

NSF Announces New Policies to Protect Researchers From Harassment

September 20, 2018



The National Science Foundation (NSF) has announced new efforts to combat harassment of members of the research community. As of October 21, 2018, organizations that receive grants from NSF will be required to report findings of sexual harassment to NSF, and NSF will also open a secure online portal for submitting harassment reports.

According to NSF's new policies, organizations receiving NSF funding will be required to notify the agency of:

- Any findings or determinations that an NSF-funded principal investigator or co-principal investigator committed harassment, including sexual harassment or sexual assault.
- The placement of the principal investigator or co-principal investigator on administrative leave, or of the imposition of any administrative action relating to a harassment or sexual assault finding or investigation.

NSF may remove principal investigators from grants, reduce award funding, or terminate awards as a result of information that is reported. And these new requirements will apply also to environments like conferences, field sites, and on the internet—"everywhere NSF-funded science and education is conducted," says NSF.

These new policies follow from a public input period held by NSF earlier in 2018, and also reflect the conclusions of a recent [National Academies report on sexual harassment of women in science, engineering, and medicine](#).

Said NSF Director France Córdova in a press release, "This new policy is intended to provide targeted, serious consequences for harassers. It gives people the tools to make harassment stop without disturbing others' careers and lives ... NSF is committed to ensuring the safety and security of the people our awards support."

[To learn more about NSF's efforts to protect against harassment, click here.](#)