stelar
STEM LEARNING AND RESEARCH CENTER

FASTLANE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

QUICKSTART GUIDE

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This guide is designed to for those submitting a proposal for NSF funding. While this document is not intended to be a substitute for the exhaustive FastLane Help guide, STELAR[1] has compiled the following information to assist proposal writers locate the Form Preparation and upload the required sections. The contents draw primarily from STELAR's *ITEST Proposal Development Course* – which is a self-paced online course for novice NSF proposal writers.

There are three main parts of this document:

- **Part 1:** step-by-step instructions (including screenshots) on how to navigate to the Form Preparation page of FastLane. This page is where you'll upload the sections of your proposal.
- **Part 2**: This section provides a diagram of the Form Preparation page and the corresponding sections from the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG).
- **Part 3**: brief descriptions of the sections described in the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)

Additional Note: The information provided in this guide should not be used as a substitute for a thorough review of the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) or your program's solicitation (list of NSF Funding Opportunities).

[1] The STEM Learning and Research Center (STELAR) is funded by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. DRL-1614697. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

FOREWORD – FASTLANE ACCESS TIPS

1. Start the process of connecting to the system as early as possible as it may take a few days to gain access. Once you have a login, it will likely take a few days to complete the uploading and submitting process, so the earlier you make this request the better off you will be.

2. Check if your organization is registered in the Fastlane system. If it is, you can click the Fastlane Contact/SRO button to determine who the point of contact at your organization

3. Make sure that the proposed Principal Investigator (PI) and any Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) on the proposal have active Fastlane accounts. *If you are not the PI*…

    a. Once your organization is registered, your SPO or organization's Fastlane contact person will have to create a Fastlane account for you if you don't already have one. Once you have an account, you will be given a user ID (9-digit number) and a password.

    b. Have any Co-PIs or Senior Staff confirm that they have Fastlane accounts. If they do, request either their user ID or the email address associated with their Fastlane account. You will need one of these pieces of information to add them to the Cover Sheet. If your partner Co-PIs are outside of your organization suggest they speak to their SPO as soon as possible.

4. Verify that your organization is registered with Fastlane: https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/n1/N1AddInst.html

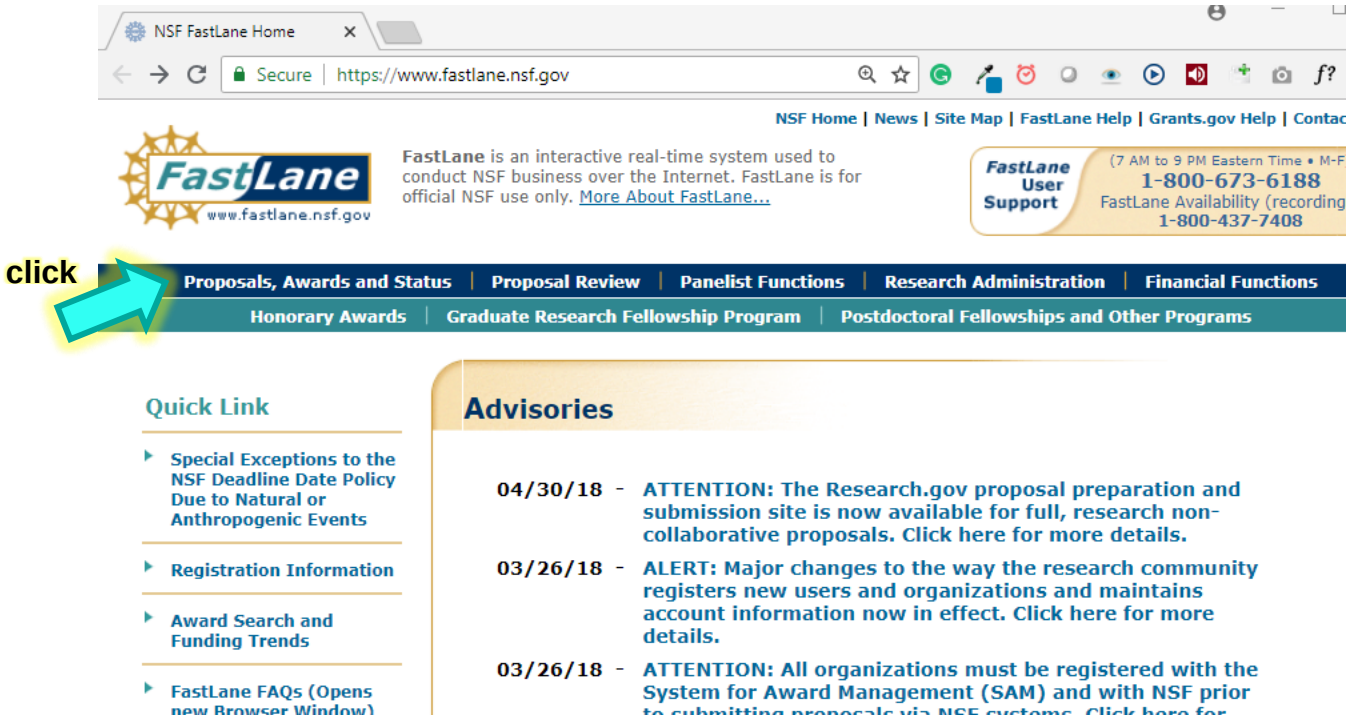
5. Locate your organization's NSF contact person. Contact them about getting a Fastlane account set up for yourself and any colleagues at your organization.

