Click on a specific question to view the answer, or browse all the FAQs and responses below.

1. **How do I know if I can submit an NSF proposal to Grants.gov (GdG) using PennERA system-to-system (S2S)?**
   - If the NSF Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) indicates that the proposal can be submitted to either Grants.gov or FastLane, then it can be submitted to GdG via PennERA S2S.
   - There are two types of proposals that NSF does not make available for Grants.gov submission:
     - Collaborative proposals submitted separately by two or more institutions can only be submitted to FastLane and cannot use S2S.
     - Fellowships submitted directly by the applicant – the potential Fellow – rather than the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania can only be submitted through FastLane. The institutional support portion of the award is setup as a PennERA generic record.

   **NOTE:** Current information about all S2S submissions is available at [http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/PennERA.html](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/PennERA.html) and by writing to PennERAHelp@lists.upenn.edu.

2. **What should I do if I can’t find the FOA or if there is an old close date?**
   - Always immediately notify the PennERA Help Desk if there are any questions about the FOA. We will work directly with NSF and/or InfoEd to quickly resolve any FOA issues.

3. **I have a collaborative proposal but only Penn is submitting the proposal; the collaborator will be a subcontract on the Penn proposal. Can this be submitted S2S?**
   - NSF also defines a proposal with subcontracts as “collaborative”, but it can be submitted S2S via GdG.
   - See FAQ #1 regarding collaborative proposals submitted by two or more separate institutions.

4. **How is a PennERA S2S submission to GdG inserted into FastLane?**
   - PennERA creates and submits the GdG data package.
   - NSF will retrieve the proposal after they are notified that it has passed GdG validations.
   - NSF then electronically inserts the proposal into FastLane. The PI and also the PennAORs mailbox will be notified, and information about any errors or warnings, with instructions about how to correct these, will also be provided.

5. **Do I need to create a proposal record first in FastLane?**
   - It is not necessary to first create the proposal record in FastLane. Only one record in PennERA needs to be created and completed.

6. **Where can I find NSF’s instructions for completing GdG submissions?**

7. **How do I know if I have correctly created the PennERA S2S record?**
   - On Setup Questions, the screen template should be “424 R&R NSF Dynamic (electronic submission)”. If this is not the template present in the record, contact PennERAHelp@lists.upenn.edu for assistance; **do not change the template.**

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**PennERA - Proposal Development**

**NSF System-to-System (S2S) FAQs**

8. Which budgeting model should I choose on the Setup Questions tab?
   - The preferred budgeting models are either “Budget by Total Project” (the default setting) or “Budget period by period”.
   - “424 Budgeting” is not required just because the proposal uses the SF424 formset. It may be selected, but the other methods are encouraged because they require much less data entry and verification.

9. How do I enter the Sponsor Credential in the proposal record?¹
   - This is the 9-digit NSF FastLane ID and is a required data element for the PI and all co-PD/PI’s.
   - Instructions for adding this information to the PennERA Profile can be found on page 19 of the PennERA Proposal Development User Guide. A link to this guide can be found at [http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/PennERA.html](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/PennERA.html).
   - If this information is added after a proposal record has been created, the information will have to be selected in the existing Proposal Development record.
   - Once this information has been entered in the Profile, future records created will automatically contain it.
   - For non-Penn personnel, the information needs to be included in the record at the time they are added to the list of personnel in the record.
   - PD currently will submit applications with this information missing.
     - The proposal will still be inserted into FastLane but won’t be associated with the PI, so s/he will be unable to access it.
     - The proposal will need to be resubmitted through Grants.gov with the credential included. See FAQ #10.
     - Contact ORS pre-award for assistance in obtaining an NSF FastLane ID.

10. How do I enter the Degree Type and Degree Year information in the proposal record on the Personnel tab?¹
    - NSF requires that the proposal include the Degree Type (abbreviation) and Degree Year for the PI. NSF does not extrapolate the data from the PI’s FastLane Profile.
    - Instructions for adding this information to the PennERA Profile can be found on page 19 of the PennERA Proposal Development User Guide. A link to this guide can be found at [http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/PennERA.html](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/PennERA.html).
    - If this information is added after a proposal record has been created, the information will have to be selected in the existing Proposal Development record.
    - Once this information has been entered in the Profile, future records created will automatically contain it.
    - PD currently will submit applications with this information missing.
      - FastLane will provide a warning message:
        - “The Degree Type was entered as <UNKW> and the Degree is defaulted to 1900…”
      - Instructions for fixing the problem will also be provided:
        - “…If this information is not correct, please go to Proposals, Awards and Status in FastLane, log in as the PI and update the Degree Information for the PI.”

