NSF Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support Fillable PDF Document FAQs

Updated September 27, 2021

Proposers are <u>required</u> to use the updated version of the NSF-approved formats in accordance with *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) ([NSF 22-1](#)) for submission of the biographical sketch and current and pending support for proposals <u>submitted or due on or after October 4, 2021</u>.

Biographical Sketch PDF FAQs

1. **Where can I access the NSF-approved fillable PDF format for the biographical sketch?**

   The NSF-approved fillable PDF format for the biographical sketch is available at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp.

2. **I have noticed that the font sizes in the NSF fillable PDF do not appear to be in compliance with the font requirements set forth in the PAPPG. Should I be concerned that my proposal will not be accepted by NSF?**

   The NSF-approved formats available on https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp will be accepted by NSF systems. Identified font sizing updates will be addressed in a future enhancement to this form.

3. **How do I determine the NSF-approved biographical sketch fillable PDF version?**

   The NSF-approved formats for biographical sketch are available at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp. The 20-1 version is for proposals due prior to October 4, 2021. The 22-1 version is for proposals submitted or due on or after October 4, 2021.

   - Right click anywhere in the NSF fillable PDF document and select Document Properties.

   - **PAPPG 22-1 Version of Biographical Sketch:**

     o has the title "NSF Biosketch 22-1"

     o has "Effective 10/04/2021" in the title line on the first page

     o may be up to three pages

   - **PAPPG 20-1 Version of Biographical Sketch:**

     o has the title "NSF Biosketch 20-1"

     o has "Revised 05/01/2020" in the title line on the first page

o   may be up to two pages

4. **Can the 20-1 version of the NSF-approved biographical sketch fillable PDF be uploaded in Research.gov, FastLane, or Grants.gov on or after October 4, 2021?**

No. If you attempt to upload the 20-1 version in the systems on or after October 4th, you will receive a compliance error message preventing you from uploading the document. Only 22-1 versions may be submitted on or after October 4th.

5. **When adding content to the biographical sketch NSF-fillable PDF, some of the text exceeds the field length or allowable space provided. How should I proceed?**

Investigators need to edit or streamline their content, particularly when copying and pasting it to populate the fillable PDF form, to fit in the space provided and comply with NSF PAPPG formatting requirements. NSF recommends proposers download and save the blank form and then populate content, since populating content directly in a web browser (e.g., Chrome or Safari) may result in formatting inconsistencies. The completed and saved PDF form can then be uploaded as a proposal document via Research.gov, FastLane, or Grants.gov.

6. **I am preparing my document using Apple Preview and see formatting issues. How should I proceed?**

Investigators may encounter issues when using Apple Preview when copying and pasting content that exceeds the available space in the form. Investigators need to edit or streamline their content, particularly when copying and pasting it to populate the fillable PDF form, to fit in the space provided and comply with NSF PAPPG formatting requirements.

7. **I am attempting to upload a biographical sketch NSF-fillable PDF, and I am receiving an error stating that my document is not in an NSF-approved format. How should I proceed?**

If you populated the NSF-fillable PDF form directly in a web browser (e.g., Chrome or Safari) and selected the "Save to PDF" or "Print to PDF" function from that web browser, this could cause the data that NSF systems use to validate the NSF-approved format to become corrupted, resulting in errors when investigators attempt to upload the PDF document to NSF systems. NSF recommends proposers download and save the blank form and then populate content, since populating content directly in a web browser may result in formatting inconsistencies. The completed and saved PDF form can then be uploaded as a proposal document via Research.gov, FastLane, or Grants.gov.

8. **I need guidance on what information I must provide when completing my biographical sketch. Where can I get more details?**

Detailed policy information about the content is available in PAPPG, Chapter II.C.2.f. Please also refer to the guidance on the biographical sketch page. A table entitled, NSF Pre-award and Post-award Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support, has been developed to provide helpful reference information regarding pre-award and post-award disclosure information in the biographical sketch and current and pending support proposal sections. The table identifies where these disclosures must be provided in proposals as well as in project reports.

9. **I do not have enough space to provide complete product citations in the space provided. How should I proceed?**

   The PAPPG requires that publication citations "include full citation information, including (where applicable and practicable) the names of all authors..." Senior personnel who wish to include publications in the products section of the biographical sketch that include multiple authors may, at their discretion, choose to list one or more of the authors and then "et al." in lieu of including the complete listing of authors' names. See the PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.f(i)(c) for complete information.

10. **I do not have enough space to complete the synergistic activities section in the space provided. How should I proceed?**

    Listed synergistic activities should be specific and must not include multiple examples to further describe the activity. See the PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.f(i)(d) for complete information.

11. **Will non-compliant biographical sketch documents receive an error message in Research.gov, FastLane, and Grants.gov?**

    Yes. Biographical sketch documents are tagged with identifiers indicating they were prepared using the current version of an NSF-approved format. Biographical sketch documents not uploaded in an NSF-approved format trigger a compliance error message that will prevent document upload in Research.gov, FastLane, and Grants.gov.

12. **Where can I provide feedback on the NSF-approved PDF formats for the biographical sketch?**

    Feedback can be submitted via Research.gov using the https://www.research.gov/research-web/feedback tool. Under site area, select "Biographical Sketch."

    For immediate response about technical issues or IT system-related questions regarding the NSF fillable PDF formats, please contact the NSF Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via fastlane@nsf.gov.

13. **Who do I contact if I have questions?**

    Policy-related questions should be directed to policy@nsf.gov. If you have technical or IT system-related questions regarding the NSF fillable PDF formats, please contact the NSF Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via fastlane@nsf.gov.