6. If you believe you have an NSF ID already, you can look up your information: https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/researchadmin/nsfIdLookupRead.do

7. Contact your partners to be sure they have done the same.

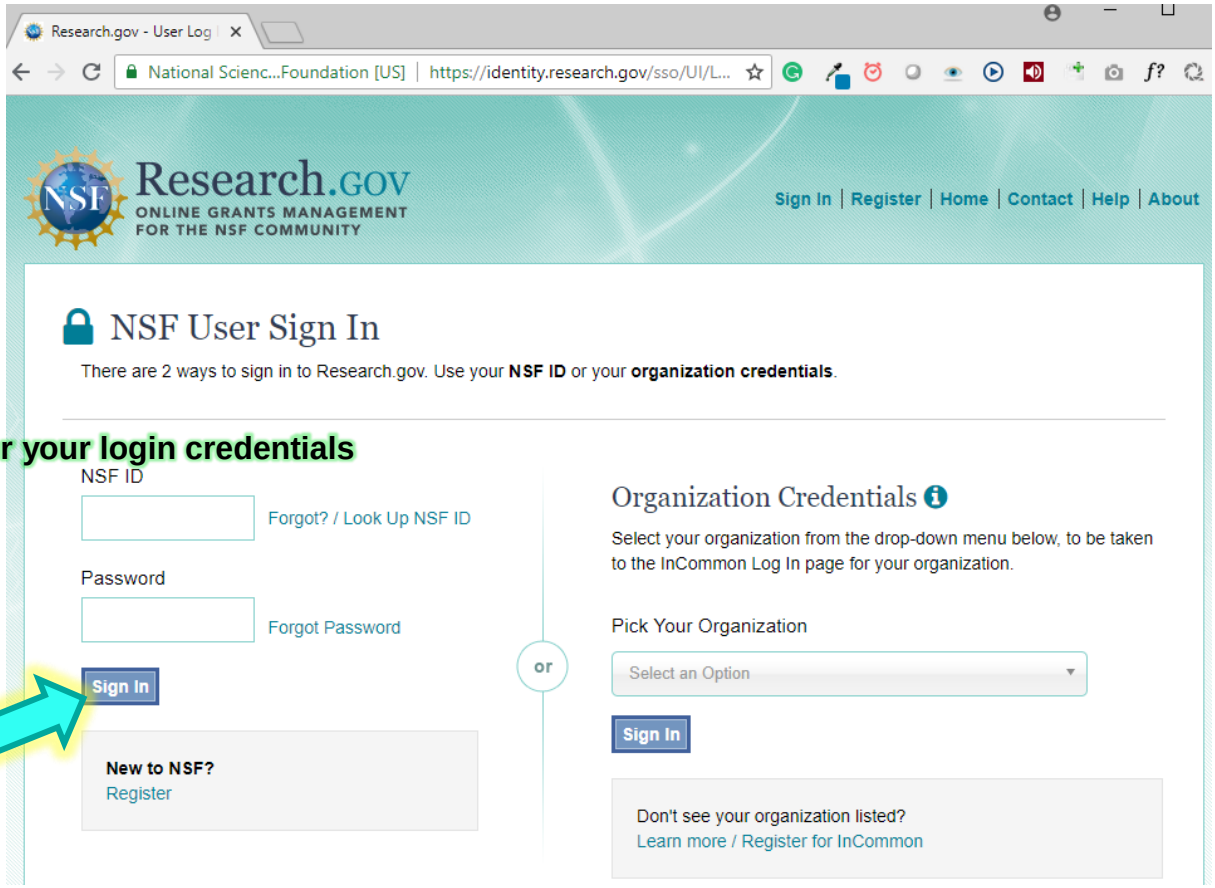
PART 1 – CREATING A NEW PROPOSAL IN FASTLANE

1. Access the FastLane site, and click on “Proposals, Awards and Status”

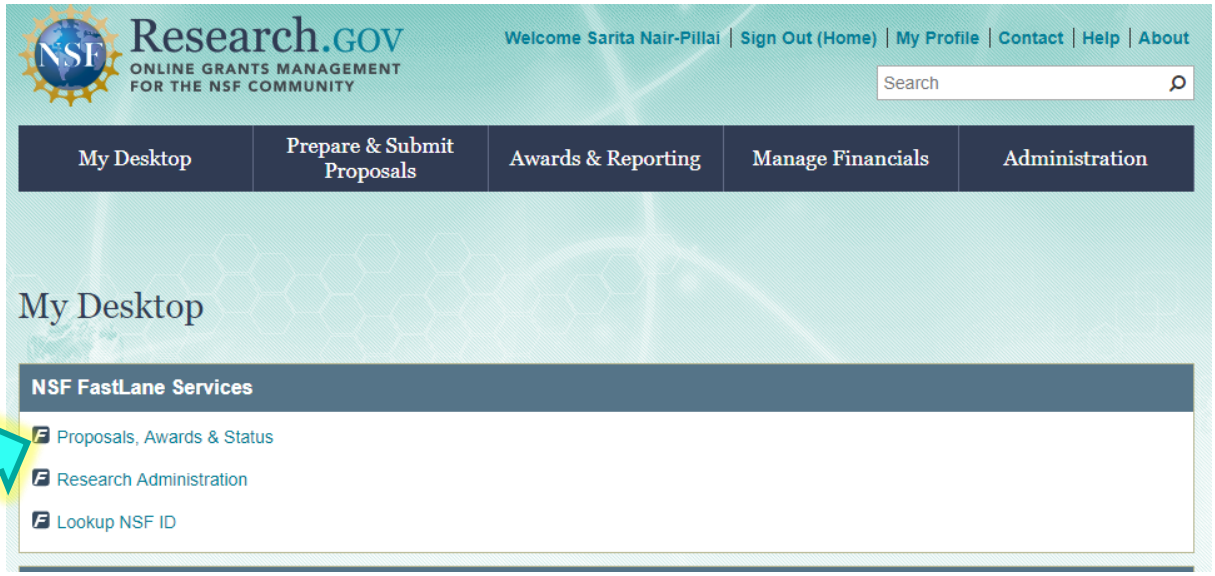


2. Click on “Sign In to FastLane/Research.gov”

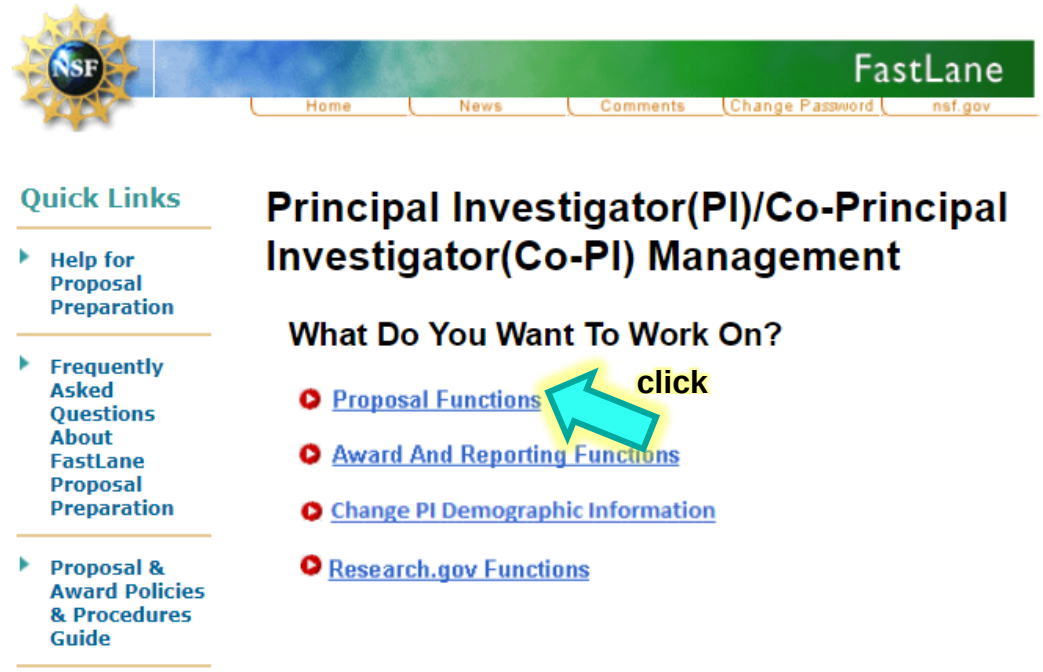
3. Enter your credentials, and then click “Sign In”
    a. Don’t have login credentials? [Register for a new NSF Account]



