIB2)

**Standard File Instructions**

* Only upload 1 file
* Do **NOT** use page numbers— Research.gov automatically adds them
* Accepted file type: PDF
* Max file size: 10 MB

**File Instructions for Other Supplementary Documents and Additional Single Copy Documents**

* Upload multiple files—use *Browse for another* button to upload another file
* Files displayed in uploaded order
* Do **NOT** use page numbers— Research.gov automatically adds them
* Accepted file type: PDF
* Max file size: 10 MB