

## March 2024 Newsletter

### In this issue:

- NSF Proposal and Award Policy Changes for 2024
- NIH Closeout Updates
- eRA Commons Updates
- Limited Submissions

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## National Science Foundation (NSF)

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NSF has released guidance on [upcoming changes](#) for the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 24-1). These changes are scheduled to take effect on May 20 and will apply to all proposals submitted on, or after, that date. Below are some of the highlights.

### Biographical Sketch

The three-page limitation will be lifted. The “Synergistic Activities” section will be removed from the sketch and submitted separately for senior/key personnel in research.gov. The sketch will also include a new certification section related to involvement in Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs (MFTRP, more below).

### Mentoring Plans

A one-page mentoring plan will be required for proposals that request support for postdoctoral researchers or graduate students. This plan will no longer be restricted to postdocs alone—it must include graduate students whenever present on a proposal. If both postdocs and graduate students are included on a proposal, then both must be addressed in the same one-page document. If submitting a linked collaborative proposal, the requirement will be one plan per proposal.

### Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

A recent directive from the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 introduces a new obligation for individual development plans (IDPs) designed specifically for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. According to this mandate, individuals receiving substantial support must maintain annually updated IDPs that align with their educational goals, career exploration, and professional development. Substantial support is defined as assistance received for one person-month or more during the reporting period. The CHIPS and Science Act further dictates a certification process, requiring each graduate student and postdoc to have a plan. This certification responsibility lies with the Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI during the annual reporting process.

## **Tribal Nations**

There will be a new checkbox on the cover page for proposals with planned activities that may impact the resources of a Tribal Nation. Projects that do not have prior written approval from the official(s) designated by the relevant Tribal Nation(s) will not be awarded by NSF.

## **Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs (MFTRP)**

Any individual who is a current party to an MFTRP will be ineligible to serve as a senior/key person on an NSF proposal or award. The definition of an MFTRP is contained in the PAPPG Introduction (NSF 24-1, D.1.i).

For more information on upcoming changes, see [here](#). NSF has also made a recording of their webinar discussing these updates available [here](#).

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# **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**

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## **Closeouts**

NIH has strengthened enforcement of their closeout requirements. Recipients must submit a Final Federal Financial Report (FFR), Final Research Performance Progress Report (F-RPPR), and Final Invention Statement and Certification (FIS) within 120 calendar days of the end of the period of performance. Without prior approval, NIH will now initiate unilateral closeout for all awards that fail to meet this deadline. See [here](#) for more details.

## **Future Plans for Bio-sketch and Other Support Forms**

In early to mid-2025, NIH plans to move its Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support forms over to SciENcv. These forms will become the common form. Until full implementation, NIH will continue to use their current forms, but now may be a good time to start acquainting yourself with [SciENcv](#) if you have not already made an account.

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# **eRA Commons**

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## **Visual Changes**

Over the next few months, eRA Commons will undergo several changes in appearance. One notable feature will be that the “Action” column will be replaced by a three-dot ellipsis icon (...) which provides the user with a dropdown menu of action items. For more details about the visual makeover, see [here](#).

## **Data Management and Sharing (DMS) Plans**

Grant recipients are now required to use the Prior Approval Module in eRA Commons when submitting requests for changes to an approved Data Management and Sharing Plan.

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# **Limited Submissions**

**EPA & NSF**

## Deadline: April 15

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Limited submission programs are those for which funding agencies restrict the number of nominations or proposals a university may submit for an award. To ensure that the most competitive proposals represent JMU, it is necessary to put an internal competition in place. Please note that the internal competition deadline usually occurs several months before the sponsor's deadline. Interested applicants can find a letter of intent form on [our limited submissions page](#) corresponding to each opportunity.

When we learn of limited submissions, the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) will publicize the opportunity both [on the OSP website](#) and in special funding announcements to deans and department heads. To assist in the internal evaluation process, there will be a panel of interdisciplinary evaluators who will screen all eligible and interested nominees to determine which proposals will best represent the university in the limited submission competitions.

The first limited submission that we are highlighting for 2024 is the Environmental Protection Agency's [Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program](#). The internal deadline for this funding opportunity is **Monday, April 15**, and only two submissions will be allowed to move forward.

We are also highlighting the National Science Foundation's [Major Research Instrumentation \(MRI\) Program](#). The internal deadline for this funding opportunity is **Monday, April 15**. For both opportunities, applicants will be notified approximately three weeks after the internal deadline.

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