4. Click “Proposals, Awards & Status”



5. Click “Proposal Functions”



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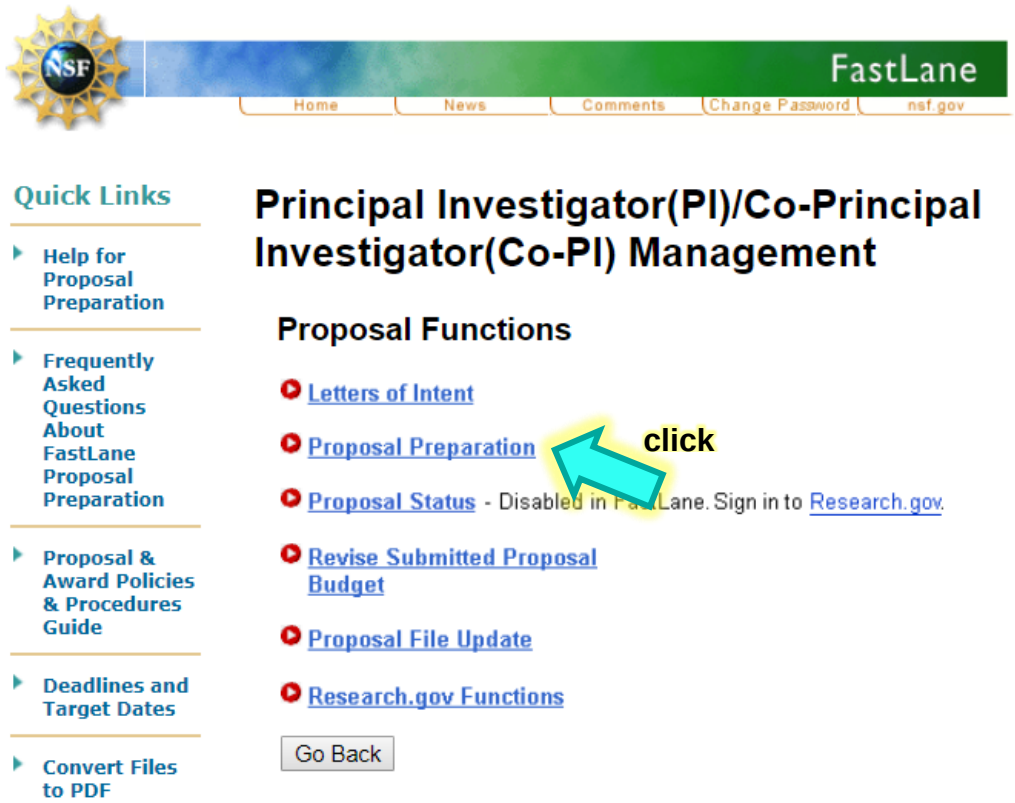
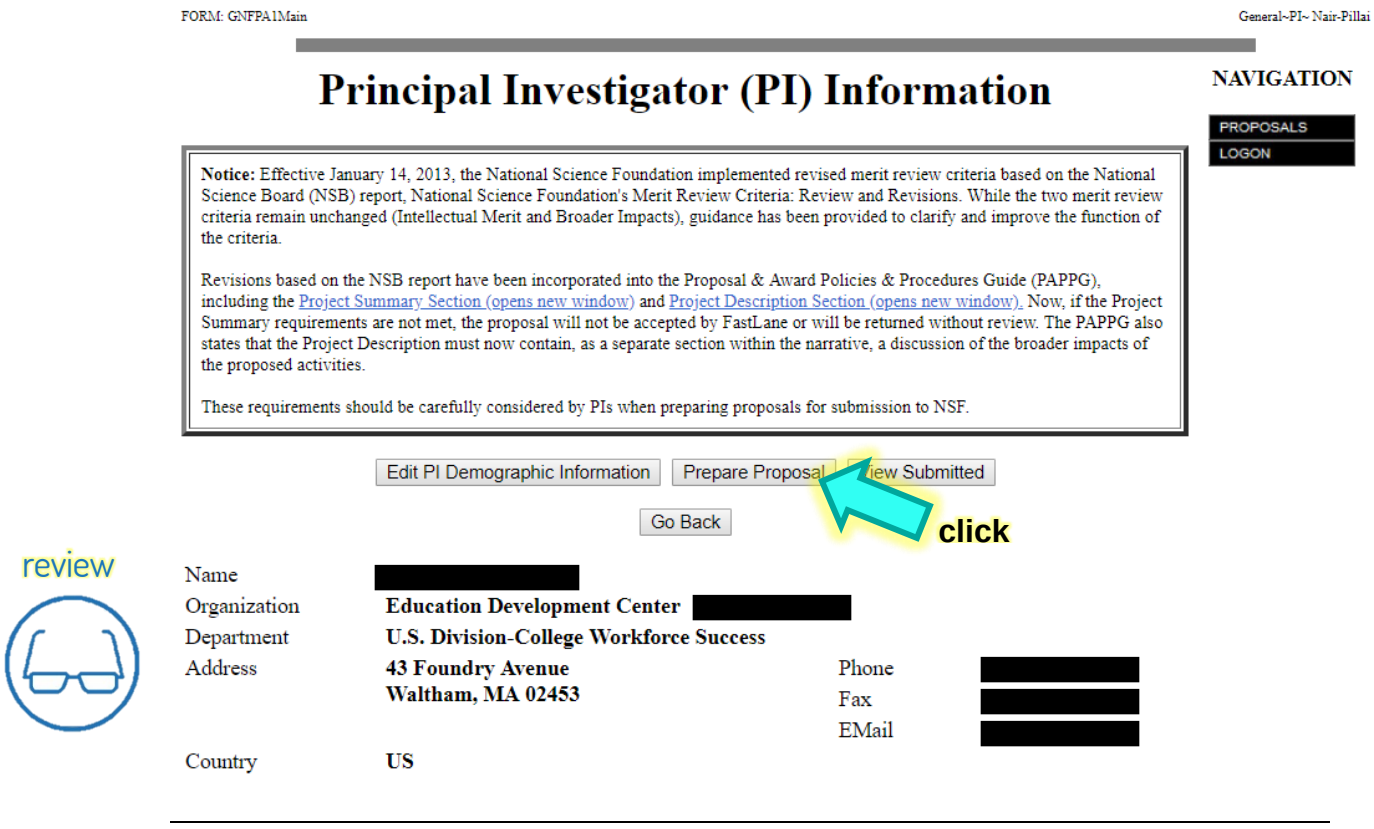
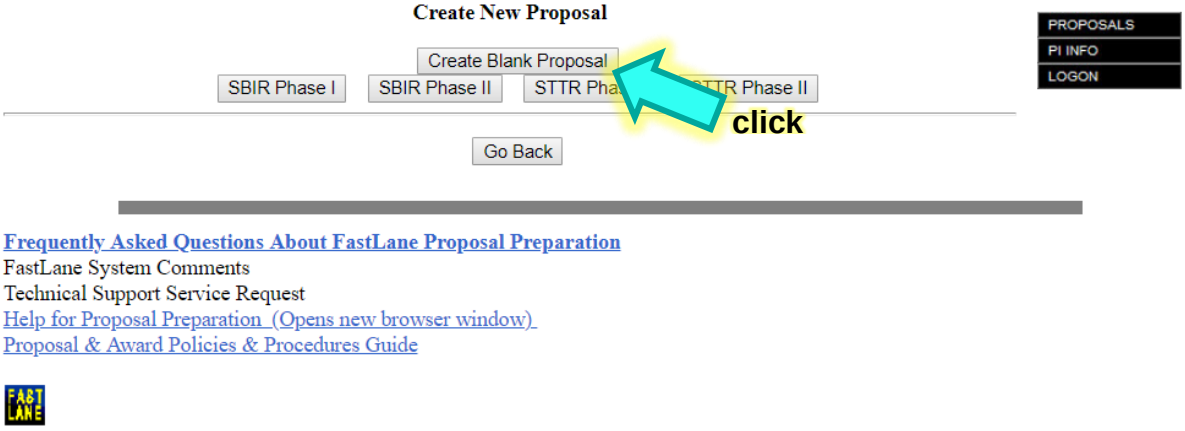
6. Click “Proposal Preparation”