Current and Pending Support PDF FAQs

14. **Where can I access the NSF-approved fillable PDF format for current and pending support?**

    The NSF-approved fillable PDF format for current and pending support is available at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp.

15. I have noticed that the font sizes in the NSF fillable PDF do not appear to be in compliance with the font requirements set forth in the PAPPG. Should I be concerned that my proposal will not be accepted by NSF?

The NSF-approved formats available on https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp will be accepted by NSF systems. Identified font sizing updates will be addressed in a future enhancement of this form.

16. How do I determine the NSF-approved current and pending support fillable PDF version?

The NSF-approved formats for current and pending support are available at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp. The 20-1 version is for proposals due prior to October 4, 2021. The 22-1 version is for proposals submitted or due on or after October 4, 2021.

Right click anywhere in the NSF fillable PDF document and select Document Properties.

- **PAPPG 22-1 Version of Current and Pending Support:**

    o has the title "NSF CPS 22-1"

    o has "Effective 10/04/2021" in the title line on the first page

    o is 27 pages

- **PAPPG 20-1 Version of Current and Pending Support:**

    o has the title "NSF CPS 20-1"

    o has " Revised 05/01/2020" in the title line on the first page

    o is 15 pages

17. Can the 20-1 version of the NSF-approved current and pending support fillable PDF be uploaded in Research.gov, FastLane, or Grants.gov on or after October 4, 2021?

No. Research.gov, FastLane, and Grants.gov will ONLY accept the 20-1 versions before October 4th and ONLY the 22-1 versions on or after October 4th. If you attempt to upload the 20-1 version in the systems on or after October 4th, you will receive a compliance error message preventing you from uploading the document.

18. When adding content to the current and pending support NSF-fillable PDF, some of the text exceeds field length or allowable space provided. How should I proceed?

Investigators need to edit or streamline their content, particularly when copying and pasting it to populate the fillable PDF form, to fit in the space provided and comply with NSF PAPPG formatting requirements. NSF recommends proposers download and save the blank form and then populate content, since populating content directly in a web browser (e.g., Chrome or Safari) may result in formatting inconsistencies. The

completed and saved PDF form can then be uploaded as a proposal document via Research.gov, FastLane, or Grants.gov.

19. I am preparing my document using Apple Preview and see formatting issues. How should I proceed?

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20. I am attempting to upload a current and pending support NSF-fillable PDF, and I am receiving an error stating that my document is not in an NSF-approved format. How should I proceed?

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21. I need guidance on what information I should provide when completing my current and pending support documentation. Where can I get more details?

Detailed information about the content is available in the PAPPG Chapter, II.C.2.h. Please also refer to the guidance on the current and pending support page. A table entitled, NSF Pre-award and Post-award Disclosures Relating to the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support, has been developed to provide helpful reference information regarding pre-award and post-award disclosure information in the biographical sketch and current and pending support proposal sections. The table identifies where these disclosures must be provided in proposals as well as in project reports. A set of frequently asked questions related to current and pending support also is available.

22. In lieu of an NSF-approved format, may I use a Word, PDF, or other document I have already created that provides the current and pending support information?

No, you must use an NSF-approved format to submit current and pending support information. The NSF-approved formats include sections for the information required for NSF to assess the capacity of the individual to carry out the research as proposed as well as to help assess any potential overlap/duplication with the project being proposed.

23. **I have fewer than 15 projects/proposals to include in the NSF fillable format. Is it permissible to delete some of the blank pages to reduce the overall size of my current and pending support document?**

No, you should not remove any blank pages from the current and pending support fillable PDF before uploading it to Research.gov, FastLane, or Grants.gov.

As of August 30, 2021, current and pending Support fillable PDFs uploaded in FastLane and Grants.gov are trimmed of any pages which do not contain data entered by users (i.e., blank pages). The trimming service is triggered in FastLane at document upload and in Grants.gov at proposal submission.

The same trimming functionality will be integrated upon document upload in Research.gov on October 4, 2021, for proposals and project reports. The trimming service only applies to the NSF-approved Current and Pending Support PDFs and **not** to any other uploaded PDFs. When viewing the updated PDF after completion of the system trimming process, pages with data entered will remain, and pages are not re-numbered if any blank pages were removed. NSF Program Officers are aware of this potential occurrence in proposals submitted to NSF.

Note that SciENcv offers users more flexibility in preparing current and pending support. The PDF document generated by SciENcv will not include blank pages.

24. **I need more than 15 project/proposal or 10 in-kind contribution entries. How should I proceed?**

The NSF fillable format allows for a maximum of 15 projects/proposals to be reported on current and pending support. If you need to report more than 15, please use the [SciENcv](#) format where you can report an unlimited number of projects/proposals and/or in-kind contributions.

25. **In the current and pending support form, I am unable to enter "0" as a value in the Person-Months Committed field for one of my entries. How should I proceed?**

Individuals should only include projects to which they are committing time/person-months. Please remove this entry from your current and pending support documentation and re-generate your PDF document so your proposal contains the accurate support information. For additional information, see the NSF-issued set of [FAQs on Current and Pending Support](#).

26. **Will non-compliant current and pending support documents receive an error message in FastLane, Research.gov, and Grants.gov?**

Yes. Current and pending support documents are tagged with identifiers indicating they were prepared in an NSF-approved format. Current and pending support documents not uploaded in an NSF-approved format will trigger a compliance error message that will prevent document upload in Research.gov, FastLane, and Grants.gov.

27. Where can I provide feedback on the NSF-approved PDF formats for current and pending support?

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28. Who do I contact if I have questions?

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