

**National Science Foundation**  
**Advisory Committee for Business and Operations**  
Fall 2016 Meeting

November 29-30, 2016  
Room 1235

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**Tuesday, November 29, 2016**

1:00 pm

**Welcome/Introductions/Recap**

*Co-Chairs: Chuck Grimes and Susan Sedwick*

1:15 pm

**BFA/OIRM/OLPA Updates**

*Presenters: Marty Rubenstein, BFA, Joanne Tornow, OIRM; Tony Gibson, OLPA and Michael Sieverts, BFA/Budget (Joint Update)*

1:45 pm

**Update on Relocation of NSF Headquarters**

The first part of the presentation will inform the Committee of the current status of the relocation project including:

- Enhancements to help NSF achieve its mission
- Project Timeline
- Schedule and Budget update
- Managing Risks

The discussion will then shift to communications with staff to connect to the new building and how to best position NSF and its staff after the move has been completed.

Committee Action/Feedback:

Questions for the Committee regarding the post-move transition to the new headquarters building:

1. What can we start planning now to prepare for post-move?
2. After the move is complete, how do we avoid a “letdown” for the team and staff that worked on the relocation?
3. What are some best practices to help staff get acquainted quickly and comfortably with the new surroundings and new processes?

*Presenter: Joanne Tornow, OIRM; Brian MacDonald, OIRM/NRO*

*Discussant: Jim Barbret*

2:30 pm

**NSF Strategic Plan**

The idea of a Strategic Goal for NSF originated in the 2001-2002 timeframe, when a Strategic Plan for Administration and Management was created. Subsequently with the help of the BOAC, a strategic goal called “Organizational Excellence” was included in the FY 2003-2008 Strategic Plan for NSF. This was the first strategic plan for NSF where a Strategic Goal around its business operations was at the same level as goals for science, engineering and education (at that time, called People, Ideas and Tools).

In the current NSF Strategic Plan (FY 2014-18), the goal is called “Excel as a Federal Science Agency.”

Additionally, the Committee has stressed the importance that this operations-oriented strategic goal be owned by all of NSF, not just BFA and OIRM. As stated in the notes of the fall 2005 meeting when providing feedback for NSF’s FY 2006-2011 Strategic Plan:

We will review the process and timeline of the construction of NSF’s new strategic plan before moving to the feedback areas for the Committee.

Committee Action/Feedback:

Questions as related to the current/future Excel as a Federal Science Agency strategic goal:

1. Do you have additional rationale for why the goal should remain a strategic goal versus being considered a “management objective?” (OMB material/definitions provided)
2. How can the goal continue to provide a mechanism to enable fundamental research?
3. How can the goal evolve to the next level as to helping NSF excel as a Federal science agency?

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4. How can NSF better integrate the three strategic goals (this business goal and the two science, engineering and education goals) so all of the goals resonate with staff across the agency (i.e., program, administration and operations)?
5. How can enterprise risk management (ERM) be incorporated in the strategic plan? ERM would cut across all three strategic goals.
6. What elements of the goal, if any, are no longer relevant?

*Presenter: Steve Meacham, OIA*

*Discussant: John Kamensky*

3:30 pm

**Break**

3:45 pm

**BOAC and Operations with its Subcommittees**

In past years, the NSF Advisory Committee for Business & Operations has successfully undertaken the practice of using the formal subcommittee mechanism to examine specific business matters in more depth and with broader external membership than would normally be on the Committee itself. At the Fall 2010 meeting of, the Committee [recommended](#) that NSF continue this practice, and NSF accepted this recommendation, and at the Spring 2011 Committee meeting. Thereafter, the Committee sought to better understand the relevant legal information, its options for frameworks, and to identify best practices. NSF staff conducted research, including interviewing past subcommittee participants and identified draft best practices and draft subcommittee guidance that was never adopted.

NSF staff has updated the draft guidance on subcommittees, and shared this draft with members in advance of this meeting. This presentation will present a high-level summary of the updated draft guidance.

Committee Action/Feedback:

NSF requests that Committee consider the updated draft guidance and recommend that it be finalized and implemented as part of the Committee's internal operations going forward.

