

CAREER Proposal System-related FAQs

****REMINDER: Aim to submit your proposal in advance of the July 24th deadline to allow time to resolve any system errors per the [CAREER Proposal Submission Timeline](#) guidance.** Failure to submit by 5:00 p.m. submitting organization's local time will result in the proposal not being accepted or it will be returned without review, unless the submission meets the special exceptions to NSF's deadline date policy per NSF *Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) [Chapter I.F.](#)

View the 2024 CAREER Proposal Submission Logistics Webinar resources:

- [Presentation](#)
- [Proposal preparation demo recording](#)

Additional Research.gov proposal resources including FAQs by topic, how-to guides, and video tutorials are available on the Research.gov [About Proposal Preparation and Submission](#) page using the left navigation bar. For example, the [Uploading Documents FAQ topic](#) includes document formatting FAQs, and the [Proposal Sections FAQ topic](#) includes Cover Sheet and budget FAQs.

Proposals submitted via Grants.gov are processed in Research.gov. See the [Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov page](#) and [Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov how-to guide](#) for details including information on the pre-check and post-check proposal validations. Errors must be corrected before a proposal can be accepted into the NSF Research.gov System for processing.

Stay informed about important updates by reviewing the advisories posted at the top of the [Research.gov](#) homepage through the July 24th CAREER proposal submission deadline.

1. Q: If I have an unsubmitted, in-progress CAREER proposal in Research.gov or Grants.gov from last year in response to CAREER Program Solicitation NSF [22-586](#), can I edit and submit it for the 2024 deadline?

A: While you can edit your in-progress proposal for submission for the 2024 deadline, NSF strongly recommends that you start your proposal over because the in-progress proposal from last year may include outdated sections or requirements. In addition, the selection of CAREER programs or other proposal options may also have changed since last year's submission deadline.

If you do opt to edit your in-progress proposal created in 2023 for Program Solicitation [22-586](#) for submission by the July 24, 2024 deadline, you must update the due date. You must also delete all of the documents previously uploaded in each proposal section and then re-upload them to ensure compliance with the current proposal [automated compliance checks](#).

2. Q: How do I register for an NSF account and request an organization-approved Principal Investigator (PI) role?

A: Please see the [CAREER proposal submission timeline](#) for instructions and links to resources.

If you receive a "Multiple Accounts Found" pop-up alert message when you sign into Research.gov, you must contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday

except federal holidays) to reconcile your accounts. Some issues require more than one business day to resolve. Please do not wait until the July 24th deadline to request NSF account reconciliation.

3. Q: Do proposers submitting CAREER proposals via Grants.gov need to have an organization-approved PI role?

A: Yes. To apply to the CAREER program, a proposer must have an NSF account (NSF ID) in Research.gov and an organization-approved PI role in Research.gov affiliated with an organization registered with NSF. This requirement is also applicable to Grants.gov proposers. Grants.gov proposers must have both an NSF account (NSF ID) **and** a Grants.gov account. In addition, in Grants.gov you must have an "Organization Application Profile."

Proposers who previously submitted a postdoctoral fellowship proposal to NSF in Grants.gov or initially created an "Individual Applicant Profile," as opposed to an "Organizational Application Profile," in their Grants.gov account can inadvertently attempt to apply to the CAREER program as an individual unless their Grants.gov account profile is updated. NSF CAREER proposals cannot be submitted by an individual. Grants.gov proposers should contact Grants.gov to update their Grants.gov account profile as necessary before starting their CAREER proposal to ensure that they are not applying with their "Individual Applicant Profile."

4. Q: If a PI does not remember their NSF ID and their NSF account primary email is from their previous institution and no longer active, can they still access Research.gov?

A: The PI should contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) as soon as possible for assistance to recover their login information and access their NSF account. Please keep in mind that the resolution may require more than one business day, so please do not wait until the July 24th deadline to request a resolution.

5. Can I add a user that is not a PI to work on the proposal?

A: Yes. You can add an individual with an organization-approved Other Authorized User (OAU) role to assist with proposal preparation or you can share the proposal with your Sponsored Projects Office and provide edit access. See the [Adding or Removing an OAU](#) how-to guide and [Sharing Proposal and Proposal File Update/Budget Revision Access with SPO/AOR](#) how-to guide for additional details.

6. Q: Can I use LaTeX to create proposal documents?

A: Yes. Refer to the open-source repository of compliant LaTeX/TeX sample input/output files for LaTeX/TeX users to reference for their own documents available at <https://github.com/nsf-open/nsf-proposal-latex-samples>. Please be aware that the NSF IT Service Desk cannot troubleshoot LaTeX files or conversions from LaTeX files to PDF.

