

# How to Prepare an NSF Project Summary

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## Guidance for the NSF Project Summary(based on PAPPG)

### Basic Elements

- Refer to NSF *Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) effective October 4, 2021, Chapter II.C.2.b Page II-11
- A proposal must contain a summary of the proposed project **not more than one page** in length.
- The Project Summary consists of
  - ✓ An **overview**,
  - ✓ A statement on the **intellectual merit** of the proposed activity, and
  - ✓ A statement on the **broader impacts** of the proposed activity.

# Writing the NSF Project Summary (based on *research.gov* instructions and PAPPG)

## Project Summary

- The **overview** must have:
  - ✓ A description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded and
  - ✓ A statement of objectives and methods to be employed.

# Writing the NSF Project Summary

## Project Summary

- **Intellectual Merit**

- ✓ Describe the potential of the proposed activity to meet the Intellectual Merit criterion.
- ✓ The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge (GPG, III-2, NSF 13-1)

# Writing the NSF Project Summary

## Project Summary

- **Broader Impacts**

- ✓ Describe the potential of the proposed activity to meet the Broader Impacts criterion.
- ✓ The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes(GPG, III-2, NSF 13-1).

## Writing the NSF Project Summary(based on PAPPG)

### **Project Summary**

- The Project Summary should:
  - ✓ Be **Informative** to other persons working in the same or related fields, and
  - ✓ Insofar as possible, **understandable** to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader.

# Formatting the NSF Project Summary (based on *research.gov* and PAPPG)

## Project Summary

- The Project Summary should:
  - ✓ Not contain page numbers,
  - ✓ Not be an **abstract**,
  - ✓ Be converted to **pdf**
  - ✓ Can be uploaded on *research.gov* or *FastLane.gov*, unless specified otherwise
- For proposals submitted via FastLane, the Project Summary may ONLY be uploaded as a Supplementary Document if use of special characters is necessary. If uploaded as a Supplementary Document, format the Project Summary to include separate headings for Overview, Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts.
- Proposals that do not contain the Project Summary, including an overview and separate statements on intellectual merit and broader impacts, **will not be accepted or will be returned without review.**

## Review Criteria for the NSF Project Summary (based on research.gov and PAPPG)

**The following elements are 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?



## Review Criteria of the NSF Project Summary (based on research.gov and PAPPG)

**The following elements are considered in the review for both criteria:**

1. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale?
2. Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
3. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
4. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

## Review Criteria of the NSF Project Summary (based on research.gov instructions and PAPPG)

- 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.**

## Review Criteria of the NSF Project Summary (based on research.gov instructions and PAPPG)

- 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.

## Review Criteria of the NSF Project Summary

Such outcomes include, but are not limited to:

- Full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities 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.