National Science Foundation
(Chapter references are taken from the PAPPG)

Organizational Changes

- Office of Polar Programs and Office of Cyberinfrastructure now report to Office of the Director.

Significant Changes to Proposal Preparation and Submission

Chapter I.G.1, Electronic Requirements
- Proposals can now contain high resolution graphics and color.

Chapter II.C.2.b, Project Summary
- FastLane has been modified to display three separate text boxes (up to 4,600 characters in total) in which proposers must provide an "Overview" and address the "Intellectual Merit' and "Broader Impacts" of the proposed activity (still within one page).
- Proposers will no longer need to include separate headings.
- ONLY proposals with special characters may upload the Project Summary as a PDF, with the same sections, "Overview", "Intellectual Merit", Broader Impacts", (up to 4,600 characters in total).
- Proposals that do not separately address the overview and both merit review criteria within the one-page Project Summary will be not be accepted or returned without review.

Chapter II.C.2.d, Project Description
- In the past, the Project Description needed to include a description of broader impacts as part of the narrative. Now, the Project Description must contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities.
- If proposer has a project previously funded by NSF (within 5 years), you must describe the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact of the funded activities in two separate sections in the summary of Results from Prior NSF Support.
- Results from Prior NSF Support section, "prior" NSF support includes current NSF funding that information should be included irrespective of whether or not the support was directly related to the proposal, or whether or not salary support was provided.

Chapter II.C.2.e, References Cited
- If there are no references cited, a statement to that effect should be included in this section of the proposal and uploaded into FastLane.

Chapter II.C.2.f(i)(c), Biographical Sketch(es)
- "Publications" section has been changed to "Products", making clear that products may include, but are not limited to, publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights.

Chapter II.C.2.g(i)(c), Budget
- If no person months and no salary are being requested for senior personnel, they should be removed from Section A of the budget (consistent with NSF's cost sharing policy).

Chapter II.C.2.g(vi)(e)

- Foreign subawardees are not eligible for indirect cost recovery unless the subawardee has a previously negotiated rate agreement with a U.S. Federal agency that has a practice of negotiating rates with foreign entities.

Chapter II.C.2.g(viii), Indirect Costs

- Except as noted in GPG II.C.2.g(v) and II.D.9 or in an NSF program solicitation, the applicable indirect cost rate(s) negotiated by the organization with the cognizant negotiating agency must be used in computing indirect costs (F&A) for a proposal.

Chapter II.C.2.i, Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources

- An aggregated description of the internal and external resources that are, or will be available to the project (both physical and personnel) should be provided.
- A new format for submission of the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources information will be available in FastLane effective in January 2013.
- The new format will assist proposers in complying with the NSF cost sharing policy.
- Proposers should not include any dollar amounts, costs, dates of acquisition, etc. for any facilities, equipment and other resources. These figures can be interpreted as cost-sharing which is unallowable by the NSF.If there is no facilities, equipment and other resources information, a statement to that effect should be included in this section of the proposal and uploaded into FastLane.

Chapter II.D.6, Proposals Involving Vertebrate Animals

- PAPPG now includes guidance on review of wildlife research protocols, and instructions clarifying submission of IACUC approval information.

Chapter III, NSF Proposal Processing and Review

- NSF wants to stress the importance of integration of research and education and broadening participation as core strategies, as outlined in NSF's strategic plan.

Chapter III.A, Merit Review Principles and Criteria

- Recommendations from the NSB, including merit review principles, and revised merit review criteria language.

Exhibit II-1, Proposal Preparation Checklist, has been modified to conform to the *Grant Proposal Guide* revisions (see attached document).

<u>Significant Changes to Award Management</u>

ARRA Award Spending

- All NSF ARRA awards MUST BE SPENT BY SEPTEMBER 2013.

Research Performance Progress Report

- Replaces the format for the Annual and Final report and must be submitted through Research.gov.

NSF Organizational Chart

- National Science Board (NSB)
- Director
  Deputy Director
- Office of the Inspector General (OIG)
- Office of Cyberinfrastructure
- Office of Diversity & Inclusion
- Office of the General Counsel
- Office of Integrative Activities
- Office of International Science & Engineering
- Office of Legislative & Public Affairs
- Office of Polar Programs
- Biological Sciences (BIO)
- Computer & Information Science & Engineering (CISE)
- Engineering (ENG)
- Geosciences (GEO)
- Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS)
- Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences (SBE)
- Education & Human Resources (EHR)
- Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA)
- Information & Resource Management (IRM)

NSB Task Force on Merit Review

- Established Spring 2010
- Rationale:
  - More than 13 years since the last in-depth review and revision of the review criteria
  - Opportunity to align review criteria with NSF's new Strategic Plan
  - Persistent anecdotal reports about confusion related to the Broader Impacts criterion, and inconsistency in how the criterion was being applied.

Final Report: Conclusions

- The Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts review criteria together capture the important elements that should guide the evaluation of NSF proposals.

- Revisions to the descriptions of the Broader Impacts criterion and how it is implemented are needed.

- Use of the review criteria should be informed by a guiding set of core principles.

