

## Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request

The National Science Foundation (NSF) recently proposed a FY 2009 investment of \$6.85 billion to advance the frontiers of research and education in science and engineering. The Budget Request includes an increase of \$822 million (14 percent) over the FY 2008 level. NSF investments in the development of new knowledge and talent are vital to advance the frontiers of discovery and to ensure that America remains a global leader in science and technology.

The Administration and Congress have conveyed their clear determination to build on America's history of success in leading-edge discovery and innovation through increased federal investments in research and education as evidenced by the President's American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) and the America COMPETES Act (ACA) of 2007.

Developments worldwide are driving a new innovation imperative. Knowledge-intensive industries, both in services and manufacturing, are reshaping the global economy. As was noted in Science and Engineering Indicators 2008, high-technology manufacturing worldwide has increased its share of total manufacturing output by 50 percent over the past 20 years. Similarly, knowledge-intensive services (which include business, communication, and financial services) have grown roughly 40 percent faster than other services since the mid 1990s.

For further detailed information, see the NSF website for the [FY 2009 Budget Request](#).

## America COMPETES Act – Update

The America COMPETES Act contains several requirements for NSF. NSF is actively processing those directives and devising plans to implement them in a timely manner. As was discussed in the previous issue of this [newsletter](#), NSF is investigating potential implications of the Act's policy requirements in the following areas:

- **Postdoctoral Research Fellows (Section 7008):** All grant applications to NSF that include funding to support postdoctoral researchers are to describe mentoring activities provided for these individuals, which will be evaluated under the Foundation's broader impacts merit review criterion. In addition, annual and the final reports for research grants that include funding to support postdoctoral researchers should include a description of the mentoring activities provided to them.
- **Responsible Conduct of Research (Section 7009):** Institutions that apply for financial assistance from NSF for science and engineering research or education should include a plan in their grant proposals for appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers

### In This Issue:

**Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request**

**America COMPETES Act – Update**

**Research.gov: Powering Knowledge and Innovation**

**Desk Reviews Under NSF's Award Monitoring & Business Assistance Program**

**NSF Regional Grants Conference**

**NSF Spring Outreach**

who will participate in the proposed research project.

- **Reporting of Research Results (Section 7010):** All final project reports and citations of published research documents resulting from research funded, in whole or in part, by NSF, should be made available to the public in a timely manner and in electronic form through NSF's website.
- **Cost Sharing (Section 7013):** The National Science Board (NSB) should evaluate the impact of its policy to eliminate cost sharing for research grants and cooperative agreements for existing programs that were developed around industry partnerships and historically required industry cost sharing. In addition the NSB should report its findings to Congress. The [NSB Report to Congress on Cost Sharing Policies at the National Science Foundation](#) was submitted on February 7, 2008.

With the exception of the congressionally mandated reinstatement of cost sharing to the [Major Research Instrumentation \(MRI\)](#) program, the above policy-related provisions of the ACA have not yet been implemented.

NSF will continue to communicate progress with respect to compliance with the ACA legislation and will provide extensive outreach to the research community prior to any future policy and procedural changes. For more information about NSF and the America COMPETES Act, see the NSF section of H.R. 2272 [here](#). Stay tuned for additional information regarding this legislation.

## Research.gov: Powering Knowledge and Innovation



[Research.gov](#) is an exciting new initiative led by NSF that enables institutions and grantees to access streamlined research grants management services and other resources for multiple federal agencies in one location.

As part of NSF's annual budget rollout, NSF announced the release of Research.gov and the initial public services. Research.gov offers the following publicly-available information services which anyone can access:

- [Research Spending and Results Search](#): Find out where federal research grant dollars are going. Search awards by a number of different elements including awardee and congressional district.
- [Policy Library](#): Find agency policies, guides, terms and conditions, and instructions that applicants and agencies need to conduct grants business.
- [Research Headlines](#): View research news and articles from NSF and its partner agencies.

