

Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (MSPRF)

PROGRAM SOLICITATION NSF 12-496

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S): NSF 11-541



National Science Foundation

Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences
Division of Mathematical Sciences

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

October 17, 2012

Third Wednesday in October, Annually Thereafter

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

A revised version of the **NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide** (PAPPG), [NSF 13-1](#), was issued on October 4, 2012 and is effective for proposals submitted, or due, on or after January 14, 2013. Please be advised that the guidelines contained in [NSF 13-1](#) apply to proposals submitted in response to this funding opportunity. Proposers who opt to submit prior to January 14, 2013, must also follow the guidelines contained in [NSF 13-1](#).

Please be aware that significant changes have been made to the PAPPG to implement revised merit review criteria based on the National Science Board (NSB) report, [National Science Foundation's Merit Review Criteria: Review and Revisions](#). While the two merit review criteria remain unchanged (Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts), guidance has been provided to clarify and improve the function of the criteria. Changes will affect the project summary and project description sections of proposals. Annual and final reports also will be affected.

A by-chapter summary of this and other significant changes is provided at the beginning of both the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) and the [Award & Administration Guide](#).

Please note that this program solicitation may contain supplemental proposal preparation guidance and/or guidance that deviates from the guidelines established in the [Grant Proposal Guide](#).

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Information

Program Title:

Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (MSPRF)

Synopsis of Program:

The purpose of the Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (MSPRF) is to support future leaders in mathematics and statistics by facilitating their participation in postdoctoral research environments that will have maximal impact on their future scientific development. There are two options for awardees: Research Fellowship and Research Instructorship. Awards will support research in areas of mathematics and statistics, including applications to other disciplines.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

- Bruce P. Palka, Program Director, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-4856, email: bpalka@nsf.gov
- Ricardo Castano-Bernard, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-4852, email: rcastano@nsf.gov
- Victor Roytburd, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-8584, email: vroytbur@nsf.gov
- Eric Sommers, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-2279, email: esommers@nsf.gov

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Fellowship

Estimated Number of Awards: 30 to 33

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$5,000,000 subject to availability of funds

Eligibility Information

Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- The Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are awards to individuals, and applications are submitted directly by the applicant to the NSF. Fellows must affiliate with institutions or organizations (e.g., colleges and universities, government and national laboratories and facilities, privately sponsored nonprofit institutes and museums, and for-profit organizations under certain conditions). Applications with international host institution affiliations are eligible for support, and additional funding from the Office of International Science and Engineering may be available for awards with international host institutions.

PI Limit:

An individual is eligible to submit a proposal to this program if all the following criteria are met:

- Must, at the time of submission, be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or a legally admitted permanent resident alien of the United States;
- May not have held the doctoral degree more than 2 years as of January 1 of the year of the award;
- Must propose research in an area of mathematics or statistics;
- May not have previously received a Federal research grant;
- May not submit a research plan duplicated in another NSF proposal;
- Must not have previously been offered an award by the MSPRF program; and
- Must have doctoral degree conferred before the postdoctoral appointment start date.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

None Specified

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI:

One application per person per year.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- Letters of Intent: Not Applicable
- Preliminary Proposal Submission: Not Applicable
- Full Proposal Preparation Instructions: This solicitation contains information that deviates from the standard NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Part I: Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

B. Budgetary Information

- Cost Sharing Requirements: Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.
- Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations: Not Applicable
- Other Budgetary Limitations: Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

C. Due Dates

- Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

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Proposal Review Information Criteria

Merit Review Criteria: National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

Award Administration Information

Award Conditions: Additional award conditions apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

Reporting Requirements: Additional reporting requirements apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

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I. INTRODUCTION

As researchers in the mathematical sciences expand their interactions with other disciplines, and as the interplay increases between the various areas of mathematics and statistics, opportunities for postdoctoral research and training become increasingly important. Postdoctoral fellowships are designed to provide increased flexibility for awardees in choosing research environments that will have maximal impact on their future scientific development. Awards of these fellowships will support research in areas of mathematics and statistics, including applications to other disciplines. The proposed research must be in an area of mathematics and statistics.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (MSPRF) is to provide increased flexibility for Fellows in choosing postdoctoral research environments that will have maximal impact on their future scientific development.

