



**DAVIS COLLEGE OF  
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES  
& NATURAL RESOURCES**

TEXAS TECH

## **How-to Guide for Applying for National Science Foundation (NSF) Funding**

Applying for NSF funding can be a rigorous process, but you can increase your chances of success with careful planning and attention to detail. Here is a step-by-step guide to help you through the process.

### **Step 1: Identify the Right Program**

1. **Research Funding Opportunities:** Visit the [NSF website](#) and browse through the various funding opportunities. NSF funds a wide range of scientific disciplines and types of projects, so it's important to find a program that aligns with your research interests.
2. **Read Program Announcements and Solicitations:** Carefully read the program announcements and solicitations to understand the specific requirements, deadlines, and evaluation criteria.
3. **There is a directorate for STEM Education**-related projects and an Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSI) program goal in place from NSF.
4. **There is an Implementation & Evaluation Track.**
  1. **Level 1:** Improve student outcomes of HSI and STEM
  2. **Level 2:** Collaborative grants

### **Step 2: Prepare Your Proposal**

1. **Register Your Institution:** Ensure your institution is registered with NSF. This usually involves obtaining a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and registering with the System for Award Management (SAM).
2. **Register with FastLane or Research.gov:** You must submit your proposal through NSF's electronic submission systems, FastLane or Research.gov. Register for an account if you don't already have one.
3. **Form a Research Team:** If applicable, assemble your research team and define roles and responsibilities.

4. **Intent to Submit:** Please fill out this [form](#) to notify ORS and Davis College Research that you intend to submit and will assist in development of your grant materials.
5. **Visit the HSI Hub:** This site will show you some ways to improve your proposal from an HSI perspective and encourages you to focus on intersectionality of innovations and demographics served.
6. **Tip:** Don't just list items that can be found in an online search. Be intentional about how you will impact students and the general community the way you say it will. If this isn't part of the thought process, grant administrators strongly encourage you to include this.

### Step 3: Gather Required Documents

1. **Cover Sheet:** This includes basic information about your project and your institution.
2. **Project Summary:** A one-page summary of the proposed research, including objectives, methods, and broader impacts.
3. **Project Description:** A detailed narrative of your proposed research, usually up to 15 pages. This should include:
  - o **Introduction:** Background and significance of the research.
  - o **Objectives:** Clear and concise goals of the project.
  - o **Methodology:** Detailed description of the research methods and procedures.
  - o **Broader Impacts:** Potential impact of the research on society.
  - o **References Cited:** A list of references cited in your proposal.
4. **Biographical Sketches:** Two-page biographical sketches for the principal investigator (PI) and co-PIs.
5. **Budget and Budget Justification:** A detailed budget for the project, including a justification for each budget item.
6. **Current and Pending Support:** Information about current and pending support for all senior personnel.
7. **Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources:** Description of the facilities and resources available to conduct research.
8. **Data Management Plan:** A plan for managing and sharing data generated by the research.
9. **Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan:** Required if the proposal includes funding for postdoctoral researchers.

### Step 4: Write Your Proposal

1. **Follow NSF Guidelines:** Adhere to the guidelines provided in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG).
2. **Be Clear and Concise:** Write in clear, concise language. Avoid jargon and ensure that your proposal can be understood by reviewers who may not be experts in your specific field.
3. **Highlight Innovation and Impact:** Emphasize the innovative aspects of your research and its potential broader impacts.

### Step 5: Review and Revise

1. **Internal Review:** Have colleagues review your proposal and provide feedback.

2. **Revise Accordingly:** Incorporate feedback and make necessary revisions to improve clarity and impact.

### **Step 6: Submit Your Proposal**

1. **Check for Completeness:** Ensure that all required documents are included and comply with NSF guidelines.
2. **Submit via FastLane or Research.gov:** Submit your proposal through the appropriate electronic submission system.
3. **Confirm Submission:** Verify that your proposal has been successfully submitted and received by NSF.

### **Step 7: Follow Up**

1. **Acknowledge Receipt:** NSF will send an acknowledgment of receipt. Keep this for your records.
2. **Monitor Status:** Use FastLane or Research.gov to monitor the status of your proposal.
3. **Prepare for Revisions:** If your proposal is not funded, you may receive feedback from reviewers. Use this feedback to revise and resubmit your proposal in the future.

### **Items Needed for NSF Proposal Submission**

- DUNS number and SAM registration for your institution
- FastLane or Research.gov account
- Cover Sheet
- Project Summary
- Project Description
- Biographical Sketches
- Budget and Budget Justification
- Current and Pending Support
- Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources
- Data Management Plan
- Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan (if applicable)

### **Additional Tips**

- **Attend NSF Webinars:** NSF often hosts webinars on how to write successful proposals. Attend these to gain additional insights.
- **Contact Program Officers:** Don't hesitate to contact NSF program officers with questions or to discuss your proposal idea.
- **Plan Ahead:** Start preparing your proposal well in advance of the deadline to ensure you have enough time for review and revisions.

Good luck with your NSF funding application!