7. Q: Is there a way to check if documents are compliant before uploading them in Research.gov?

A: Yes. The [Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo site](#) can be used to explore preparing proposals **and** to check compliance of uploaded proposal documents (e.g., Collaborators and Other Affiliations and Biographical Sketch). All demo site users are automatically given the PI role for demo site purposes, in order to perform the proposal preparation functions that a PI can do in the actual

system. See the demo site FAQs on the Research.gov [About Proposal Preparation and Submission](#) page for information on demo site access and features.

8. Q: Can I submit a collaborative proposal?

A: There are two types of NSF collaborative proposals, a single proposal (with or without subawards) and a separately submitted collaborative proposal.

For CAREER, a single proposal (with or without subawards) is allowable per solicitation requirements, but separately submitted collaborate proposals from multiple organizations are not allowable per solicitation requirements.

9. Q: Why is the "Prepare New" button in the Prepare New tile grayed out?

A: If the "Prepare New" button is grayed out in the Prepare New tile on the Prepare and Submit Proposals landing page, this means you must add an organization-approved PI role to initiate a new proposal. See the [CAREER proposal submission timeline](#) guidance for details and links to resources. Once the organization's Administrator approves the PI role, it typically takes 30 minutes for the PI role update to be effective in Research.gov. See the [Initiating a New Proposal](#) how-to guide for additional information.

To view your active user roles, access the View My Roles page:

- Open [Research.gov](#)
- Click **Sign In** located at the top right of the screen
- Enter your credentials and click **Sign In**
- Click **My Profile** located at the top right of the screen
- Click **View My Roles** from the left navigation bar

10. Q: Which proposal type should I select in Step 3 (Proposal Type) of the proposal setup wizard?

A: CAREER proposers should select the "Research" proposal type. Do not select another proposal type without discussing with the cognizant NSF Program Officer.

11. Q: I have started my CAREER proposal but have selected an incorrect Division and Program for the CAREER solicitation. How can I update that?

A: After the proposal is created, click on the "Manage Where to Apply" link on the proposal main page. Check the box for "Limit selections to those identified in the funding opportunity" and select a new program. Once selected, use the arrow buttons to move selections up or down in priority or use the delete button to remove unwanted programs. You may find other programs by unselecting the check box for "Limit selections to those identified in the funding opportunity," however, not all of the programs in this list are eligible to be the primary program for CAREER.

12. Q: Can my proposal title be edited after the proposal is set up in the wizard?

A: Yes, the title can be edited at any time before proposal submission or through a proposal file update after proposal submission.

13. Q: Research.gov allows me to enter a proposed duration other than 60 months for my CAREER proposal. Can I choose a proposed duration other than 60 months?

A: As stated in the Faculty Early Career Development Program Solicitation (NSF [22-586](#)), “The Project Description section should contain a well-argued and specific proposal for activities that will, **over a 5-year period**, build a firm foundation for a lifetime of contributions to research and education in the context of the Principal Investigator's organization.” You are strongly encouraged to enter a proposed duration that aligns with the requirements of the solicitation. Proposals that are not compliant with solicitation requirements may be returned without review.

14. Q: Why is there a line spacing warning when I am using a compliant font type and font size?

A: Line spacing warnings will not stop proposal submission. Please see the line spacing FAQs under the [Uploading Documents FAQ topic](#) for more information.

15. Q: Do uploaded Research.gov proposal documents need to be paginated?

A. No, Research.gov will paginate the proposal sections.

16. Q. Can the financials be uploaded using a standard format such as an Excel file rather than typed into individual fields in Research.gov?

A. No. You must enter the information in the Budget proposal section and cannot upload a budget document such as an Excel file. See the [Entering Proposal Budgets](#) how-to guide for additional information.

17. Q. Am I required to use SciENcv to prepare the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support sections of the proposal?

A. Yes, use of SciENcv is mandatory for preparation of the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support proposal sections. See [Documents Required for Senior Personnel](#), PAPPG [Exhibit II.3](#), and PAPPG [Chapter II.D.2.h](#). for policy guidance.

Research.gov and Grants.gov only accept the current version of the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support prepared in SciENcv. Attempting to upload a prior SciENcv version or the NSF fillable PDF will generate a compliance error message preventing proposal submission. The current version of the Biographical Sketch has “SCV Biographical Sketch v.2024-1” in the document footer, and the current version of the Current and Pending (Other) Support has “SCV C&P(O)S v.2024-1” in the document footer.