Final Report: Recommendations

1. Three guiding review principles
2. Two review criteria
3. Five review elements

Merit Review Criteria Guiding Principles

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals.
- Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects.

Merit Review Criteria

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers should consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits would accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers are asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

Five Review Elements

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

Researchers can do business with NSF through a suite of services

Government-wide grantees

- Find grant opportunities and submit proposals
- Apply for grants

NSF Grantees

- Find grant opportunities and submit proposals

Research Grantees

- Support the research community with a modern technology platform
- Submit financial and project reports

Research.gov is the modernization of FastLane, providing the next generation of grants management capabilities for the research community

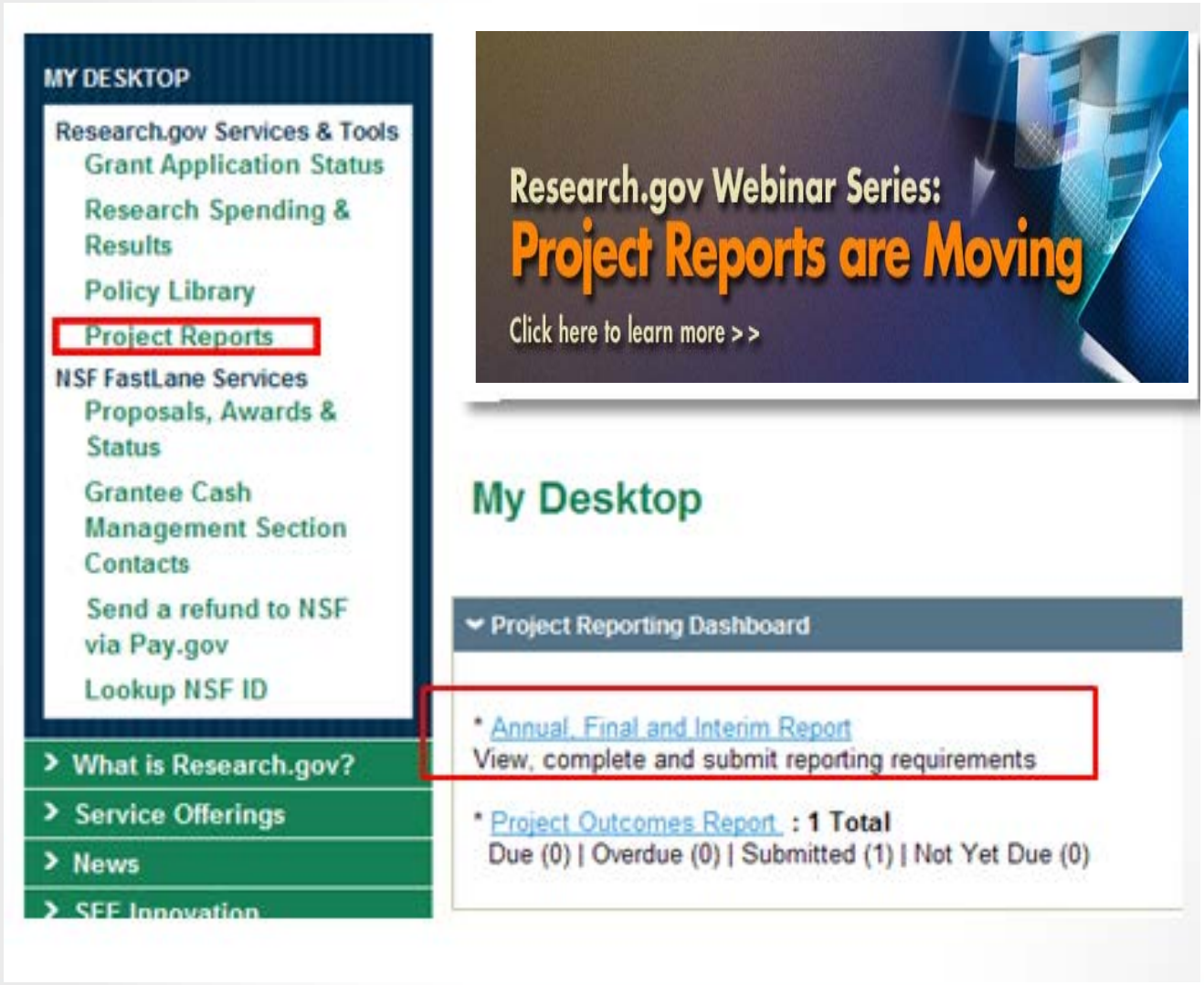
Report Components

- Mandatory Category:
  - Accomplishments: What was done? What was learned?
- Optional Categories:
  - Products: What has the project produced?
  - Participants & Other Collaborating Organizations: Who has been involved?
  - Impact: What is the impact of the project? How has it contributed?
  - Changes/Problems
  - Special Reporting Requirements (where applicable)
  - Appendix 1: Demographic Information for Significant Contributors

Key Differences of the New Project Report System

- Project reporting dashboard
- Structured collection of data
- Rich text editor
- PDF upload to support images, charts, and other complex graphics
- Improved citation search through Thomson Web of Science
- Special reporting requirements are controlled by solicitation
- PI no longer provides demographic information on significant participants

Project Reports Access: PI View



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