The Fellows will have two options for receipt of a stipend:

The Research Fellowship option provides full-time support for any eighteen academic-year months in a three-year period, in intervals not shorter than three consecutive months.

The Research Instructorship option provides a combination of full-time and half-time support over a period of three academic years, usually one academic year full-time and two academic years half time.

Under both options, the award includes six summer months; however, no more than two summer months of support may be received in any calendar year.

Under both options, the stipend support for 24 months (18 academic-year months plus 6 summer months) will be provided within the 48-month duration of the award.

III. AWARD INFORMATION

NSF expects to award approximately 30-33 Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Fellowships per year, from a budget of approximately \$5 million per year, depending on the quality of submissions and the availability of funds. Fellowship awards are for a total of \$150,000, with a possible additional allowance of up to \$20,000 for awards with international host institutions. The anticipated date of awards is April in the year following the application deadline. The stipend support for 24 months (18 academic-year months plus 6 summer months) will be provided within the 48-month duration of the award.

DURATION/TENURE AND STIPEND/ALLOWANCES

A. Duration and Tenure

The Fellow may choose to exercise the Research Instructorship option either in the original application or any time before beginning the postdoctoral appointment; however, the choice of institution and sponsoring scientist must be approved in advance by the cognizant NSF Program Director.

Each applicant must apply for a total of either two academic years of full-time support, or for one academic year of full-time and two academic years of half-time support. The appointment period also includes three two-month summer periods, which generally will immediately precede or immediately follow an academic year of support. The postdoctoral appointment must start between June 1 and October 1 of the year of the award. The doctoral degree must be conferred before the start date of the appointment.

Within the 48-month fellowship period, up to two months may be used for paid leave, including parental or family leave. The two months of paid leave cannot be used to increase the level of NSF support.

Fellowships may not be renewed.

B. Stipend and Allowances

The total Fellowship amount is \$150,000 and consists of three separate types of payments.

(1) A monthly stipend of \$5,000 for full-time support or \$2,500 for half-time support is paid directly to the Fellow as an electronic funds transfer into a personal account at a financial institution.

(2) A research allowance of \$12,000 is paid as a lump sum to the Fellow in the same manner for expenses directly related to the conduct of the research, such as materials and supplies, subscription fees and recovery costs for databases, travel, and publication expenses. The Fellow should keep records to document the expenditures.

(3) An annual benefit allowance of \$9,000, paid in the first two years of the award, in support of fringe benefits, including health insurance provided through either a group plan offered by the host organization or an individual plan secured by the Fellow, dental and/or vision insurance, disability insurance, retirement, dependent care, and moving expenses.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- The Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are awards to individuals, and applications are submitted directly by the applicant to the NSF. Fellows must affiliate with institutions or organizations (e.g., colleges and universities, government and national laboratories and facilities, privately sponsored nonprofit institutes and museums, and for-profit organizations under certain conditions). Applications with international host institution affiliations are eligible for support, and additional funding from the Office of International Science and Engineering may be available for awards with international host institutions.

PI Limit:

An individual is eligible to submit a proposal to this program if all the following criteria are met:

- Must, at the time of submission, be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or a legally admitted permanent resident alien of the United States;
- May not have held the doctoral degree more than 2 years as of January 1 of the year of the award;
- Must propose research in an area of mathematics or statistics;
- May not have previously received a Federal research grant;
- May not submit a research plan duplicated in another NSF proposal;
- Must not have previously been offered an award by the MSPRF program; and
- Must have doctoral degree conferred before the postdoctoral appointment start date.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

None Specified

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI:

One application per person per year.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Full Proposal Instructions: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the guidelines specified in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg. Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-PUBS (7827) or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

Application Preparation Instructions for Fellowships (same for either Fellowship option)

Mathematical Sciences Research Fellowship Program applications must be submitted electronically using the NSF FastLane system. Only one application is permitted per person. An application consists of many parts, and requires input from the applicant, the sponsoring scientist(s), and the references. Applicants are advised to begin the application well in advance of the deadline and to submit as early as possible. FastLane procedures allow applicants to save partially completed proposals for future completion and submission. FastLane does not permit the submission of incomplete or late applications.