7. Review your PI Information, is it correct? Update if needed ("Edit PI Demographic Information"), then click on "Prepare Proposal"



8. Click "Create Blank Proposal"

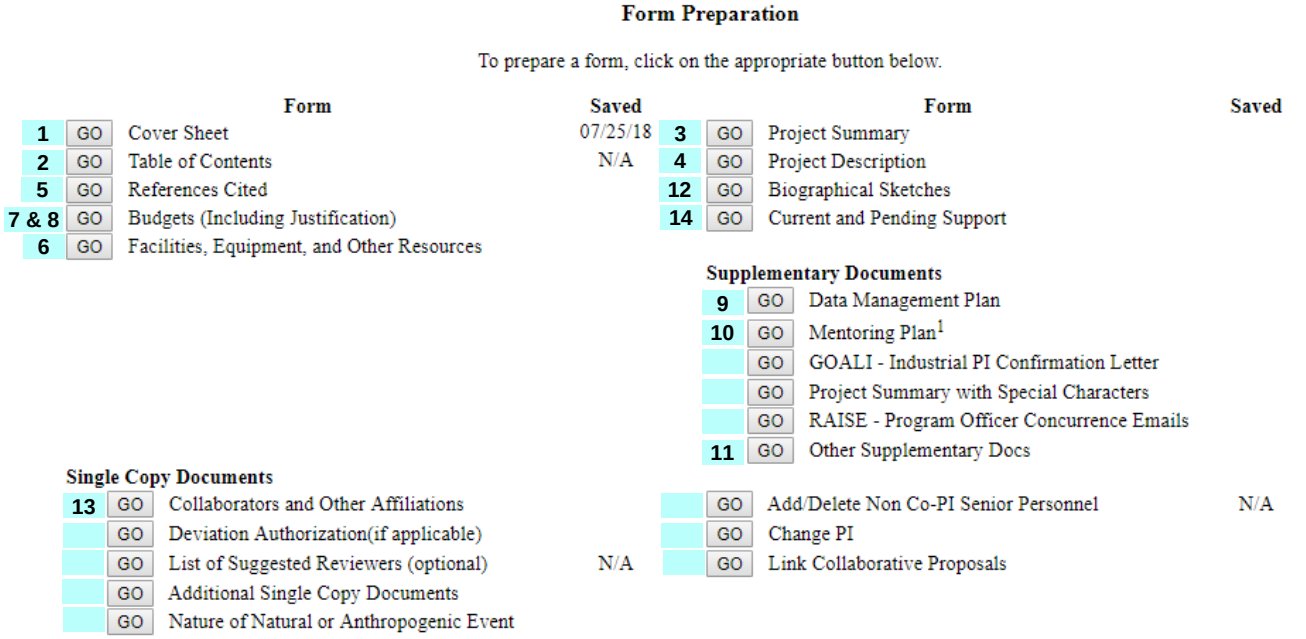


THIS WILL TAKE YOU TO THE FORM PREPARATION PAGE,

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

PART 2 – FORM PREPARATION/ PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Clicking “Create Blank Proposal” will bring you to this page. This is the page where you will upload the sections of your proposal. Clicking “Go” next to each of the items will take you to the page where you upload/enter your proposal information, and also provides further detail.



Form Preparation

To prepare a form, click on the appropriate button below.

Form			Saved
1	GO	Cover Sheet	07/25/18
2	GO	Table of Contents	N/A
5	GO	References Cited	
7 & 8	GO	Budgets (Including Justification)	
6	GO	Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources	

Form			Saved
3	GO	Project Summary	
4	GO	Project Description	
12	GO	Biographical Sketches	
14	GO	Current and Pending Support	

Supplementary Documents

9	GO	Data Management Plan	
10	GO	Mentoring Plan[1]	
	GO	GOALI - Industrial PI Confirmation Letter	
	GO	Project Summary with Special Characters	
	GO	RAISE - Program Officer Concurrence Emails	
11	GO	Other Supplementary Docs	

Single Copy Documents

13	GO	Collaborators and Other Affiliations	
	GO	Deviation Authorization(if applicable)	
	GO	List of Suggested Reviewers (optional)	N/A
	GO	Additional Single Copy Documents	
	GO	Nature of Natural or Anthropogenic Event	

