

REU Site Awards: Guidelines for Use of NSF FastLane Project Reports System

To: **Principal Investigators for REU Site Awards**

From: **The NSF REU Team of Program Directors**

All NSF-funded projects are required to use the FastLane Project Reports System for annual and final reports. To assist you in doing so for your REU Site, we of the NSF REU Team have prepared some simple guidelines. We urge you to use the guidelines so that your reports will provide not only the kind of information needed by NSF, but also will enter that information into the FastLane Project Reports System in ways consistent across the REU program.

The Foundation has revised the Project Reports System to enable the collection of data on REU participants. You are automatically guided through the entry of this data for a given participant after you select as “Participant’s Role in Project” the choice “Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Participant.” A REU participant is one who has received direct compensation from REU grant funds. You should ignore the textbox on this screen concerning how the person participated in the project. That information will be provided in aggregate in the body of the report. You will be asked to provide for each participant:

- Year of schooling completed (freshman, sophomore, junior, pre-college teacher, other)
- Home institution
- Home institution’s highest degree granted in fields supported by NSF (associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, doctoral degree)
- Year during which this REU participant was supported

NSF also requests **demographic information** (gender, ethnicity, race, disability status, and citizenship) from each participant. There are two approaches to providing such information: (1) the individual participant enters the data directly, or (2) if it is impractical to get the individual to enter the information directly, you may enter the information yourself for that person. To request direct entry by the individual, you may either send a standardized e-mail message that contains instructions and a temporary PIN for the FastLane system, or you may print the message and give it to the individual. Alternatively, you may enter the demographic information yourself.

It is essential that NSF have good data on those students being served by the REU program.

In addition to *Participants*, other report categories are *Activities and Findings*, *Products*, and *Contributions*. NSF will rely heavily in its reporting on information you provide in the *Contributions* category. You might wish to formulate your ideas on contributions before entering the factual-type information requested under *Activities and Findings*. However, the guidance offered below uses the order of topics in the Project Reports System.

Activities and Findings -- Activities: Do not use this text box for REU-specific material.

Activities and Findings – Findings: Give specific examples of major research findings by an REU student, i.e. special research nuggets, if any.

Activities and Findings – Training and Development: This is the primary text box for factual information about an REU Site. Such information might include:

- Project title and research supervisor of each NSF-supported participant;
- Recruitment and selection process, with comments on problems and successes, particularly regarding efforts toward diversity;
- Number of applicants from host institution and from outside;
- Adjunct activities for students such as tutorials on special skills, orientation to graduate school and career options, opportunities for presentation of research work, participation in professional meetings, etc;
- Level of stipend paid and other expenses compensated;

Activities and Findings – Outreach Activities: Describe outreach, if any, to pre-college students, schools, other institutions, or the public.

Products: Enter publications with REU student co-authors and place an asterisk after the last name of the REU student. Enter also publications in which REU students are acknowledged and place an asterisk by the name of the mentor.

Contributions within Discipline: Do not use this text box for REU-specific material.

Contributions to other Disciplines: Use this category to report on any NSF-funded **Ethics Component**. Describe the offering, with emphasis on how the students participated. Provide insights on how well the goals of the Ethics Component were achieved.

Contributions to Human Resource Development: The material requested in this section is very important to NSF's assessment of progress toward the goal of a diverse, internationally-competitive, and globally-engaged workforce. Your thoughtful comments on the topics below will be most appreciated.

- Success in meeting your project goals and resulting value of that success;
- Highlights of student research accomplishments and important skills gained;
- Outcome of any international dimensions of the project;
- Impact of mentoring and interactions among REU students and faculty/postdocs/graduate students/other professionals;
- Impact of the REU experience on career choices;
- Other findings from formal evaluation of the project.

Contributions to Resources for Research and Education: Do not use this text box for REU-specific material.

Contributions beyond Science and Engineering: Use this category to report on any participation by pre-college teachers, such as funded through **Research Experiences for Teachers**. Describe the experience offered and assess its value as a professional development activity. Discuss the intended impact on the teacher's classroom activities and how the impact will be promoted and sustained.