

**National Science Foundation**  
**Advisory Committee for Business and Operations**  
Fall 2018 Meeting

December 12-13, 2018  
Room E 3410

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**Wednesday, December 12, 2018**

1:00 pm      **Welcome/Introductions/Recap**  
*Co-Chairs: Chuck Grimes and Susan Sedwick*

1:15 pm      **BFA/OIRM/OLPA/Budget Updates**  
*Presenters: Teresa Grancorvitz, BFA; Wonzie Gardner, OIRM; Amanda Greenwell, OLPA*

1:45 pm      **Results from the 2018 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)**  
Review NSF's FEVS results.  
  
*Presenter: Wonzie Gardner, OIRM; Bill Malyszka, OIRM*  
  
*Discussant: John Palguta*

The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is an annual measure of NSF staff's engagement across several dimensions. Each year, all staff are invited to share their perspectives on their work unit, supervisor and leadership, and NSF culture. FEVS results are a major input into employee engagement action planning by each directorate and office. Senior leaders see the connection between engagement and productivity, willingness to change and innovate, and retention of our talent.

NSF staff are invested in the employee engagement process, as evidenced by the 76% response rate on the FEVS, compared to the government average of 41%. We have achieved four years of sustained improvement across all the engagement areas of focus – career development; performance and recognition; workload; and inclusion.

OIRM continues to build out resources that support the directorates and offices as they work to improve engagement. Along with providing full transparency on all NSF FEVS results, we also have incorporated a module on effective employee engagement strategies in our Federal Supervisor training course, published a curated engagement website with resources touching many topics, and are providing consulting support to the directorates and offices.

**Committee Action/Feedback:**

1. What promising practices have you seen organizations like NSF use to sustain improvements in engagement?
2. NSF has a workforce with a diverse set of people and life experiences. How have you seen organizations successfully integrate STEM and non-STEM staff working side-by-side on the same mission?
3. NSF has made good progress on improving the FEVS Workload Index, which is a measure of staff perceptions of workload. NSF still sees room for working more efficiently through better tools, streamlined processes, and increasing staff capabilities. In today's climate of "do more with less", how have you seen organizations successfully balance additional effort to gain efficiency when staff already see their workload as being difficult to complete?

2:30 pm      **Break**

2:45 pm      **Facilities Subcommittees Updates**  
The Cost Surveillance Subcommittee will share the findings of its report, which documents the Subcommittee's evaluation and findings regarding the sufficiency of NSF's end-to-end cost surveillance oversight procedures for all Large Facility construction and operations awards. Also, an update will be provided, as requested by the Committee during the Spring 2018 meeting, on activities completed by the Cooperative Agreements to Support Large Scale Investments (NSF implementation) Subcommittee.

*Presenter: Matt Hawkins, BFA and Kim Moreland*

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*Discussant: Mike Holland*

Subcommittee on Implementation of NAPA Recommendations

The Subcommittee on Implementation of NAPA Recommendations was charged with preparing a report for the BOAC 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](#).

The subcommittee presented its final report to the BOAC at the Spring 2017 Meeting. In response to a request for a status update by the BOAC during the Spring 2018 meeting, the Head, Large Facilities Office, NSF, will provide an informational briefing summarizing NSF's resolution actions with respect to each of the Subcommittee's recommendations.

Subcommittee on NSF's Strengthened Oversight of Major Facility Cost Surveillance

The Subcommittee on NSF's Strengthened Oversight of Major Facility Cost Surveillance was charged with preparing a report for the BOAC that fully evaluates NSF's strengthened "end-to-end cost surveillance policies and procedures" for Major Facility projects (i.e., Large Facilities). The report is to specifically state whether or not the subcommittee feels the strengthened policies and procedures are sufficient. The report may include recommendations to NSF for further improvement depending on the outcome. The review pertained to both construction and operations awards. Specifically, the subcommittee was charged with reviewing and evaluating NSF's current oversight framework relating to Large Facility costs including the following: (1) proposal cost estimates; (2) NSF cost analysis of those estimates; and (3) post-award cost and performance monitoring.

**Committee Action/Feedback:**

- The BOAC liaison submitted the subcommittee's final report to the BOAC chairs on December 7, 2018, and on behalf of the chairs, NSF BOAC staff shared it with the full BOAC as a pre-read for this meeting.
- During the meeting, the BOAC Liaison, will provide to the BOAC a summary of the subcommittee's findings and recommendations for discussion.
- The BOAC will discuss and deliberate the subcommittee's advice and recommendations at the meeting.
- At the close of the BOAC's discussion, it will:
  - Accept the subcommittee's report;
  - Reject the subcommittee's report; or
  - Send the subcommittee's report back to the subcommittee for revisions.
- The BOAC may also provide additional written feedback to NSF, including any comments or opinions it has to offer regarding the report or its findings and recommendations by way of a cover letter to the NSF Designated Federal Officers (DFOs).
- Once the report is accepted, the BOAC will submit it to NSF for the agency to make it publicly available.
- After receiving the report, the NSF DFOs may, verbally or in writing, comment on or respond to it and its recommendations at any duly organized BOAC meeting.

4:00 pm

**Break**

4:15 pm

**CFO Office of the Future**

*Presenters/Panel: Dorothy Aronson, CIO/OD; Teresa Grancorvitz, BFA; Mike Wetklow, BFA*

*Discussant: Adam Goldberg and Doug Webster*

Today's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) plays a central role at the crossroads of finance, technology and strategy in support of mission delivery. Although the private sector has adopted technology more quickly, federal CFOs are embracing the opportunity to modernize financial management and services. With the onset of new, emerging technologies, the role of the federal CFO office continues to evolve in the future. In this session, NSF's CFO, Chief Information Officer (CIO), and Deputy CFO discuss some of the

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modernization priorities and exciting new technologies that are being used to leverage and support a modern CFO office of the future.