Research.gov also plans to roll out the following two new services for public use, both of which are currently being BETA tested by more than 50 institutions from around the country:

- [Grants Application Status](#): This service will allow Sponsored Projects Officers (SPOs) and Principal Investigators (PIs) to check the up-to-date

### Important Links:

[National Science Foundation](#)

[Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management](#)

- [Budget Division](#)
  - [Division of Acquisition & Cooperative Support](#)
  - [Division of Financial Management](#)
  - [Division of Grants & Agreements](#)
  - [Division of Institution & Award Support](#)
  - [Policy Office](#)
  - **National Science Foundation Update**  
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status of grant applications submitted to the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES).

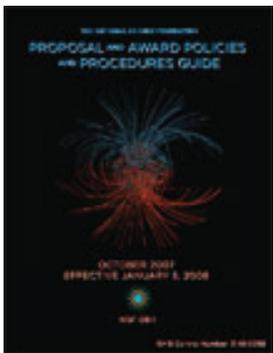
- **Institution and User Management:** Research.gov leverages the research community's investment in NSF's FastLane. All institutions and users registered in FastLane are automatically registered in Research.gov! Being registered in FastLane will allow institutions and users to access Research.gov Business Services once they become available.

Consistent with the way NSF built and deployed FastLane, Research.gov is being delivered in a modular and research community-focused manner. Research.gov offers a menu of services that will continue to grow over time. NSF will engage the community on a continual basis as Research.gov services are developed and deployed to ensure they meet the community's needs. Feedback to date from research institutions has been extremely positive and will be used to further refine the initial business services prior to launching them for all users.

Recently NASA and Department of Defense (DoD) Research joined Research.gov. NSF will be working with NASA and DoD over the coming months to develop plans to extend Research.gov services to those agencies and their grantees.

These services and partnerships are just the beginning. In the future, NSF will continue to add content and develop and implement additional service offerings on Research.gov addressing priorities of the research community and sponsoring agencies. NSF will also continue to explore partnership opportunities with other federal research agencies. For more information or questions, see the Research.gov [media kit](#) or contact the [Research.gov team](#).

## Desk Reviews Under NSF's Award Monitoring & Business Assistance Program



Over the past several years NSF has implemented a post award monitoring program designed to evaluate the award administration systems, practices, and capacities of NSF awardees to manage NSF funds. The goal of this program is to provide proactive assistance to NSF awardees to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the award agreement as well as Federal regulations. The Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management (BFA) conducts a variety of post-award monitoring activities at both the award

and institutional level. Within BFA, the Division of Institution and Award Support (DIAS) provides oversight of both site visits and desk reviews that are implemented through the Award Monitoring and Business Assistance Program (AMBAP) and are conducted by NSF staff and NSF contractors.

The latest activity incorporated into the program is the desk review module. During a desk review, awardees' general business systems are reviewed. Each desk review includes an assessment of general management policies and practices, a review of accounting and financial systems, and a reconciliation of the amount included in one Federal Cash Transaction Report (FCTR). Together the review activities assess the extent to which the awardee has established an internally controlled environment in compliance with federal regulations and

specific agreement(s) with NSF.

Desk reviews are designed to:

- Provide NSF with a cost-effective means for expanding oversight provided by site visits;
- Complement the site visit process by compiling and documenting a significant amount of information related to NSF recipients' award administration policies and procedures to provide a basis for future site visits;
- Provide NSF and awardees with insights and information related to award administration deficiencies and concerns, and consequently help NSF better target future awardee capacity building and monitoring efforts; and
- Promote a dialogue with NSF awardees about award administration practices.

The desk reviews completed in 2006-2007 identified common areas where awardees need to strengthen their award administration practices in order to successfully manage their awards. The most common grants management concerns include:

- A lack of or inadequate documentation of policies and procedures related to grants administration and accounting;
- A lack of clearly defined and documented employee responsibilities for grant administration;
- A lack of written delegation of authority for the approval of proposals, award agreements, and subsequent amendments; and
- Inadequate documentation of policies related to unallowable costs.