11. How do I submit a changed/corrected application if there is a problem with my submission?
    - Most corrections can be made within the application in FastLane, using either the Update Module or the Budget Revision Module:
      - It is not necessary to resubmit the PennERA S2S record to Grants.gov.
      - Work with the ORS Pre-Award person who submitted the proposal to make the changes in directly in FastLane.
    - If the change cannot be done using one of the above options, the application will need to be resubmitted through Grants.gov.
      - The PennAOR needs to withdraw the application from FastLane.
      - DO NOT identify the proposal as a “Changed/Corrected Application” on the SF424 R&R tab.
    - **IMPORTANT!** Make all changes or resubmit the S2S record prior to the deadline to ensure an on-time acceptance by FastLane.

12. How do I exclude “Participant!” cost categories from MTDC and F&A calculation?
    - PennERA automatically excludes these categories; no adjustment is needed.

13. This project involves foreign countries. How should I list these in section 6a of Other Project Info so that the information correctly populates to FastLane?
    - Include each country name, followed by a comma.
    - Note that NSF now limits the number of foreign countries that may be entered here to five.

14. The PI wants to list suggested reviewers and names of potential reviewers to exclude. How should these be entered on the form?
    - Enter each person’s name, followed by a comma.
    - NOTE: This form is not automatically included in the PennERA proposal record; it should be selected on Setup Questions if needed.

¹ If credential and degree information are added after the proposal has been created in PennERA, a departmental person with PennERA Profile edit privileges will have to manually select the value in the proposal record. However, records created after this information has been included in the Profile will have the information automatically populated on the Personnel tab detail.
15. How can I list some Key Personnel on the Senior/Key Personnel form but not in the R&R Detail Budget form?
   - Make certain that 424 budgeting has not been selected as the budget method on Setup Questions.
   - Confirm with ORS Pre-Award that it is allowable for anyone who is Key Personnel on the project to be only listed on the Senior/Key Personnel form and not in the detail budget.
   - Contact the PennERA Help Desk for assistance.
     - Personnel should be listed with 0% effort in most instances. They will then appear only on the Senior/Key Personnel form.
     - There are occasional circumstances that require slightly different data entry; Help Desk staff can help make that determination.

16. The PI of this proposal isn’t required to have any effort. Will it fail at Grants.gov if their effort = 0%?
   - Make certain that you have not selected 424 budgeting as the budget method on Setup Questions.
   - Confirm with ORS Pre-Award that 0% effort for the PI is allowable.
   - Contact the PennERA Help Desk for assistance.
     - PI most likely can be listed with 0% effort. S/he will then appear only on the Senior/Key Person form.
     - There are occasional circumstances that require slightly different data entry; Help Desk staff can help make that determination.

17. How do I handle cost-sharing in an NSF proposal record?
   - Make certain that you have not selected 424 budgeting as the budget method on Setup Questions.
   - Discuss the cost-sharing aspects of the proposal with ORS Pre-Award before contacting the PennERA Help Desk for assistance in how to provide the information in the PennERA record.
   - NSF has provided updated instructions in their Proposal Preparation Guide; however, there is ongoing review by NSF about the proper way to handle this situation. Please contact the PennERA Help Desk if you plan to submit an NSF proposal that has this issue.

18. Is an upload required at both the Facilities and Other Resources and the Equipment upload locations?
   - A document is required by NSF at each location.
   - If there is no Facilities and Other Resources or no equipment to describe, a document needs to be uploaded that states that fact.
   - When these documents are retrieved by NSF, they are concatenated into one document that can be found at the Facilities location in the proposal record in FastLane.

19. Where can I upload the Data Management Plan and/or the Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan?
   - NSF has specific requirements regarding these documents. Be sure to check the NSF publications listed in the answer to FAQ #7.
   - These two documents, when required, are uploaded to the latest version of the NSF Cover Page, which is located on the S2S Forms tab.
   - Be sure to follow NSF’s instructions and use the correct file names. Using abbreviations, such as “DMP” or “Data Mgmt”, will result in submission failures, as NSF is electronically validating expressly on the required name of the file.

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