

PRIMARY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NSF AND NIH PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Item	NIH	NSF
Mission	Seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability.	Promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense.
Leadership	The Office of the Director sets policy for NIH and for planning, managing, and coordinating the programs and activities of all the NIH components; provides leadership to the Institutes. Assisted by the NIH Deputy Directors including the Principal Deputy Director, who shares in the overall direction of the agency's activities.	The National Science Board (NSB), composed of 24 eminent individuals, establishes the overall policies of the foundation. The NSB oversees the Director, who is responsible for NSF staff and management; program creation and administration, merit review, budget and daily operations.
Organization	Comprising 27 separate institutes and centers , each with a specific research agenda.	Comprising seven Directorates ; each directorate is composed of Divisions, each with a specific research agenda.
Program Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Announcements (PAs) (general areas of increased priority and/or emphasis, standard due dates) • Requests for Applications (RFAs) (more narrowly defined area, often offers a single receipt date) • Notice of Special Interest (NOSI) (no set aside funding but indicates NIH's strong interest; applicants apply under a PA) • Three-character activity code identifies a specific category of extramural research activity (e.g., R01 [Standard]; R21 [Exploratory]; R03 [Small Grants]) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Descriptions and Announcements (general areas of interest, follows PAPPG and standard due dates) • Program Solicitations (specific programs and due dates) • Dear Colleague Letters (DCLs) (special competitions for supplements to existing awards or indicated interest in specified topical areas)
How it Funds Biomedicine/ Bioengineering	Generally funds research on the health-related application of devices, computation, instruments (e.g., testing effectiveness of imaging instruments on tissue; using computation to help solve/address a critical health issue); conducting trials on animals or human subjects.	Funds research on the basic science of health-related devices, computation, instruments (e.g., mechanical aspects of a medical device; developing a software program to process vast amounts of health data).

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<p>Review Process</p>	<p>First-Level Peer Review: By a Scientific Review Group (SRG) composed primarily of non-federal scientists with expertise in relevant scientific disciplines and current research areas.</p> <p>Second-Level Review: By Institute and Center National Advisory Councils or Boards. Councils are composed of both scientific and public representatives chosen for their expertise, interest, or activity in matters related to health and disease.</p> <p>Only applications recommended for approval by BOTH the SRG and the Advisory Council may be recommended for funding.</p>	<p>Proposals are assigned to the appropriate NSF program. NSF Program Officers identify experts in their particular fields to review the proposal. Usually, a proposal is reviewed by at least three external reviewers. The review may be conducted by ad hoc reviewers, a panel of experts, or a combination of both.</p>
<p>Review Ratings/Scores</p>	<p>Overall Impact Score. Reviewers will provide an overall impact/priority score (1=exceptional; 9=poor) to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the following review criteria, and additional review criteria (as applicable for the project proposed).</p> <p>Scored Review Criteria. Reviewers will consider and give a separate score for each of the review criteria below in the determination of scientific and technical merit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Significance – Investigator – Innovation – Approach – Environment <p>The final overall impact score is determined by calculating the mean score from all the eligible members' impact scores, and multiplying the average by 10; the final overall impact score is reported on the summary statement. Thus, the final overall impact scores range from 10 (high impact) through 90 (low impact).</p>	<p>Merit Review Process: In addition to any program-specific review criteria, reviewers evaluate all NSF proposals through the use of two NSB-approved merit review criteria: Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts, which are based upon Merit Review Principles. Reviewers are asked to consider five elements in the review for both criteria.</p> <p>NSF staff will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of research and education • Integrating diversity into NSF projects, programs, and activities <p>Excellent: Outstanding proposal in all respects; deserves highest priority for support.</p> <p>Very Good: High quality proposal in nearly all respects; should be supported if at all possible.</p> <p>Good: A quality proposal, worthy of support.</p> <p>Fair: Proposal lacking in one or more critical aspects; key issues need to be addressed.</p> <p>Poor: Proposal has serious deficiencies.</p>