	GO	Add/Delete Non Co-PI Senior Personnel	N/A
	GO	Change PI	
	GO	Link Collaborative Proposals	

	Proposal Component	Submission Type	FastLane Submission Location
1	Cover Sheet	online form	Form - Cover Sheet
2	Table of Contents	auto generated	n/a
3	Project Summary	text box	Form - Project Summary
4	Project Description	pdf document	Form - Project Description
5	References Cited	pdf document	Form - References Cited
6	Facilities, Equipment, and Other	pdf document	Form - Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources
7	Budget	online form or Excel template	Form - Budgets (Including Justification)
8	Budget Justification	pdf document	Form - Budgets (Including Justification)
9	Data Management Plan	pdf document	Supplementary Documents - Data Management Plan
10	Post-doc Mentoring Plan	pdf document	Supplementary Documents - Mentoring Plan
11	Letters of Collaboration from Project Partners	pdf document	Supplementary Documents - Other Supplementary Docs
12	Biographical Sketches of Non-Co PI Senior Personnel	pdf document	Form - Biographical Sketches
13	Collaborators and Other Affiliations	pdf document or e-form	Single Copy Documents - Collaborators and Other Affiliations
14	Current and Pending Support	pdf document	Form - Current and Pending Support

PART 3 – OVERVIEW OF PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

This section reviews the components of an NSF proposal based on the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG), and is not intended to be a substitute for a thorough review of the PAPPG or your project solicitation.