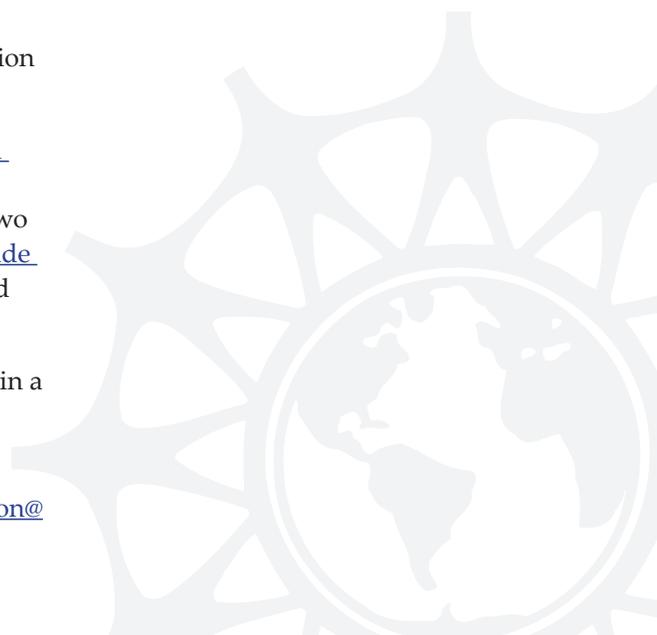
NSF is discovering that although most awardees can articulate their practices related to budget monitoring, expenditure approval, and accounting policies, many have not prepared adequate written guidance for employees responsible for these functions. Without adequate written policies and procedures, duties are not enforceable and accountability cannot be ensured.

Once the desk review is complete, NSF compiles the findings, contacts the awardee and, if appropriate, asks for modification and/or strengthening of policies with regard to the areas of concern identified in the desk review report. In some instances, NSF will require the awardee to provide an Action Plan detailing how it will correct these concerns.

For further guidance on award administration issues, see the [Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#), which is comprised of documents relating to NSF's proposal and award process and consists of two parts: the [Grant Proposal Guide \(GPG\)](#) and the [Award Administration Guide \(AAG\)](#). AAG, Chapter II is designed to provide an overview of NSF award monitoring.

NSF plans to complete 150 desk reviews in FY 2008. This article is the first in a series that will discuss the new desk review monitoring strategy.

For more information on the Award Monitoring and Business Assistance Program, please contact Rosalind Jackson-Lewis, Project Director at [rjackson@nsf.gov](mailto:rjackson@nsf.gov) or (703) 292-4582.



## NSF Regional Grants Conference



The first National Science Foundation Regional Grants Conference of FY 2009 will be held in Omaha, NE, and hosted by the University of Nebraska Lincoln on October 20-21, 2008.

Key representatives from the National Science Foundation as well as your colleagues - faculty, researchers and grant administrators - representing colleges and universities from around the US will participate.

This two-day conference is a must, especially for new faculty, researchers and administrators who want to gain key insight into a wide range of current issues at NSF. Highlights include:

- New programs and initiatives;
- Future directions and strategies for national science policy;
- Proposal preparation;
- NSF's merit review process;
- Cross-disciplinary and special interest programs;
- Conflict of interest policies; and
- Breakout sessions by discipline.

NSF Program Officers representing each NSF Directorate will be on hand to provide up-to-date information about specific funding opportunities and answer your questions.

Questions about conference registration should be directed to [nsf\\_regional@nsf.gov](mailto:nsf_regional@nsf.gov), or by calling (703) 465-2648.

For additional information regarding program content, contact the Policy Office in the Division of Institution and Award Support at (703) 292-8243, or by sending an e-mail to [policy@nsf.gov](mailto:policy@nsf.gov).

## NSF Spring Outreach

- April 7-8 NSF Regional Grants Conference, Providence, RI
- April 27-30 NCURA Region VI and VII Spring Meeting, Portland, OR
- April 27-30 SRA Northeast Spring Meeting, Cambridge, MA
- April 27-30 NCURA Region II Spring Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA
- May 5-6 NCURA Region IV Spring Meeting, Kansas City, MO
- May 5-7 NCURA Region V Spring Meeting, Oklahoma City, OK
- May 6-9 NCURA Region I Spring Meeting, Cape Cod, MA
- May 12-14 NCURA Region III Spring Meeting, Isle of Palms, SC
- May 19-21 SRA Southern/Midwest Spring Meeting, Hilton Head, SC
- June 9-11 SRA Western Spring Meeting, Denver, CO

