**Safe and Inclusive Working Environment Plan**

NSF’s PAPPG (Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide), effective for proposals with off-campus or off-site work due on or after January 30, 2023, requires proposers to certify that they have a plan in place for creating and maintaining a Safe and Inclusive Working Environments for Off-Campus and Off-Site Research **for that project**.

*Off-campus or off-site research is defined by NSF for this requirement as “data/information/samples being collected off-campus or off-site, such as fieldwork or research activities on vessels and aircraft.”*

At the time of proposal submission for each proposal that proposes to conduct research off-campus or off site, the Authorized Organizational Representative must complete a certification that the organization has a plan in place for that proposal.   **Thus, prior to the submission of the proposal, Sponsored Research Services (SRS) will require the PI to certify that a plan has been created.  The PI should provide a copy of the plan to their proposal administrator who will upload the plan into the Proposal Other Documents section in Maestro.**

The Principal Investigator (PI)/Project team must establish a plan for that specific proposal that describes how the following types of behavior will be addressed:

a. Abuse of any person, including, but not limited to, harassment, stalking, bullying, or hazing of any kind, whether the behavior is carried out verbally, physically, electronically, or in written form; or

b. Conduct that is unwelcome, offensive, indecent, obscene, or disorderly.

The plan should also Identify steps the proposing principal investigator(s)/project team will take to nurture an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment. e.g., trainings; processes to establish shared team definitions of roles, responsibilities, and culture, e.g., codes of conduct;

Unless specifically state in the notice of funding opportunity announcement, this plan should **not** be submitted to NSF for review with the proposal, but it must be documented prior to submission.

**The PI is responsible for ensuring that any individuals working on this project in an off site or off campus location receive a copy of this plan prior to commencement of their work at any off site or off campus location.**

SRS has created an optional template that a PI can choose to use as a starting point for the plan.  It is available [**here**](https://srs.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/TAMU-Safe-and-Inclusive-WorkEnvironment-plan-template.docx).

Below is some sample wording in RED. The PI should tailor the wording of the plan to meet the specific aspects of their project.

**=================================================================**

**Sample Plan**

Please provide the names and titles of the individuals who will be working offsite in performance of this project (Note: if you have unnamed individuals, please list title and/or role with a TBD, e.g. Graduate Research Assistant - TBD)

1. **Please provide a brief description of the field setting and unique challenges for the team.**
2. **Please describe how the following behaviors will be addressed for personnel working off-site for any portion of performance of this project: Abuse of any person, including, but not limited to, harassment, stalking, bullying, or hazing of any kind, whether the behavior is carried out verbally, physically, electronically, or in written form.**

*Sample Language: Harassment, stalking, bullying, or hazing of any kind, whether the behavior is carried out verbally, physically, electronically, or in written form, will not be tolerated. All participants will be required to follow TAMU system regulations surrounding harassment, stalking, bullying, or hazing of any kind as detailed:*

*https://student-rules.tamu.edu/statement/*

1. **Please describe how the following behaviors will be addressed for personnel working off-site for any portion of performance of this project: Conduct that is unwelcome, offensive, indecent, obscene or disorderly.**

*Sample Language: Participant are provided and agree to abide by a code of conduct in the preplanning phase of the offsite work. Code of Conduct violations should be reported to the field project director/supervisor or a designated ombudsperson on the field team.*

*Decide if the violation also violates university rules and/or Texas state law, and requires reporting to the university. Some violations (e.g., being dismissive of local norms), might only violate the project’s code of conduct. Ensure that complainant and other members of the team continue to feel safe given the decision and inquire as to whether anything else needs to take place for them to feel so*

1. **Identify steps the proposing principal investigator(s)/project team will take to nurture an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment for this project**.

*Sample Language/Examples*

*(NSF examples include: trainings, processes to establish shared definitions of roles and responsibilities, culture, codes of conduct, field support, mentor/mentee support mechanisms, regular check-ins, developmental events.)*

* *All TAMU University staff, faculty, and student workers are required by University policy to complete the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention and Response Training course.*
* *In advance of the launch of the program, all investigators will meet and agree to the set of roles and responsibilities, culture, codes of conduct, in line with existing policies at their respective institutions. They will also agree on the formal, mentor/mentee support mechanisms, establish regular check-ins, and refine developmental events no less than 1 month in advance of the planned summer research activities*

1. **Please describe how you will ensure all affected employees have access to this plan and any related resources named herein prior to commencement of off-campus work.**

* *All students recruited for this program will be provided with a copy of our Safe and InclusiveWworking Environment plan as part of their on-boarding.*

1. **How will communications within the team and to the school/college(s) or the institution(s) be handled, minimizing singular points within the communications pathway (e.g., a single person overseeing access to a single satellite phone).**

* *It is the expectation of the PI that any issues arising will be reported first to local mentors, or lead faculty investigators at the site, followed by concomitant reporting of any incidents by the lead investigators \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, to ensure timely reporting to TAMU following all local requirements for said reporting.*
* *Participants will have personal phones and/or computer and regular internet or cell service; AND/OR Other (provide detail):*

1. **How will any special circumstances such as the involvement of multiple organizations or the presence of third parties in the working environment be taken into account in supporting a safe and inclusive work environment off campus for this project?**

* *Sample Language: Only include if applicable.*

1. **Please describe the process or method for making incident reports as well as how any reports received will be resolved.**

*Sample Language:*

* *As noted above, incident reports can be made to any member of the team, followed by subsequent reporting to the lead investigators, and then their reporting to their respective institutions.*
* *All participants are responsible for ensuring that our work environment is free from harassment and discrimination. When alleged or suspected harassment is experienced or observed by or made known to a TAMU employee, the employee is responsible for promptly reporting this harassment to the TAMU Title IX Coordinator. All non-employee participants should report any incident to any of the project supervisors or the TAMU Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will review the complaint and respond accordingly. Issues may be resolved via informal resolution or formal resolution including an investigation and a decision on responsibility and sanctions.*

**TAMU Title IX Coordinator:** Jennifer Smith office: (979) 458-8407, email: [civil rights@tamu.edu](mailto:civil%20rights@tamu.edu) or online at <https://titleix.tamu.edu/report/>

**Certification:** I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(PI Name), agree to disseminate this plan to individuals participating in the off-campus or off-site research prior to commencement of their off-site work. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature & Date

=========================================================================

**Resources:**

NSF FAQ Regarding Preparation and Submission of Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork Plans under the BIO/GEO Pilot [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Regarding Preparation and Submission of Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork (SAIF) Plans under the BIO/GEO Pilot (nsf23071) | NSF - National Science Foundation](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23071/nsf23071.jsp?org=OPP)

NSF PAPPG 24-1 [nsf24001 Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (24-1) | NSF - National Science Foundation](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp)

Texas A&M University, Department of anthropology Fieldwork Code of Conduct [Fieldwork Code of Conduct | Texas A&M University College of Arts and Sciences](https://artsci.tamu.edu/anthropology/resources/fieldwork-code-of-conduct.html)

Texas A&M Fieldwork Safety Manual [Manuals | Environmental Health & Safety](https://ehs.tamu.edu/Manuals.html)

University of Kansas has prepared a comprehensive [Safe + Inclusive Fieldwork Checklist (.docx)](https://research.ku.edu/sites/research/files/documents/safe-inclusive-fieldwork/ku-safe-inclusive-fieldwork-checklist-2024.docx) to create a thoughtful, thorough plan for ensuring a safe and inclusive fieldwork experience for all members of your research team. Elements of that plan can be modified to reflect TAMU policies and procedures.