Proposal Component	Brief Description	Length
Cover Sheet	The Cover Sheet is an online form you'll complete through your FastLane account (see Module 9). You can download (and print) a pdf version of your cover sheet to review the components beforehand. To see a sample Cover Sheet click [here].	1 page
Table of contents	Your Table of Contents will be created automatically as you upload the other documents. However, you will still need to add page numbers to each of your uploaded documents (FastLane does not automatically paginate for you).	n/a
Project Summary	Your Project Summary will be one-page in length (approx 4,500 characters) and consists of an overview, a statement on intellectual merit, and a statement on broader impacts. The contents of your summary is submitted via text box through your FastLane account.	1 Page
Project Description	The Project Description is the cornerstone of your proposal and can be no longer than 15 pages in length. There are nine essential elements of the Project Description; Project Overview, Rationale, and Importance Results from prior NSF support Research and Development Design Project Evaluation Dissemination Expertise and Management Intellectual Merit Broader Impacts Special Review Criteria It's uploaded in document format through FastLane. The page-limit does not apply to bibliographic citations, which are to be included in your References Cited section. *Note: Refer to the PAPPG and your project's solicitation for further information and requirements*	15 Pages
References Cited	References Cited contains the bibliographic citations from your Project Description. There is no page	No Limit

	minimum or maximum for this section and is uploaded in document format through FastLane.	
Facilities Equipment, and Other Resources	This section of the proposal is where you describe the resources you will use to implement your proposed program (i.e. the elements described in your Project Description). There is no page minimum or maximum for this section and is uploaded in document format through FastLane.	No Limit
Budget	You will develop one budget for each year of the proposed project. The information will be submitted through the Budget Form in FastLane. You can download (and print) a pdf version of your budget to review the components beforehand. To see a pdf sample budget click [here], or download a fillable template [here].	5 pages
Budget Justification	This is a narrative justifying each of the line items in your budget. Your Budget Justification cannot exceed 5 pages in length and is uploaded in document format through FastLane.	5 pages
Data Management Plan	This section outlines the standards and policies for collecting and disseminating the research results for your proposed program. Your Data Management Plan cannot exceed 2 pages in length and is uploaded in document format through FastLane Examples here.	2 pages
Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan (if applicable)	This section will describe the mentoring that will be provided to postdoctoral researchers supported by the project, if applicable. Your Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan cannot exceed 1 page in length and is uploaded in document format through FastLane.	1 page
Letters of Collaboration from Project Partners	These letters will be collected from your project partners (advisors, consultants, evaluator, schools, etc.) stating their intent to collaborate. NSF provides a template for these letters, and they are uploaded in document format through FastLane.	1 page each (per collaborator)
Collaborators and Other Affiliations	Each staff member on your team (PI, Co PI, senior staff) must complete this form in order to identify possible conflicts of interest to ensure the NSF	1 form per staff member

	reviewers of your proposal are impartial and unaffiliated. Have each staff member complete the "Collaborators and Other Affiliations" form provided by NSF [here], paying careful attention to the instructions on formatting. Each file will then be uploaded through FastLane.	
Current and Pending Support	Each staff member on your team (PI, Co PI, senior staff) must complete one of these forms in order to identify all sources of funding for his/her work (on this project and any other, currently being funded or any other with pending applications). A template can be found [here]. You will upload one pdf per staff member through FastLane. You can also complete this as an e-form rather than uploading the pdfs.	1 form per staff member
Biographical Sketches of Non-Co PI Senior Personnel	Custom formatted CV (see example [here]). Each CV cannot exceed 2 pages. You will upload one pdf per staff member through FastLane.	2 pages per staff member