Specific examples of new developing technologies will be discussed such as robotics process automation (RPA) and blockchain. These and other promising tools have the potential to enhance performance, increase accountability, and improve staff productivity while simultaneously advancing NSF's mission, the President's Management Agenda (PMA) and internal reform efforts such as Renewing NSF.

As background, the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) 2018 Report, "The CFO Office of the Future" examines trends in technology and how they impact the federal CFO. The report examines some of the most important trends in technology and how they impact the federal CFO and in turn, the financial community at large. These trends include emerging technologies such as: secure applications, cloud technology, data analytics, process automation, auditing with blockchain, and more.

**Committee Action/Feedback**

NSF seeks advice and perspective on financial management modernization priorities and tools for a modern federal CFO office that supports mission delivery and reform efforts.

5:15 pm

**Adjourn**

6:15 pm

**Dinner- Rus Uz**



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**Thursday, December 13, 2018**

8:00 am

**Renewing NSF**

Update on the status of the Renewing NSF effort.

*Presenters: Erwin Gianchandani, CISE and Joanne Tornow, BIO*

*Discussants: John Kamensky and Joe Mitchell*

With an eye on improving government processes, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a [memorandum](#) in April 2017 requesting Agency Reform Plans as part of the agencies' FY 2019 budget submissions. As NSF Director Dr. France Córdova has since reflected, "At NSF, we saw this as an opportunity to look thoughtfully at our operation and to explore ways we could transform ourselves to better support NSF's long-term research goals. *We call this initiative Renewing NSF.*"

Given this backdrop, NSF undertook an agency-wide brainstorming process last year to think deeply and critically about how we as an organization could transform to support and sustain NSF's long-term research agenda. That process produced over 200 suggestions from NSF staff, which were subsequently synthesized by senior leadership into four thematic pillars:

- Making information technology work for all (IT);
- Adapting the workforce and the work (Workforce);
- Expanding and deepening public and private partnerships (Partnerships); and
- Streamlining, standardizing, and simplifying processes and practices (Streamlining).

In spring 2018, a Renewing NSF Steering Group and four Goal Teams (one for each thematic pillar) were established with staff from across the agency. Using a facilitated visioning process, each Goal Team identified a Vision and Bold Steps for their respective pillar. The Bold Steps are intentionally broad and flexible so as to allow us to explore various approaches and eventually pursue the best solutions for implementation.

Where FY 2017 was the "ideation year" and FY 2018 was the "planning year," FY 2019 is the "go year" in terms of moving forward on implementing several of the Bold Steps in a staged fashion. As part of the transition to implementation, NSF is currently in the midst of an intensive agency-wide engagement period to gather inputs about the Visions and Bold Steps that have emerged from the Goal Teams.

**Committee Action/Feedback:**

NSF seeks advice and perspective on how to ensure NSF moves forward effectively on implementation of the bold steps. Specifically:

1. What are the key ingredients for successful management of this initiative?
2. Many of the bold steps are interdependent. What mechanisms would you suggest for identifying, cultivating, and managing the relationships among one another, including where resources requirements overlap?
3. What mechanisms would you encourage for internal communication and enhancing employee engagement to avoid "change fatigue"?

8:45 am

**Renewing NSF- Partnerships Pillar**

Committee provides feedback on Vision and Bold Steps related to one of the four Renewing NSF pillars on Partnerships.

*Presenters: Ken Calvert, CISE; Barry Johnson, ENG*

*Discussants: Lee Cheatham and Theresa Pardo*

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NSF's vision for the partnerships pillar is "Expanding partnerships to enhance the impact of NSF's investments and contribute to American economic competitiveness and security". Private industry, foundations, and non-profits, together with other federal agencies and international funding organizations, bring additional expertise, resources, and capacity to NSF-funded research. This, in turn, accelerates discovery and translation of research to products and services, and enhances preparation of the future workforce to benefit society and grow the American economy.

The vision for the partnerships pillar includes:

- A unified strategic vision to guide proactive identification and pursuit of partnerships that advance NSF's mission;
- Streamlined, flexible processes and tools for implementing a range of different types of partnerships, along with mechanisms for sharing knowledge and expertise; and
- Systematic and continual evidence-based improvement of costs and benefits of partnerships, through evidence-based assessment.

The Partnerships Goal Team developed six bold steps toward realization of this vision:

- Conduct a landscape study to explore "out of the box" partnerships.
- Develop a framework and method for identifying advantageous partnerships.
- Explore options for appropriate centralization.
- Build a partnerships toolbox: guidelines, best practices, examples, templates.
- Educate and train workforce to strengthen the culture of partnerships.
- Develop metrics, tools and processes to track all partnerships.

**Committee Action/Feedback:**

NSF seeks advice and perspective on how to ensure NSF moves forward effectively on implementation of the bold steps. Specifically:

1. What elements of a partnerships program would you consider best suited for centralized management?
2. What metrics do you suggest should be most important for consideration?
3. What mechanisms would you encourage to help strengthen the culture of partnerships?

9:45 am	<b>Break</b>
10:00 am	<b>Preparation for Meeting with Drs. Córdova and Crim</b>
10:30 am	<b>Meeting with Drs. Córdova and Crim</b>
11:30 am	<b>Committee Business/Wrap Up</b>
12:00 pm	<b>Adjourn</b>