FastLane Registration for Fellowship Applicants

Before starting an application in FastLane, an applicant must register as an Individual Researcher. This means that the applicant functions as his or her own institution, and the application must be submitted in FastLane by the applicant, not by the applicant's institutional Sponsored Research Office (SRO). This also means that the applicant serves as his or her own SRO for purposes of any research administration functions in FastLane. To register, access <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>. Select *Postdoctoral Fellowships and Other Programs*. Select **GO** next to Individual Registration. Fill in all the required fields. Select **Submit**. As soon as you select **Approve** on the next screen, your password will be activated. There is no need for you to mail, FAX, and email a signed copy of the registration to NSF.

FastLane Instructions for Fellowship Applicants

Detailed instructions for completing a *Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowship* application are available by accessing the [FastLane](https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov) homepage and clicking on the link for Postdoctoral Fellowships and Other Programs. Under "Who Are You?" click on Applicant. Select "Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships." Click on "How to Apply." From this web location, applicants and authors of reference letters may provide their components of the application by following the links identified by their authorship status. Please keep in mind that the applicant must obtain the required documents from the sponsoring scientists' and upload them as Supplementary Documentation.

A complete postdoctoral fellowship application consists of the following (Note: *The entire application, with the exception of the letters of reference, must be submitted by the fellowship applicant in FastLane*):

- NSF cover page;
- FastLane application forms;
- Project Summary (1 page limit);
- Project Description (3 to 5 pages) which addresses what the applicant hopes to accomplish during the fellowship period and how it relates to her/his career goals. The Project Description consists of:
 - an introduction or background section;
 - a statement of research objectives, methods, and significance;
 - an explanation of how the fellowship activities will enhance the applicant's career development; and
 - a justification of the choice of sponsoring scientists and host institutions.
- Biographical Sketch (2 page limit);
- Supplementary Documentation consisting of:
 - The sponsoring scientist statement. The statement should indicate both expected availability for consultation during the requested tenure period and agreement to work with the Fellow. In particular, this statement should include a discussion of the role that the sponsoring scientist will play in the professional development of the applicant and of the opportunities for training and research at the host institution that will be of particular benefit to the applicant. It should also describe the appropriateness of the match between the sponsoring scientist and the Fellow. The sponsoring scientist's statement should provide only the information requested above and should NOT be a letter of recommendation. FastLane submission of the sponsoring scientist statement is required.
 - Data management plan. *All* applications *must* include a supplementary document of no more than two pages labeled "Data Management Plan." Describe plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, or assert the absence of the need for such plans.
- Three or four letters of reference (one from the doctoral advisor and others from scientists who know the applicant well). FastLane submission of the reference letters is required. The sponsoring scientist is not allowed to serve as a letter-of-reference writer, unless that person is also the applicant's doctoral advisor.

FastLane Instructions for Sponsoring Scientists

The applicant will upload both the sponsoring scientist statement and the Information Sheet into the application. Either mail, e-mail or FAX the documents to the applicant. A copy of the Information Sheet can be found on FastLane <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov> under Postdoctoral Fellowships. Under "Who Are You?" click on Sponsoring Scientist. Select "Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowships." Click on "How to Prepare Statement."

FastLane Instructions for Authors of Reference Letters

To prepare and submit the reference letters, the authors must receive from the applicant the applicant's Temporary Proposal Number and a password. The Temporary Proposal Number is used to provide secure access to the FastLane application for preparing and submitting the reference letters. Access is limited to only those to whom the applicant gives the Temporary Proposal Number. This number links the reference to the application. Access FastLane (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>). Click on Postdoctoral Fellowships hyperlink. Under "Who Are You?" click on "Letter of Reference Writer." Click the "GO" button for Letter of Reference Preparation/Submission. Click on the "Prepare New Letter of Reference" hyperlink. Enter the applicant's Temporary Proposal Number, your last name, and your password, then provide the requested Reference Letter.