*Presenter: Charisse Carney-Nunes, BFA*

4:15 pm

**Update from the Subcommittee on National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) Implementation Regarding NSF's Use of Cooperative Agreements to Support Large Scale Investments in Science and Technology**

The Subcommittee on NAPA Implementation was charged with preparing a report for BOAC approval that recommends actions to NSF for implementing a subset of National Academy of Public Administration recommendations related to NSF-wide oversight of large-scale research facilities in the report, [National Science Foundation: Use of Cooperative Agreements to Support Large Scale Investment in Research](#). Specifically, the Subcommittee has been charged with providing options for appropriate agency-wide oversight for the NSF Office of the Director (OD) for the following four tasks:

- Re-scope of the role, duties, and membership of the Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) Panel to include status update reviews of projects in the development and construction phases focusing on cost, schedule, and performance. [NAPA Recommendation 6.2]
- Evaluate the potential value in extending the MREFC Panel's role to operating facilities, including divestment (i.e. full life-cycle).
- Evaluate the potential value in creating an internal agency "senior official" position in OD charged with reporting to the Director and Deputy Director/Chief Operating Officer on large facilities.
- Evaluate the potential value in creating a new Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) committee to provide the NSF Director with a sounding board for objective insight on large research projects. [NAPA Recommendation 6.4]

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Committee Action/Feedback:

The Subcommittee met at NSF on Aug 3-4, 2016. We will provide a summary of our provisional findings and recommendations for discussion with the Committee.

*Presenter: Mike Holland*

5:00 pm

**Application of Lessons Learned from Other Lessons-Learned Programs**

NAPA Recommendation 6.9 stated that NSF should formally establish communities of practice and implement a “lessons learned” requirement for all MREFC projects. The Panel and study team identified DOE and NASA as comparator science agencies whose large capital investment projects most closely align with NSF. However, DOE and NASA “own and operate” the research infrastructure they build, while NSF is banned from operating facilities (except Antarctic stations). NSF funds other organizations (recipients) to build and operate the research infrastructure. NSF and their recipients have multiple communities of practice and have conducted various lesson learned workshops.

NSF has achieved some success in sharing best practices and lessons-learned through various communities of practice. However, lessons learned are being done in a non-systemic manner. In developing a response to the NAPA recommendation, NSF is examining how to balance the lessons learned requirements with the benefits.

Committee Action/Feedback:

NSF is seeking committee advice on best practices and potential missteps with lessons learned programs when creating a culture of continuous improvement within a multidisciplinary, vertically-segregated organization.

Based on the committee member’s organization experience, how is a culture of continuous improvement established?

What are the key elements of a lessons learned programs that drive the benefits to your organization?

How communities of practices, lessons are learned documents, and changes to policy and/or procedures tied together?

How does your organization share lessons learned externally?

Are there any issues with sharing lessons learned outside your organization?

Suggestions on how to address the NAPA Recommendation 6.9?

*Presenter: Rebecca Yasky, BFA/LFO*

*Discussant: Theresa Pardo*

5:45 pm

**Adjourn**

6:30 pm

**Dinner- SER**

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**Wednesday, November 30, 2016**

8:00 am      **Results from the 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)**  
The presentation will update the Committee on the results from the 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The survey was administered to NSF employees during May and June 2016.

Key results from the 2016 FEVS:

- NSF is third highest among medium and small agencies on Employee Engagement scores (behind Office of Management and Budget and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission).
- All question scores higher than government average except for two (76 out of 78)
- High response rate of 74% (government-wide average is 46%).
- Ongoing focus areas are workload, career development, and performance management.

We will also discuss comparisons to benchmark agencies and next steps for employee engagement action planning.

Committee Action/Feedback:

- How does NSF continue to maintain its progress in the coming year?
- How do we avoid complacency?
- How do supervisors and managers best engage with employees on the results?

*Presenter: Joanne Tornow, OIRM*

*Discussant: John Palguta*

9:00 am      **Preparation for Discussion with Dr. Córdova and Buckius**

9:45 am      **Break**

10:00 am      **Discussion with Dr. Córdova and Buckius**

11:00 am      **Update: Committee on Equal Opportunities in Science and Engineering (CEOSE)**  
Update on CEOSE activity and the NSF INCLUDES program.

*Presenter: Alicia Knoedler*

11:30 am      **Wrap Up/Loose Ends**

12:00 pm      **Adjourn**