National Science Foundation
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Meeting NSF's Technical Reporting Requirements

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The National Science Foundation has a new project reporting system
As of March 18, 2013, PIs must use Research.gov to meet all NSF project reporting requirements, including submission of annual, final, and project outcomes reports.

What is Required?
NSF requires that all Principal Investigators (PIs) submit annual reports during the course of an award and a final report within 90 days after the expiration of an award. Each report is reviewed by the award's managing Program Officer; only after the Program Officer has reviewed and approved the report has the requirement been met.

NSF also requires that PIs submit a non-technical, Project Outcomes Report (POR), for the general public in Research.gov within 90 days after the expiration of an award. This report is submitted and posted on the Research.gov website exactly as submitted, without review by a Program Officer. Its intended audience includes the general public, journalists, Congress and its staffers.

When is a Report "due"? When is a Report "overdue?"
The annual report is due *within* the 90 day period *before* the end of the current budget period for the award; it is overdue the day after that 90 day period ends. The final report is due *within* the 90 days *following* the award's expiration; it is overdue after that 90 day period ends. The POR follows the same policies governing Final Reports. Overdue reports will prevent the release of continuing grant increments (CGI) or the awarding of additional funding to the PI and *all* co-PIs listed on the award that has the overdue report.

What is an Interim Report?
An interim report may be submitted at any time during the life of the award to update NSF on what the grant has accomplished. Interim reports do not fulfill the reporting requirements, and most grantees do not need to submit them. If you have a "continuing grant," with increments released annually, an interim report **will not** release the next increment. For that, you must submit your annual report and have it approved by the managing Program Officer.

Does a "no cost extension" affect the reporting requirements?
A "no cost extension" adds time to an award, but does not relieve the awardee of reporting requirements. Annual reports are still due every 12 months. When the award finally does expire, the final report and project outcomes report are both due within 90 days.

How do I know what to put in my Report?
The Project Reporting module in Research.gov can be accessed only by the PI and co-PIs of an award. The module is organized with tabs for each of the components of your report: Accomplishments,

Products, Participants, Impact, Changes/Problems, and Special Requirements. The template also allows you to attach PDF documents for images, charts and other supplemental materials; PDF attachments are *not permitted* for the narrative content of the report. A "Getting Started Guide" for creating (and editing) annual and final reports is available at:
http://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/ProjectReportGettingStartedGuide_general.pdf. (The reporting module can also be used to submit interim reports.)

PIs should enter reporting details under each of the tabs in the Report Content section of the module. Under the Accomplishments tab you will be prompted to enter information about your project (including project goals, major activities, specific objectives, significant results, and key outcomes). For each publication that you list in the Products section, you must indicate whether you acknowledged NSF support in the product and whether it was peer reviewed. (Do not include publications that are outside the scope of NSF's support for the project.) Your report should discuss your broader impact activities such as outreach and mentoring under the Impacts tab. Program Officers will also check the Changes/Problems section to see if you discussed deviations from the original research plan and how you handled any issues that arose with human subjects or vertebrate animals.

The Project Outcomes Report serves as a brief summary (200-800 words), prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report should describe the project outcomes or findings that address the intellectual merit and broader impacts of the work as defined in the NSF merit review criteria. The POR should also contain information about products that have resulted from the award such as collections, data sets, software and educational materials. However, the POR does not need to include a list of publications resulting from the award because NSF automatically imports the citations that you provided as part of your annual and final project reports into Research.gov's Research Spending and Results.

What if my project was funded as part of a Collaborative?
Some projects are funded as multi-institutional Collaborative proposals, with awards made to the separate institutions. The PI at each institution must submit independent annual and final reports. These may be coordinated and share common text where appropriate (such as in the Accomplishments section), but they also should identify participants, activities, and findings unique to each PI's part of the NSF supported research.

What if my project was funded as a CAREER award?
The CAREER Program is committed to promoting the role of teacher-scholars. As stated in the program solicitation under Reporting Requirements, the annual and final reports must summarize progress in *both* research and education, and indicate how well these activities are being integrated and assessed. You should include this information under the Special Reporting Requirements tab.

What if my award was for a workshop?
The PI is responsible for the report. The Accomplishments section should include: (1) a description of participant selection; (2) a list of persons for whom travel funds were provided (including institutional affiliation and sum awarded); and (3) information about the meeting-including attendance, total number of U.S. participants, and other countries represented, highlights of the program and its outcomes and products.

What if I have other questions?
The *Award and Administration Guide* (Ch. II: Grant Administration) has more details on reporting requirements (http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag). Frequently asked questions about the project outcomes report for the general public can be found on the Policy Office website (http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=porfaqs). Workshop reporting requirements are described in FL 26 (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/fl26/fl26_113.pdf). And, as always, you are encouraged to contact your Program Officer.