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Reviewers' Comments	Applicants will receive a Summary Statement . Applications that are not discussed at the review meeting will be given the designation "Not Discussed (ND)" as an overall impact score, but the applicants will see the scores from the assigned reviewers and discussants for each of the scored review criteria as additional feedback on their summary statement.	A PI whose proposal for NSF support has been declined will receive information and an explanation of the reason(s) for declination along with copies of the reviews considered in making the decision. Applicants will receive: (1) description of the context in which the proposal was reviewed; (2) copies of all reviews used in the decision (with any reviewer-identifying information redacted); and (3) copy of panel summary, if the proposal was reviewed by a panel at any point in the process.
Final Funding Decisions	Final funding decisions are made by the Institute/Center Directors, with consideration of staff and Advisory Council/Board advice.	Reviewers do not make funding decisions. The analysis and evaluation of proposals by external reviewers provide information to NSF Program Officers in making their recommendations to award or decline a proposal. Final programmatic approval for a proposal is generally completed at the Division level.
Proposal Submission	Grants.gov : PI creates the proposal record and grants access to the department grant manager. Proposal documents are uploaded into grants.gov by your department's grant specialist. The record is sent to OSP, which reviews each proposal for compliance with the guidelines and policies of NIH and Brown. Once approved, OSP submits the proposal electronically.	FastLane (soon to be Research.gov): Proposal documents are uploaded into FastLane or Research.gov by your department's grant specialist. The record is sent to OSP, which reviews each proposal for compliance with the guidelines and policies of NSF and Brown. Once approved, OSP submits the proposal electronically.
Proposal Format Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margins: Minimum half-inch on all sides. No information should appear in the margins, including the PI's name and page numbers. • Fonts: Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, or Palatino Linotype, size 11+ • Line Spacing: No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margins: Minimum one inch, all sides. No information should appear in the margins, including the PI's name and page numbers. • Fonts: Arial (not Arial Narrow), Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at size of 10+; or Computer Modern family of fonts or Times New Roman size 11+. • Line Spacing: No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.
Nomenclature Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Aims • Principal Investigator/Project Director (PI/PD) • Co-Investigator (Co-I) (do not use "Co-PI" in proposals) • Also uses Multiple PD/PI (MPI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives (do not use "Specific Aims" in proposals) • Principal Investigator (PI) • Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)

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Proposal Budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modular budget for projects \$250,000 or less in direct costs • Detailed budget for projects >\$250,001 in direct costs • Requests of \$500,000 or more in direct costs require prior approval. • Budget limits usually exclude indirect costs, including subaward indirects; indirects are paid on top of the direct costs (unless specified otherwise). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same budget format for all NSF programs (unless specified otherwise) • Budget limits usually include indirect costs (unless specified otherwise).
Salary Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Capped at \$203,700 per year.</u> • Salary requests must match the level of effort (e.g., 2 summer months). • No limit on the number of months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum two months of salary support, combined from all of a PI's NSF-funded grants; can be used in summer or during the academic year. • No dollar cap.
Typically Required Proposal Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Summary/Abstract • Project Narrative • Specific Aims • Research Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Significance – Investigator – Innovation – Approach – Environment • Equipment • Facilities & Other Resources • Biosketch (use NIH template) • Budget • Budget Justification (level of detail depends on budget type and activity code) • Bibliography & References Cited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover Sheet • Project Summary • Table of Contents • Project Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Broader Impact section – Results from Prior NSF Support • References Cited • Biographical Sketch(es) • Budget and Budget Justification • Current and Pending Support • Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources • Special Information and Supplementary Documentation • Collaborators & Other Affiliations Information • Appendices
Optional/As-Needed Proposal Sections/Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data sharing plan • Human subjects • Animals • Letters of support/collaboration • Institutional letters of commitment from subawardees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postdoc Researcher Mentoring Plan • Data management and sharing plan • Letters of collaboration

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Required Forms	Included in Grants.gov Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF-424 (R&R) • PHS 398 Cover Page Supplement • Research & Related Other Project Information • Project/Performance Site Location(s) • Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile • PHS 398 Research Plan • PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information • Modular or Research & Related Budget Form 	Included in Research.gov Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF-424 (R&R) • Project/Performance Site Location(s) • Research And Related Other Project Information • NSF Senior Key Person Profile (Expanded) • Research & Related Budget • Research & Related Personal Data [V1.2] • NSF Cover Page
Proposal Resubmissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to one resubmission per proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No limit on resubmissions
Links to Proposal Guides	SF424 (R&R) Application Guide for NIH and Other PHS agencies	Grant Proposal Guide