SciENcv Training Resources:

- [NSF Biographical Sketch video tutorial](#)
- [NSF Current and Pending \(Other\) Support video tutorial](#)
- [SciENcv Help Manual with NSF-specific sections](#) (includes screenshots and step-by-step instructions)

- [Using SciENcv Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- SciENcv Demo (2024 Spring NSF Grants Conference)
- Implementing the Common Forms for the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support ([April 2024 NSF/NIH webinar with SciENcv demo](#))

18. Q: If I have more Collaborators and Other Affiliations (COA) information than the template allows, can I add rows?

A: Yes, you can add rows to the COA template or make the rows taller. However, you cannot make columns wider and doing so will cause data to be lost. Please see the COA FAQ under the [Uploading Documents topic](#) on the Research.gov [About Proposal Preparation and Submission](#) page and the [Adding or Removing Collaborators and Other Affiliations](#) how-to guide for additional COA guidance.

Please be aware that Google Sheets, the spreadsheet application offered by Google, is not supported, and will corrupt the file.

19. Q: On the COA template, what should I put for ongoing collaborations instead of "current" or "ongoing"?

A: Please leave that field blank on the COA template to indicate ongoing collaborations. Entering text or invalid dates in a date field will corrupt the document and cause unsaved data. See the COA FAQ under the [Uploading Documents topic](#) on the Research.gov [About Proposal Preparation and Submission](#) page and the [Adding or Removing Collaborators and Other Affiliations](#) how-to guide for additional COA guidance.

20. Q: How do I submit the Departmental Letter and Letters of Collaboration?

A: Please see the guidance in CAREER solicitation [22-586](#) Section V.A.

Grants.gov proposers will upload this information in one of two ways. Grants.gov proposers can either upload the documents in Research.gov when making post-check validation corrections in Research.gov before resubmitting the proposal in Research.gov or will use the Proposal File Update function in Research.gov to submit this information if the Grants.gov proposal passes all post-check validations. See the [Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov](#) how-to guide and the [Preparing Proposal File Updates](#) how-to guide for additional information

21. Q: I'm trying to upload a Departmental Letter PDF to the Other Supplementary Documents section but I'm receiving a message saying the system has encountered an error. What do I do?

A: Other supplementary documents such as Departmental Letters and Letters of Collaboration may fail the upload validations *OR corrupt the proposal* if the PDF is a **certified signed document or is password protected**. Open the file with any browser and print to "Adobe PDF" (do not print to "Save as PDF"). DocuSign files are also not supported.

22. Q: If I submit my CAREER proposal early, can I submit a proposal update?

A: Yes. Proposal file updates (PFUs) are automatically accepted before the deadline. We encourage proposers to submit in advance of the deadline per the [CAREER proposal submission timeline](#) guidance to resolve any system errors in advance of the deadline and avoid high volume delays at the NSF IT Service Desk. Creating a proposal file update draft does not withdraw or impact the submission status of the original proposal at NSF. However, once the deadline passes, PFU submissions must be accepted or rejected by the Program Officer.

23. Q: How do I update my submitted Research.gov proposal using a PFU?

A: Please see the [How to Initiate and Prepare a Proposal File Update guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

24. Q: I am using Chrome and trying to download the PDF of my proposal but I am encountering an error. What can I do?

A: Individuals who are using Chrome will encounter a networking error when attempting to use the download file functionality. We recommend clicking on the Print icon and "Save as PDF" or using a different browser.

25. Q: How does a proposer check submitted proposal status?

A: Within 24 hours of proposal submission in Research.gov (including proposals submitted via Grants.gov and processed in Research.gov), the proposal will be listed on the Research.gov Proposal Status page. Proposers can access the Proposal Status page using the Proposal Status link under Proposals on the Research.gov homepage after signing in.

If proposers do not see a submitted proposal listed on the Proposal Status page after 24 hours, the proposer should contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 for assistance. The NSF IT Service Desk is available by phone from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM ET Monday - Friday except federal holidays or via email to rgov@nsf.gov.

26. Q: How do I submit the Current and Pending (Other) Support update requested by the NSF Program Officer?

A: The cognizant NSF Program Officer will request that an updated version of Current and Pending (Other) Support be submitted for all senior/key personnel named on the proposal prior to making a funding recommendation. SciENCv will produce an NSF-compliant PDF version which the AOR submits for each individual named as senior/key personnel on the submitted proposal. See the [Preparing Updated Current and Pending \(Other\) Support how-to guide](#) for additional information.

Contacts for Questions:

- For program-specific questions, please contact the Program Officer of the program to which you are interested in applying. Division CAREER contacts are listed at <https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/career/contacts.jsp>. If you need help with programs, please contact the CAREER Coordinating Committee at cc-nsf@nsf.gov.
- For IT system-related questions or technical questions, please contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov.
- For [SciENcv](#) technical questions, please contact the NIH Help Desk (7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. ET; Monday through Friday except for federal holidays) via email at NLMSciencv@mail.nih.gov or create a ticket at <https://support.nlm.nih.gov/support/create-case/>. The NIH Help Desk cannot be reached by telephone.
- Policy-related questions should be directed to policy@nsf.gov.