

Frequently Asked Questions on Current and Pending Support PAPPG (NSF 20-1)

Updated July 30, 2020

1. What is the rationale for the requirement to submit current and pending support information?

NSF uses the information submitted in the current and pending support section 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.

2. Do I report gifts in current and pending support?

If an item or service meets the definition of a gift, it is not reported. A gift includes any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, license, special access, equipment time, samples, research data, or other item having monetary value. A gift also includes services as well as gifts of training, transportation, local travel, lodging, meals, research hours, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has occurred. A gift by definition is given without expectation of anything in return.

An item or service given with the expectation of an associated time commitment is not a gift and is instead an in-kind contribution and must be reported to NSF. If the in-kind contribution is not intended for use on the project/proposal being proposed to NSF but has an associated time commitment, the information must be included as part of the current and pending support section of the proposal. If the in-kind contribution is intended for use on the project/proposal being proposed to NSF, the information must be included as part of the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal and need not be replicated in the individual's current and pending support submission.

3. If an individual designated as senior personnel on a project does not have effort in a given year, how does this relate to reporting "person months committed to the project" in current and pending support?

The [*Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide*](#) (PAPPG), Chapter II.C.2.h states "Current and pending support includes all resources made available to an individual in support of and/or related to all of his/her research efforts, regardless of whether or not they have monetary value." Senior personnel are required to provide "the number of person-months (or partial person-months) per year to be devoted to the project by the individual." NSF uses the information provided to assess the capacity of investigators to carry out the research as proposed and to help assess any potential overlap with the project being proposed.

Person-month information included in current and pending support may differ from the person-months requested on the budget for a given project. The information contained on the budget is separate and distinct from the information entered on current and pending support regarding how much time the individual is or is planning, or has committed to spend on a project. For example, if an individual is not requesting salary for a project, then no person-months would be shown on the budget. They would, however, be expending effort on the project and therefore a number greater than zero must be entered in current and pending support. If the individual is not

requesting salary, and will not be expending any effort, then the project should not be reported in current and pending support.

4. Do I report in-kind contributions with no associated time commitment in current and pending support?

If the in-kind contributions are not intended for use on the project/proposal being proposed to NSF **and** have no associated time commitment, the information is not required to be reported. However, in-kind contributions with no associated time commitment that are intended for use on the project/proposal being proposed to NSF must be included as part of the Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources section.

5. Do I have to include in-kind contributions in both the current and pending support and Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources sections of the proposal?

No. If the in-kind contributions are not intended for use on the project/proposal being proposed to NSF but they have associated time commitment, the information must be included as part of the current and pending support section of the proposal. If the in-kind contributions are intended for use on the project/proposal being proposed to NSF, the information must be included as part of the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal and need not be replicated in the individual's Current and Pending Support submission.

6. Do I report "start-up" packages or academic year salary in current and pending support?

Organizational start-up packages provided to the individual from the proposing organization are not required to be reported. Start-up packages from other than the proposing organization must be reported. Faculty academic year salary is not considered current and pending support in this context.

7. How should individuals report projects that exceed five years in current and pending support?

For projects that exceed five years, individuals should report on the next five years of the project in current and pending support. For example, if the individual is in year three of a ten-year award, they would report on years three through seven.

8. The NSF-approved current and pending support formats require us to provide person-months per year committed to the project, however, our organization's fiscal year spans two calendar years. Which year should we include when reporting person-months per year?

If you are reporting person-months that span two calendar years, you should enter the latter year. For example, if your entry covers your organization's fiscal year of June 2019 through May 2020, you would enter "2020" for the year and include the corresponding person-months as defined and used by your organization in proposals submitted to NSF.

9. How can an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) “certify” representations that its employees may make regarding current or pending support based on information not available to the organization?

In most cases, NSF accepts proposals from and awards grants to an organization, not to an individual. In submitting a proposal and/or accepting federal funds under a grant instrument, proposers/grantees assume legal and financial responsibility and accountability for the content of the submitted proposal, any awarded funds and the performance of the grant-supported activity.

As such, proposers/grantees are responsible for all information and data provided to the federal agency under the proposal or grant agreement, and may need to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the information that its employees provide to the AOR in order to appropriately comply with NSF’s policies on reporting current and pending support. NSF does not dictate the terms of or interfere with the employment relationship between the grantee organization and its employees. Organizations will need to establish whatever internal communication or other processes they believe are necessary in order to provide the required current and pending support information.

10. *New question:* Mentoring of a trainee is an example of a time commitment that must be reported in current and pending support. There is a difference, however, between a time commitment and an activity that takes time. Should the latter be reported in current and pending support?

An individual need not identify any mentoring activities in their current and pending support submission that take place as part of their regular appointment at the proposing organization. If an individual, however, receives in-kind support either directly or through their organization from an external source to support mentoring of undergraduate or graduate students, that in-kind support, including the time associated with such mentoring, should be identified in the individual’s current and pending support submission.

11. *New question:* What is the scope of “research endeavors” that must be reported in current and pending support? For example, a trainee’s research that will result in their dissertation is not part of the PI’s individual research endeavors, correct? Should only the research endeavors of an individual be reported and not all the research in their lab?

“Research endeavors” in the context of the guidance provided in PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.h. does refer to the endeavors *of the particular individual*. The current and pending support information that must be provided is all planned, pending, and current support that is either provided directly to the individual, or to the individual through their organization in support of that individual’s research endeavors.

12. *New question:* Will NSF be incorporating the clarifications contained in these FAQs into the next version of the PAPPG?

NSF will review all FAQs and incorporate additional coverage, where appropriate, prior to posting the 2021 draft version of the PAPPG in the Federal Register. Any further feedback should be sent to policy@nsf.gov.

13. **New question:** For Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) investigator effort and lab support, what are the requirements for reporting current and pending support? Since HHMI investigators, for the duration of their HHMI appointment, are HHMI employees and HHMI pays their expenses, should any un-costed commitments be included in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section with a statement that the individual will devote the necessary resources to accomplish the objectives of the project?

If an HHMI investigator is proposed to serve as senior personnel and is not requesting salary compensation in the NSF budget, then their name, and the estimated amount of time to be devoted to the project should be identified in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal.

14. **New question:** Do individuals serving as senior personnel need to disclose all postdoctoral fellows and graduate students who are individually funded through fellowships as in-kind support? For example, if a postdoctoral researcher is personally funded by a foundation, and the fellowship does not flow through the proposing organization, does this need to be disclosed as in-kind support?

The current and pending support information that must be provided is all planned, pending and current project and in-kind support that is either provided directly to the individual, or to the individual through their organization in support of that individual's research endeavors. If the postdoctoral researcher is personally funded by a foundation or other organization, then the support of the postdoctoral researcher should not be submitted as part of the PI or co-PIs current and pending support submission.

15. **New question:** Do outside consulting activities have to be reported in current and pending support?

Consulting or professional service arrangements as defined in 2 CFR 200.459 are not identified as an example of a source of support in PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.h. that must be reported, as the type of work conducted is not typically considered to be at the same level of a proposal/project or in-kind contribution. However, if the individual will be conducting research as part of the consulting agreement, then the consulting arrangement should be specified in the individual's current and pending support submission.

16. **New question:** How should a PI document effort when no salary is being requested? Should this be indicated in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal with the effort indicated in the Current and Pending Support section?

If a PI or co-PI is not requesting salary support, they should be removed from the budget and their name and the estimated amount of time to be devoted to the project should be identified in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal.