

How *Ad Hoc* Reviewers Access Assigned Proposals for Review



Thank you for contributing to NSF’s merit review process. We’ve made several enhancements to our processes in recent months. Our recent updates focus on safeguarding sensitive information, including proposals, while adopting a modernized proposal review system. These changes are designed to ensure robust data protection protocols and create a more user-friendly environment. This guide will walk you through the new requirements. Most of these account management tasks are one-time actions, so you won’t need to repeat them for each review. If you need assistance, please contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM – 9:00 PM Eastern Time; Monday – Friday except federal holidays) or rgov@nsf.gov.

Step 1: Review Correspondence from NSF Program Officer (NSF Proposal Review Request or Invitation Code Email with the subject line “Review for NSF - Action Needed”)

Step 2: Create an NSF Account in Research.gov (One-time Process)

- Skip to Step 3 if you already have an existing NSF account and NSF ID in Research.gov. Users should not have more than one NSF account and NSF ID.
- New users register for an NSF account on the Research.gov [Account Registration](#) page to obtain an NSF ID.
 - Refer to the [Register for a New NSF Account job aid](#) for step-by-step instructions with screenshots or view the [Register for a New NSF Account video tutorial](#) for a demonstration of steps.

Step 3: Sign Into Research.gov and Set Up Multifactor Authentication

Per Dear Colleague Letter [NSF 25-011](#), all users must use multifactor authentication (MFA) to sign into Research.gov as of October 27, 2024.

View the [MFA Options Overview](#). Users can sign into Research.gov using **NSF account credentials** (NSF ID / Primary Email Address + Password), **organization credentials** (InCommon Federation participating organizations only), or **Login.gov credentials**. The sign-in option you use impacts how you will enroll in MFA. You must use the MFA method that you are enrolled in each time you sign into Research.gov. For information on setting up a secondary MFA method, please see the MFA [FAQs](#).

Click [Sign In](#) on the top right navigation bar to access Research.gov and sign in using one of the three options.

- If you sign into Research.gov with your **NSF credentials**, you must enroll in one of the seven Research.gov [MFA options](#). MFA setup will be required in Research.gov if you have not yet completed this one-time step. After Research.gov MFA enrollment, you must use your selected MFA method each time you sign into Research.gov with your NSF credentials.
 - If you are an *ad hoc* reviewer without an additional administrative or financial role in Research.gov, you can use a standard MFA method (Google Authenticator or Okta Verify) to sign into Research.gov.
 - Use the **Google Authenticator** [how-to guide](#) and [video tutorial](#) (2:25 minutes) to enroll in MFA using Google Authenticator **OR** use the **Okta Verify** [how-to guide](#) and [video tutorial](#) (3:44 minutes) to enroll in MFA using Okta Verify. See the [About Signing Into Research.gov page](#) for additional MFA guidance and [FAQs](#).
 - If you’ve forgotten your NSF account password, see the [NSF Account Password Reset Guide](#). If you’ve forgotten your NSF ID or primary email address or do not have access to your primary email address for your NSF account, you must contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or rgov@nsf.gov for assistance. Please ensure that you maintain access to your NSF account primary email address as you may be required to complete a validation step with a one-time passcode sent to this email.
- If you sign into Research.gov with your **organization credentials**, your MFA enrollment is through your InCommon participating organization.

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- You must register for an NSF account first if you plan to sign into Research.gov with your organization-issued credentials.
- When signing into Research.gov with organization credentials the first time, ensure your organization email address and your NSF account primary email address are the same so the two accounts can be automatically linked. If the NSF account primary email address does not match your organizational email address, you will not be able to sign in with your organization-issued credentials.
- If you sign into Research.gov with your **Login.gov credentials**, your MFA enrollment is through Login.gov. You must use a phishing-resistant MFA. The phishing-resistant MFA options in Login.gov are face or touch unlock and security keys. You set up your MFA in Login.gov. See <https://www.login.gov/help/get-started/authentication-methods/>.
 - You must register for an NSF account first if you plan to sign into Research.gov with your Login.gov credentials.
 - When signing into Research.gov with Login.gov credentials the first time, ensure your Login.gov email address and your NSF account primary email address are the same so the two accounts can be automatically linked. If the NSF account primary email address does not match your Login.gov email address, you will not be able to sign in with your Login.gov credentials.

After you have signed into Research.gov using your selected MFA method, you will be navigated to the Research.gov homepage.

Step 4: Provide Reviewer Profile Information (*One-time Process*)

- Locate the “**Reviews & Meetings**” tile on the Research.gov homepage.
- Click the “**Provide Reviewer Profile Information**” link to begin the one-time process to provide your reviewer profile information. This link will not display after you complete your reviewer profile.
 - Follow the instructions provided in the NSF Proposal Review Request or Invitation Code Email from Step 1, including entering the email address where you received the email or Invitation Code.
 - Provide your reviewer profile information by completing the five-step wizard.
 - Refer to the **Provide Reviewer Profile Information job aid** in the [Account Management User Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions with screenshots.

Step 5: Use the Reviews, Panels and Other Meetings Landing Page to Access Your Assigned Proposal Review

- Navigate to the Research.gov homepage and click the “**Reviews, Panels, and Other Meetings**” link in the “Reviews & Meetings” tile.
- From the **Reviews** tab that is open, find the proposal number corresponding to the proposal you are assigned to review and click on it in the Proposal Number column. Note that the table will only populate and display active reviews from the previous six months if you have completed the one-time process to provide your reviewer profile information.
- Refer to the **Using the Reviews, Panels, and Other Meetings Page to Access Reviewer Assignments job aid** in the [Account Management User Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions with screenshots.

Note: *Ad hoc* reviewers must review the Merit Review Principles, Criteria, and Privacy Act and Public Burden Statements and click “**Accept**” and “**Continue**” to access the Proposal Evaluation System.

Step 6: Use the Proposal Evaluation System to Prepare and Submit Your Assigned Proposal Review

- After you open the assigned proposal from the Reviews tab on the Reviews, Panels, and Other Meetings landing page, you will be navigated to the Proposal Evaluation System to prepare and submit your review to NSF.
- Refer to the [Quick Start Instructions for Ad Hoc Reviewers](#) on the [About Proposal Evaluation System page](#) for step-by-step instructions with screenshots.