The Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) Program
Today’s hosts

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Submission platforms

Research.gov
• Immediate compliance checking

Grants.gov
• Transfers proposal to NSF for compliance and validation checks; requires 48 hours for compliance checking
• Call 1-800-518-4726 if you have problems submitting or receiving notification of receipt of proposal

Note that FastLane has been retired as a submission platform.
Grants.gov proposal submissions

• Proposals submitted via Grants.gov must pass through multiple systems for processing.

• Expect three sequential proposal confirmation emails with the subject lines and content as shown in the example email screenshots

• If you do not receive all three emails within a few minutes, an issue has prevented your proposal from being fully processed into NSF systems and you should call the NSF Help Desk for assistance
Grants.gov proposal submissions

1st email – Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application confirming Grants.gov received your proposal

2nd email – Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application confirming Grants.gov assigned a Grants.gov tracking number
Grants.gov proposal submissions

3rd email – *Application Successfully Inserted into FastLane* confirming NSF received the proposal and assigned a proposal ID. Success!

Grantee agency has assigned the following Agency Tracking Number to your application: [XXXXX].

You will need the Agency Tracking Number when corresponding with the Grantee agency about your application.
Need help?

• For IT system-related and technical questions, please contact the NSF Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov.

• Program-related questions should be addressed to DRLAISL@nsf.gov

• Keep track of your Help Desk ticket number and save all emails to/from the Help Desk about your issue
  • If you email the Help Desk, it could take more than one business day for a ticket number depending on Help Desk volume
  • If the issue is urgent, NSF recommends calling the Help Desk to get a ticket number

• Some issues do not have quick turnaround times to resolve. Please do not wait until January 18 deadline to request NSF account reconciliation
Common reasons for return without review

• Violation of formatting rules of the PAPPG (font, margins, page length, etc.)

• Resubmission too closely resembles a previous submission to any NSF program

• Failure to address intellectual merit and broader impacts in project summary and description

• Including unauthorized appendix or other supplementary material (e.g., letters of support exceed language specified in PAPPG)

• Including URLs/website links in project description

• Failure to include Data Management or Postdoc Mentoring Plans (if budget includes postdoc)
Submit EARLY

The AISL submission deadline is January 18, 2022

• NSF has strict submission requirements; plan ahead!
• Your submission must be validated & accepted prior to 5pm local to submitting institution
• Your proposal is not submitted if you have not received an official email with an assigned 7-digit proposal number that starts with 22-XXXXX
• Remember, the internet and systems are not immediate
Last-minute tips from AISL POs

- Be sure to discuss the sustainability of the project.
- Writing clearly and succinctly is essential. If someone reviews 10 proposals, they could be reading 150 pages of proposal text. Will your project stand out as written?
- Aim to submit your proposal 1-2 days before the January 18 deadline.
- Reviewers are not required to read supplemental materials. So include key information in the Project Description, not in Supplemental Materials.
- Present a clear rationale at the start of the proposal outlining what the problem is what the R&D aims to solve.
- Watch recordings of the AISL program office hours on past topics on informalscience.org.
Recipe for a high-quality proposal

• WHY is it of national and societal importance (i.e., motivation)? ONE page

• WHAT is your approach, solution, design, and development, and WHY is your approach uniquely better than other alternatives? SEVEN pages

• HOW will you show that your approach is effective and the extent of effectiveness? FIVE pages

• WILL and HOW will your intervention generalize?