

STEM Learning and Research (STELAR) Center @ Education Development Center

Writing Successful NSF
Annual Reports
Thursday, April 21, 2016



Agenda

- STELAR Introduction
- Annual Report Overview
- Q & A
- The Specifics of Annual Reports
- Q & A

Who We Are

- STEM Learning & Research Center (STELAR)
- Education Development Center, Waltham, MA
- Supporting the program and its grantees since 2003
- <http://stelar.edc.org>

What We Do

- Facilitate projects' success through **technical support** with a focus on synthesis of findings
- Inform and influence the field of STEM stakeholders by **disseminating** project findings nationally
- Deepen the impact and reach of the ITEST program by **broadening participation** in the ITEST portfolio



Some of Our Activities

- **Webinars:** Effective Dissemination, Designing Research for ITEST Projects, Mentoring Models
- **Monthly Newsletter:** Information to stay updated on all things STEM and ITEST
- **Project Liaisons:** A STELAR staffer who works directly with each project to provide resources and make connections
- **Regional and Thematic Meetings:** A way for current projects to network with each other
- **Management Information System (MIS):** Annual collection of project information about what projects do, who they work with, what they have achieved

Featured Publication

FEATURED PUBLICATION

ITEST DATA BRIEF: ITEST IN ACTION

Learn more about ITEST project participants & activities!

[Learn more »](#)

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MARCH 2016
A PUBLICATION OF THE
STELAR CENTER AT EDC

The Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) program was established by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to help ensure the breadth and depth of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workforce, in direct response to concerns and projections about the growing demand for and current shortages of STEM professionals in the U.S.

The STEM Learning and Research (STELAR) Center at Education Development Center, Inc., in partnership with the Goodman Research Group, Inc., assists ITEST principal investigators (PIs) and evaluators to design, refine, and evaluate their ITEST projects and activities.

ITEST in Action


The NSF ITEST program has three goals:

- Increase student awareness of STEM and ICT careers
- Motivate students to pursue the education necessary to participate in STEM and ICT careers technology-rich experiences
- Provide students with technology-rich experiences that develop their knowledge of related content and skills (including critical thinking skills) needed for entering the STEM workforce


This databrief provides descriptions of how current ITEST projects implement their projects in order to meet these goals. Among 68 active projects that reported on their youth goals during the fall 2015 Management Information System (MIS) survey, 3/4 of projects addressed all three goals, 8 addressed two of the goals and 5 addressed one of the goals.

Who participates in ITEST projects?


ITEST projects can be designed in many different ways in order to meet the program goals. Almost all projects work directly with youth, and most include educators as well.


Youth 95%  Educators 77% 

Helping prepare a diverse, skilled, and innovative STEM workforce.


TEXT SEARCH 

ADVANCED SEARCH


ITEST Program Findings


ITEST Proposal Development


STELAR Materials


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Writing Good Reports for ITEST Projects

David L. Haury
ITEST Program



How are Project Reports Used?

❖ **Accountability**

- PIs need to report and document the impact and effectiveness of their projects to NSF.
- NSF uses this information to document the impact and effectiveness of the ITEST program to Congress.

❖ **Outreach**

- Reports inform Program Officers when asked to provide examples of projects and products.



Why You Should Submit High Quality Reports

- ❖ An important resource for Program Officers searching for project highlights to draw attention to your work.
- ❖ Used by outside reviewers to evaluate NSF programs.
- ❖ Used by Program Officers to identify projects that are generating findings related to NSF, White House, or Congressional initiatives.
- ❖ Enables Program Officers to provide potential references when responding to inquiries from the field.



Types of Reports

❖ Annual Reports

- Required; need cognizant Program Officer approval.

❖ Interim Reports

- Not required; can be submitted at any time; PO may request

❖ Final Report

- Required; needs cognizant Program Officer approval.
- Final Report is a Final *Annual* Report, but may be a synthesis

❖ Project Outcomes Report

- Required; no Program Officer approval; for general public.
- See FAQ at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/porfaqs.jsp>



Official Policies for Managing Awards

- ❖ The National Science Foundation Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide: Part II – Award & Administration Guide
 - For awards *before* January 25, 2016:
http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf15001/ag_print.pdf (Final report due within 90 days of end date)
 - For awards *on or after* January 25, 2016:
http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf16001/ag_print.pdf (Final report due within 120 days of end date.)



Meeting NSF's Technical Reporting Requirement

- ❖ Factsheet: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2016/nsf16040/nsf16040.pdf>
- ❖ Must use Research.gov to submit reports, but can access the reporting site from NSF's FastLane in the *Proposals, Awards, and Status* menu: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/jsp/homepage/proposals.jsp>, or the *Research Administration* menu: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/researchadmin/researchAdminHome.do>



A Note About Due Dates

- ❖ Annual Reports (Considered submitted when *approved*)
 - “Due” *within* the 90 day period *before* the end of the current budget period for the award.
 - “Overdue” the day after that 90 day period ends.
 - Tip: For continuing grants with budget period ending in September, submit annual report before September.
- ❖ Final Reports
 - For awards received before January 25, 2016, reports are “due” within 90 days of project’s end.
 - For awards after January 25, reports are “due” within 120 days of project’s end.



What Happens if a Report is Overdue?

- ❖ An overdue report remains overdue until approved by a Program Officer.
- ❖ Annual increments in funding will not be released if you have a continuing grant. This includes increments for other awards that the PI or Co-PIs may have through any program supported by NSF.
- ❖ Recommendations for funding of other proposals submitted by the PI or Co-PIs will be blocked until overdue reports are **approved**.



Components of an Annual Report

- ❖ Accomplishments (Text Fields + Supporting Files)
- ❖ Products (Text Fields + Supporting Files)
- ❖ Participants (Text Fields)
- ❖ Impacts (Text Fields)
- ❖ Changes/Problems (Text Fields)

Caution: Is there really “Nothing to Report”?

Caution: Do not use PDF supporting files to replace required entries in text fields; text fields are searchable.



Make Good Use of Supporting Documents

Among the things that are appropriate to upload as PDF attachments are:

- ❖ Articles, PowerPoint Presentations, and Chapters
- ❖ Evaluation information such as reports from your Advisory Committee and evaluators. These are often confidential or preliminary and not appropriate to be broadly shared.
- ❖ Charts, graphs, data tables, pictures, news articles, and similar material that cannot be represented in text-only format.
- ❖ Documents that are too long to be included in the text boxes, such as curriculum modules or other publications.



Reports of Collaborative Proposals

- ❖ Collaborative projects involve awards made to multiple institutions, so the PI at each institution must submit an independent annual and final report.
- ❖ The individual reports may include common language where appropriate, such as in the *Accomplishments* section.
- ❖ The individual reports should also identify participant groups, activities, and findings unique to the individual collaborators. “Collaboration” implies unique contributions.



Report Component: Accomplishments

Components

- What are the major goals of the project?
- What was accomplished under these goals (you must provide information for at least one of the 4 categories below):
 - Major activities
 - Specific Objectives
 - Significant results
 - Key outcomes or other achievements
- What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?
- How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?
- What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish these goals?

- ◆ Describe accomplishments in the context of the overall project to help the Program go beyond the numbers to understand the overall progress of the project.
- ◆ Make reviewing the report easier by presenting accomplishments in a way that enables the Program Officer to interpret accomplishments without referring to the original proposal. The report should stand on its own.
- ◆ If you upload a large volume of files, you are encouraged to send an email message to your Program Officer to identify materials that may be of particular importance or interest.



Report Component: Products

Components

- Books
- Book Chapters
- Inventions
- Journals or Juried Conference Papers
- Licenses
- Other Conferences
- Other Products
- Other Publications
- Patents
- Technologies or Techniques
- Thesis/Dissertations
- Websites

- ❖ Include curriculum materials and professional development materials.
- ❖ Include videos and any applications developed for computers or hand-held devices.
- ❖ Include formal assessments, protocols, or professional development materials.
- ❖ Products listed in text boxes show up in project abstract.

Caution: Do not include publications that are outside the scope of the funded project.



Report Component: Participants

Components

- Research Experience for Undergraduate (REU) funding
- What individuals have worked on the project?
- What other organizations have been involved as partners?
- Have other collaborators or contacts been involved?

Be sure to include everyone being supported for contributions to the project



Report Component: Impact

Components

- What is the impact on the development of the principal discipline(s) of the project?
- What is the impact on other disciplines?
- What is the impact on the development of human resources?
- What is the impact on physical resources that form infrastructure?
- What is the impact on institutional resources that form infrastructure?
- What is the impact on information resources that form infrastructure?
- What is the impact on technology transfer?
- What is the impact on society beyond science and technology?

- ❖ The range of guiding questions is intentionally broad to capture impacts in a broad range of fields and contexts. Individual projects will likely not have impacts in all of the areas included.
- ❖ Reporting on impacts on society beyond science and technology seems particularly relevant to projects focusing on research in STEM education.
- ❖ Discuss Broader Impact activities such as outreach and mentoring under the Impact tab.



Tips About Reporting Impact

- Report any actions related to the proposal's Data Management Plan and Post-doctoral Mentoring Plan.
- More discussion of impact is expected as the project advances.



Report Component: Changes/Problems

Components

- Changes in approach and reasons for change
- Actual or anticipated problems or delays and actions or plans to resolve them
- Changes that have a significant impact on expenditures
- Significant changes in use or care of human subjects
- Significant changes in use or care of vertebrate animals
- Significant changes in use or care of biohazards

- ❖ Changes and Problems are not necessarily PROBLEMS. Unanticipated events are common, so recognizing and resolving issues are viewed as positive actions.
- ❖ Report any deviations from the original implementation or research plan.
- ❖ Describe any issues that arose regarding human subjects, and how they have been or will be resolved.
- ❖ Report any unexpected events that led to unanticipated opportunities or challenges.



Resources

- ❖ *Prepare & Submit Your Annual, Final, and Interim Project Reports* [Directions for navigating Research.gov's Project Reports Dashboard]
 - http://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/ProjectReportGettingStartedGuide_general.pdf
- ❖ *Tips and Guidelines on the Submission and Effective Annual, Final, and Project Outcomes Reports* [For awards prior to January 25, 2016]
 - http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/bcs/BCS_Reporting_Guidelines.pdf
- ❖ *Meeting NSF's Technical Reporting Requirements*
 - <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2013/nsf13094/nsf13094.jsp>



Questions?