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# NASA Procedural Requirements

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2009**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**

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## Standard Format for NASA Research Announcements (NRAs) and other Announcements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

**Responsible Office: Contract Management Division**

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# Preface

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## P.1 Purpose

The purpose of this NPR is to establish a standard announcement format for NASA announcements that may result in the award of a grant or cooperative agreement.

## P.2 Applicability

This NPR is applicable to NASA Research Announcements (NRAs) and other announcements for grants and cooperative agreements that are issued at NASA Headquarters, NASA Centers, except for JPL, and Component Facilities.

## P.3 Authority

- a. 42 U.S.C. 2473(c)(5), The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.
- b. NPD 5101.32, Procurement.
- c. OMB Policy Letter entitled, "Format for Financial Assistance Program. Announcements", dated June 17, 2003.
- d. 48 CFR Chapter 18, the NASA FAR Supplement (NFS).

## P.4 References

- a. NPR 5800.1, Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook.
- b. 31 U.S.C. 6301 et seq., Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977, as
- c. amended.
- d. OMB Circulars A-21, dated April 26, 1996, as amended; A-110, dated November 19, 1998, as amended; A-122, dated June 1, 1998, as amended; and A-133, dated June 24, 1997.
- e. 48 CFR Chapter 1, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).
- f. 48 CFR Chapter 18, the NFS.
- g. NPD 1000.1, NASA Strategic Plan.
- h. 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- i. 20 U.S.C. 1681 to 1688, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972.
- j. 29 U.S.C. 794, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- k. 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq., Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended.
- l. 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.
- m. 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq., National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

## P.5 Cancellation

None.

**/S/**

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# Chapter 1. Policy

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## 1.1 Background

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a policy directive, "Format for Financial Assistance Program Announcements." on June 17, 2003, to establish a standard format for Federal agency announcements of funding opportunities under programs that award discretionary grants or cooperative agreements. The format is designed so that similar types of information are grouped in the same sections in announcements of different Federal funding opportunities. A Governmentwide format will provide easy access to the information about Federal opportunities. There is text in each of the format's sections to describe the types of information that an agency would include in that section of an actual announcement. The Federal awarding agencies jointly developed this format as part of their grant streamlining efforts to implement the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999.

## 1.2 Use of the Standard Announcement Format

The standard announcement format is required for all NASA announcements of funding opportunities under programs that may award grants or cooperative agreements, including NASA Research Announcements (NRAs).

## **Chapter 2. Responsibilities**

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### **2.1 Office of Procurement**

The Office of Procurement is responsible for issuing guidance to the Agency on the use of NRAs and other announcements of grants and cooperative agreements and for ensuring compliance with OMB policy in the area of announcements.

### **2.2 Program Managers/Mission Directorate Associate Administrators**

Program Managers/Mission Directorate Associate Administrators are responsible for ensuring that the standard format is used for announcements of programs under their cognizance.

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# Chapter 3. Procedures

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## 3.1 Text of the Standard Announcement Format

This document is a uniform format for Federal agencies' announcements of funding opportunities under which discretionary awards of grants or cooperative agreements may be made. The format has two parts. The first part provides overview information, and the second part includes the full text of the announcement. Follow the format exactly as it appears below, using the same title headers and numbering scheme. Previous NASA announcements that have used this format may be reviewed on the NASA Acquisition Internet Service, located at <http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/nais/index.cgi> and at the NASA Research Opportunities Online site at <http://research.hq.nasa.gov/research.cfm>. Additional information on the applicability of this format is found in Appendix A, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

With respect to electronic methods for providing information about funding opportunities or accepting applicants' submissions of information, NASA is responsible for compliance with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Therefore, ensure that all Internet sites referenced in NASA announcements are section 508-compliant, current, and accessible. Information concerning compliance with section 508 may be found at <http://www.section508.nasa.gov>.

## Overview Information

- A. Required Overview Content. Display prominently the following information, in the sequential order shown, in a location preceding the full text of the announcement:
  1. Federal Agency Name (Required). The Federal agency name is "National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)." Also include the specific