More detailed information about the FastLane Application Package Preparation and Submission is available on FastLane <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>. Click on Postdoctoral Fellowships. Questions may also be directed by e-mail to dmsfl@nsf.gov or fastlane@nsf.gov.

Proposers are reminded to identify the program solicitation number NSF 12-496 in the program solicitation block on the NSF Cover Sheet For Proposal to the National Science Foundation. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing: Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited

Other Budgetary Limitations: The fellowship application does not require an itemized budget.

C. Due Dates

- Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time):

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D. FastLane Requirements

Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this program solicitation through use of the NSF FastLane system. Detailed instructions regarding the technical aspects of proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail fastlane@nsf.gov. The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>.

VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program for acknowledgement and, if they meet NSF requirements, for review. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF either as *ad hoc* reviewers, panelists, or both, who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal. In addition, Program Officers may obtain comments from site visits before recommending final action on proposals. Senior NSF staff further review recommendations for awards. A flowchart that depicts the entire NSF proposal and award process (and associated timeline) is included in the GPG as [Exhibit III-1](#).

A comprehensive description of the Foundation's merit review process is available on the NSF website at: http://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/.

Proposers should also be aware of core strategies that are essential to the fulfillment of NSF's mission, as articulated in *Empowering the Nation Through Discovery and Innovation: NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2011-2016*. These strategies are integrated in the program planning and implementation process, of which proposal review is one part. NSF's mission is particularly well-implemented through the integration of research and education and broadening participation in NSF programs, projects, and activities.

One of the core strategies in support of NSF's mission is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students, and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the variety of learning perspectives.

Another core strategy in support of NSF's mission is broadening opportunities and expanding participation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines, which is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria

The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes." NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.

1. Merit Review Principles

These principles are to be given due diligence by PIs and organizations when preparing proposals and managing projects, by reviewers when reading and evaluating proposals, and by NSF program staff when determining whether or not to recommend proposals for funding and while overseeing awards. Given that NSF is the primary federal agency charged with nurturing and supporting excellence in basic research and education, the following three principles apply:

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals. These "Broader Impacts" may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified.

Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects. If the size of the activity is limited, evaluation of that activity in isolation is not likely to be meaningful. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these activities may best be done at a higher, more aggregated, level than the individual project.

With respect to the third principle, even if assessment of Broader Impacts outcomes for particular projects is done at an aggregated level, PIs are expected to be accountable for carrying out the activities described in the funded project. Thus, individual projects should include clearly stated goals, specific descriptions of the activities that the PI intends to do, and a plan in place to document the outputs of those activities.

These three merit review principles provide the basis for the merit review criteria, as well as a context within which the users of the criteria can better understand their intent.

2. Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board approved merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. Both criteria are to be given full consideration during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria. ([GPG Chapter II.C.2.d.i.](#) contains additional information for use by proposers in development of the Project Description section of the proposal.) Reviewers are strongly encouraged to review the criteria, including [GPG Chapter II.C.2.d.i.](#), prior to the review of a proposal.

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- Intellectual Merit: The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- Broader Impacts: The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to
 - a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
 - b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Proposers are reminded that reviewers will also be asked to review the Data Management Plan and the Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan, as appropriate.

Additional Evaluation and Selection of Fellows

The evaluation of applicants will be based on ability and potential as evidenced by past research and the reference letters; suitability and availability of the sponsoring scientist and other colleagues, as well as other conditions at the proposed host institution such as adequate space, basic services, and supplies; likely impact of the sponsoring scientist and the host institution on the scientific development of the applicant; scientific quality of the research likely to emerge; and the potential of the applicant's contributions to the Foundation's education and human resource goals. Applications will be evaluated by a panel of mathematical scientists. The panel will be advised to take into consideration NSF's goal to broaden participation.

The selection of Fellows will be made by the National Science Foundation, and applicants may expect to be notified by e-mail in late January or early February.

No written reviews are generated during the review process for this program, so the Fellow will not receive copies of reviews for proposals submitted to this program solicitation.

