



PROPOSAL IDEA FOR NSF? SUBMIT A CONCEPT OUTLINE

COs, a New NSF Submission Type in the PAPPG (NSF 23-1):

Effective for proposals submitted or due on or after
January 30, 2023

PURPOSE OF A CONCEPT OUTLINE

- LOIs are used by NSF to plan and manage proposal review
- COs should be used to ensure the concept being proposed is appropriate for the proposal type and/or funding opportunity
- The goal is to help reduce the administrative burden associated with a full proposals for NSF, PIs, & RAs

PURPOSE OF A CONCEPT OUTLINE

- Like LOIs, COs are not binding or used in review of full proposal
- COs replaces informal communication with the Program Officer
- Should be used when the PI wants NSF feedback on a proposed line of research or when a CO is required.

AFTER 1/30/2023
A CO MAY BE REQUIRED

- Planning grants
- Rapid Response Research (RAPID)
- Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER)
- Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE)
- Funding Opportunities that require submission of Concept Outlines

A CO REQUIRES A NEW SUBMISSION TOOL

- PIs are required to use the Program Suitability & Proposal Concept Tool (ProSPCT)—<https://suitability.nsf.gov/s/>
- ProSPCT requires a valid Login.gov account to access (not Research.gov)
- Each PI will have to create a new account
- Staff can submit on behalf of the PI
- After submitting a webform, the PI can track the status of submissions
- **Note: CO Submissions do not have to go through an AOR (SPO)**

THE “CO” PROCESS

- Step 1: Choose a proposal type (e.g. RAPID)
- Step 2: Select at least one and no more than three target NSF units (directorates or divisions)
- Provide project information (key terms, describe relevance to program criteria)
- Safe draft—warning will occur if text is too long.
- Submit final version and get validation of required fields
- After confirmation is provided no changes can be made unless the CO is cancelled.

AFTER SUBMISSION

- An email alert that the CO has been submitted will be provided to the PI
- An NSF Program Officer will review and assign the CO to the appropriate NSF unit
- The PI will receive an alert indicating the assignment of the CO
- A Program Officer in the assigned unit may then ask the PI for clarification and/or ask questions about the CO.
- Following review, a Program Officer in the assigned unit will provide a response to the PI.

REMINDERS

- COs are required for some programs, but they can be submitted at any time for other NSF initiatives
- There are no limits on the number of COs that can be submitted by a PI or an institution
- There is no linkage between Research.gov and Login.gov at this time.
- The only way to submit a CO through NSF ProSPCT is through Login.gov

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- 2022 Policy Office Webinar Series: Concept Outlines at NSF;
<https://nspolicyoutreach.com/resources/september-27-webinar-concepts/>
- See Links To:
Login.gov: <https://login.gov>
The Program Suitability & Proposal Concept Tool (ProSPCT):
<https://suitability.nsf.gov/s/>