Highlighted Updates in the Draft NSF PAPPG 24-1

The National Science Foundation (NSF) published a notice today, April 13 2023 in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the “For comment” draft of the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 24-1). The anticipated effective date of NSF 24-1 is January 2024. The Foundation is accepting comments from the external community until cob June 12, 2023. The draft PAPPG is available on the Policy Office website.

Note there are not what I consider major changes to the PAPPG. Below are some selected updates that may be of interest to the research community and those preparing proposal for due dates after January 2024.

Biographical Sketches and Current and Pending Support

- In addition to the changes specified below, the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending (Other) Support section of the PAPPG will be modified to incorporate the final version of the Current and Pending (Other)Support Common Form that is being developed as an initiative of the NSTC Research Subcommittee.

- Continues the required use of SciENcv (Science Experts Network Curriculum Vitae) to produce an NSF-compliant PDF version of the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending support Note the current PAPPG 23-1 requires the use of SciENcv effective for proposals due on or after October 23, 2023.

Biographical Sketches:

- Synergistic activities previously required under the Biographical Sketch has been moved to a new type of Senior Personnel document.

- The three-page limitation for the Biographical Sketch has been removed

Synergistic Activities

Each individual identified as senior personnel must provide a document of up to one-page that includes a list of up to five distinct examples that demonstrates the broader impact of the individual’s professional and scholarly activities that focus on the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as its creation.

These documents must be uploaded under “Synergistic Activities” in the supplementary documentation section of Research.gov.
Examples may include, among others: innovations in teaching and training; contributions to the science of learning; development and/or refinement of research tools; computation methodologies and algorithms for problem-solving; development of databases to support research and education; broadening the participation of groups underrepresented in STEM; participation in international research collaborations; participation in national and/or international standards development efforts; and service to the scientific and engineering community outside of the individual’s immediate organization.

Not Allowed: Examples with multiple components, such as committee member lists, sub-bulleted highlights of honors and prizes, or a listing of organizations for which the individual has served as a reviewer, are not permitted.

Mentoring Plan
- Previously only required for proposal that requested funding to support postdoctoral scholars.
- Each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral scholars or graduate students must upload under “Mentoring Plan” in the supplementary documentation section of Research.gov, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals.
- One page limit
- One plan regardless of whether they reside at the submitting organization, any subrecipient organization, or at any organization participating in a simultaneously submitted collaborative proposal.
- Please note that separate plans are not required for postdoctoral scholars or graduate students. The plan may, however, specify how different components of the mentoring program will be enacted for the two types of researchers.

Two New Proposal Types
While these types are not applicable to TAMU and the TAMUS Agency researchers, there may be opportunities to collaborate with eligible institutions.

Research in Undergraduate Institutions
RUI is a type of proposal that supports research by faculty members at eligible, predominantly undergraduate institutions (PUIs). RUI proposals must be submitted to a standing, active NSF funding opportunity and must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines specified therein as well as the RUI-specific requirements specified below.

To be eligible as a PUI, an organization must satisfy two criteria.
1. First, it must be an institution of higher education (IHE), acting on behalf of its faculty members,
2. Second, the PUI must also be an accredited IHE (including two-year community colleges) that awards Associate's degrees, Bachelor's degrees, and/or Master's
degrees in NSF-supported fields, but that has awarded 20 or fewer Ph.D./D.Sci. degrees in all NSF-supported fields during the combined previous two academic years.

RUI proposals are evaluated competitively alongside other proposals submitted to a given program, in accordance with the NSF's standard merit review procedures for that program. RUI proposals may be submitted to request support of an individual investigator research project or as a collaborative project involving PUI faculty and students at their own institution or other PUI's and/or other institutional types.

**Research Opportunity Awards for Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions (ROA-PUI)**

A Research Opportunity Award for Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (ROA-PUI) is a type of proposal or supplement that enables a faculty member (or equivalent), at an eligible NSF organization to pursue research as part of a collaborative research team as a visiting scientist at another NSF-supported institution. Either the visitor’s home organization, or the host organization, or both, must be a Primarily Undergraduate Institution (PUI) of higher education. Most frequently, NSF-supported ROA-PUI research activities occur during the summer, but support for research during the academic year can be requested.

A new proposal with a ROA-PUI component may be submitted as a collaborative proposal from multiple organizations with one or more of the proposals representing an ROA-PUI component of the combined project. One or more of the proposals in such a collaboration may represent a new ROA-PUI activity involving a PUI; typically, at least one of the proposals in the collaborative is from a more research-intensive organization.

ROA-PUI funding for PUI faculty members also can be requested via use of a subaward within a new NSF proposal that is submitted by a more research-intensive organization. An NSF award resulting from such a proposal would normally go only to the more research-intensive organization, which would then provide funds to the PUI through a subaward.