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

A summary rating will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. The proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award notice, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget; (3) the application referenced in the award notice; (4) the applicable award conditions and (5) any NSF funding opportunity or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award notice. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically via e-mail.

Special Award Conditions: All awards are made subject to the general provisions in the brochure entitled *Information for Mathematical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellows*, which will be mailed to successful applicants. The information contained in the brochure is summarized below.

All arrangements for affiliation with the chosen fellowship institution(s) are the responsibility of the Fellow.

If the Research Fellowship option is chosen, Fellows will be expected to devote full time to appropriate scientific research during the appointment period of the fellowship, and to pursue the program for which the fellowship was awarded. Institutions may supplement fellowship stipends without prior approval from the Foundation provided that such is done in accordance with established institutional policies. Supplementation may be given only if there is no requirement for duties in addition to normal fellowship activities, and may involve teaching only to the extent of conducting or participating in seminars directly related to the fellowship activities and research program.

If the Fellow chooses the Research Instructorship option, Fellows will be expected to devote half time to appropriate scientific research during the appointment period of the fellowship. The institution at which the Fellow plans to hold the Instructorship must agree to provide a half-time position with a teaching load not to exceed the equivalent of three teaching hours per semester for the academic year period during which half-time NSF support is received. This agreement need not be obtained until after the awards are announced; lack of such an agreement at the time of the application will not adversely affect the evaluation.

For either the Research Fellowship or the Research Instructorship option, the host institution's faculty should have competence in the Fellow's research area, and a member of the institution's faculty must agree to serve in the role of sponsoring scientist.

Changes in the host institution will be approved only under extremely unusual and compelling circumstances. Since the likely impact of both the sponsoring scientist and the host institution on the professional development of the applicant is an important factor in the evaluation process, the selection of these will normally be viewed as a commitment on the part of the applicant to fulfill the plan for research as outlined in the application. Securing a position at an institution other than the proposed host institution is not considered an "extremely unusual and compelling circumstance."

Under certain circumstances it might be desirable for portions of the work to be done at foreign institutions. Approval to do so must be obtained in advance from both the sponsoring scientist and the cognizant NSF program officer.

In exceptional circumstances, applications for less than full-time postdoctoral support, with reduced stipends, will be considered. Requests for such must be made in the original application, and applicants must agree to accept remuneration from no other source while on a part-time appointment. Major changes in the plan of scientific research, in the appointment period, or in fellowship institution require prior Foundation approval. After an award is made, the dollar amount and length of the appointment are not subject to increase except as indicated above.

In the context of the brochure's guidelines, funds that the institution has obtained from external (including federal) sources may be considered as institutional funds. NSF awards may be used for supplementation of stipends in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 per year.

C. Reporting Requirements

Within 90 days after expiration of the fellowship, the Fellow is required to submit a project outcomes report for the general public. Failure to provide the project outcomes report will delay NSF review and processing of any pending proposals for the Fellow.

The project outcomes report must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the Fellow.

Within 90 days after termination of the fellowship, the Fellow is required to submit both a termination certificate and a final report. The termination certificate will be provided to the Fellow by NSF. No additional annual reports will be required.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Please note that the program contact information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Bruce P. Palka, Program Director, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-4856, email: bpalka@nsf.gov
- Ricardo Castano-Bernard, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-4852, email: rcastano@nsf.gov
- Victor Roytburd, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-8584, email: vroytbur@nsf.gov
- Eric Sommers, 1025 N, telephone: (703) 292-2279, email: esommers@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: fastlane@nsf.gov.

IX. OTHER INFORMATION

The NSF website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, "My NSF" is an information-delivery system designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF [Grants Conferences](#). Subscribers are informed through e-mail or the user's Web browser each time new publications are issued that match their identified interests. "My NSF" also is available on NSF's website at <http://www.nsf.gov/mynsf/>.

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this new mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <http://www.grants.gov>.

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The National Science Foundation Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

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- For General Information (NSF Information Center): (703) 292-5111
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Suzanne H. Plimpton
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