- office(s) within NASA that are involved in the announcement. The specific office(s) may include a Headquarters Mission Directorate, NASA Center, and/or NASA Program Office. Examples include "NASA Headquarters, Exploration Systems" and "NASA, Ames Research Center."
2. Funding Opportunity Title (Required). State the title of the announcement in this section. Include the program name if it is not referenced in the Funding Opportunity Title. This section can also include a description of the type of announcement. Examples of types of announcements include "NASA Research Announcement," "Educational Grant Opportunity," and "Cooperative Agreement Notice."
  3. Announcement Type (Required). Indicate whether this is the initial announcement of this funding opportunity or a modification of a previously announced opportunity. If the announcement modifies a previous one, provide the date of that announcement and identify the portions that are being modified. Note: a modification of an announcement does not need to include all of the sections of the full announcement text. For modifications of announcements, this section may also include an Internet address where the original announcement is located. NASA Headquarters research announcements are typically posted on NASA Research Opportunities Online, located at <http://research.hq.nasa.gov/research> and on the NASA Acquisition Internet Service (NAIS), located at <http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/nais/index> <http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/nais/index.cgi>. NASA Center announcements are typically posted on the NAIS site.
  4. Funding Opportunity Number (Required). Assign an announcement number in accordance with NFS 1804.7102, "Numbering Scheme for Solicitations," located at: [http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1804.htm#4\\_71](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1804.htm#4_71), and state that number in this section.
  5. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s) (Required). NASA has been granted an exemption to this requirement through the assignment of a placeholder code and title. State "00.000" (meaning nonapplicable) in this section.
  6. Dates (Required). List the key dates for potential applicants. Key dates can include due dates for the following; Notices of Intent (NOI), advance notices, Executive Order 12372 submissions, and proposals. For announcements issued before a program's proposal materials are available, include the anticipated date on which those materials will be released.
  7. OMB Approval Number (Required). All NRAs must state "OMB Approval Number 2700-0087" in this section. This requirement does not apply to announcements for grants and cooperative agreements other than NRAs.

- B. Optional, Additional Overview Content. Following the required overview information described in paragraph (a) above, "Required Overview Content," present any optional overview information in a sequential order that parallels the organization of the full text of the announcement. Examples of overview information that could help potential applicants decide whether to read the full announcement are as follows: a concise description of the funding opportunity; the total amount to be awarded; the anticipated amounts and/or numbers of individual awards; the types of instruments that may be awarded (such as contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc.); what types of entities are eligible to apply; whether cost sharing is required; a breakdown of the estimates by research area; and any limitations on the numbers of proposals that each applicant may submit. (Note: not all categories of overview information will be applicable to every announcement. Also, the overview information may be provided as an estimate or a range.) This section may also include other information that could help applicants quickly and easily find what they need: for example, where to obtain proposal materials.
- C. Method of Presentation. The summary information described above in paragraphs (a), "Required Overview Content" and (b), "Optional, Additional Overview Content" above may be presented in an executive summary format or a cover and/or inside cover format. The NASA program issuing the announcement may choose which format to use.
- Executive Summary. The announcement may include an executive summary before the full text of the announcement. The purpose of the executive summary is to provide an overview of the announcement. Especially for announcements that are long (25 pages or more in length) or complex, consider including an executive summary with at least the required overview information described above in paragraph (a), "Required Overview Content." as well as any additional information described in paragraph (b), "Optional, Additional, Overview Content." The executive summary must be concise and generally should not exceed two pages. The executive summary is similar to the "Summary of Solicitation" and "Introduction and Background" sections that were used in previous announcement formats.
  - Cover and/or Inside Cover. The cover and/or inside cover format is an alternative to the executive summary format. This format provides at least the required overview information described above in Overview Information, paragraph (a), "Required Overview Content" on the cover and/or inside cover of the announcement. The cover and/or inside cover is the first screen a potential applicant would see in an electronic

announcement. Generally, this option is used for announcements that are brief, more straightforward, and not complex.

## Full Text of the Announcement

The full text of the announcement is organized in sections. The format indicates, immediately following the title of each section, whether that section is required or optional in every announcement. The format is designed so that similar types of information are grouped in the same sections in announcements of different Federal funding opportunities. There is text in each of the format's sections to describe the types of information that NASA would include in that section of the actual announcement. Note that the terms "application" and "proposal" are used interchangeably.

If a NASA program requires information on a subject that the format does not specifically discuss address that subject in the most appropriate section(s). For example, if NASA chooses to address performance goals in the announcement, that can be done in the funding opportunity description, the proposal content, or the reporting requirements. Similarly, when this format calls for a type of information to be in one particular section, a NASA program needing to address that subject in other sections may elect to use cross-references between sections. Use hyperlinks for cross-references in electronic versions of the announcement. If a large document (such as model contract, model data procurement document, data package) needs to be attached to the announcement, then it may be included as an appendix to the announcement and referenced in the appropriate section of the standard announcement format.

The Guidebook for Proposers Responding to a NASA Research Announcement (NRA) (hereafter referred to as the Guidebook) includes all policies and procedures for the preparation and submission of proposals in response to NASA Headquarters NRAs, as well as those for NASA's review and selection of proposals for funding. The Guidebook is located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nraguidebook/>. In many sections, this standard announcement format requires the writer of an announcement to provide information that is already addressed in the Guidebook. For these sections, the writer may include a cross-reference to the applicable sections of the Guidebook. Additional information on the applicability of the Guidebook is found in Appendix A., Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

The Guidebook is not usually applicable to Center announcements or certain Headquarters announcements for grants and cooperative agreements; however,

the Guidebook does include information useful to the writer of an announcement. If a writer of an announcement wishes to include information from the Guidebook into that announcement, the writer may either (1) copy information from the Guidebook directly into the announcement and/or tailor the Guidebook text to the announcement; or (2) include references to section(s) of the Guidebook in the applicable section of the announcement.

The following offices can provide additional information about policy requirements: The Sponsored Research Business Activity group of the Headquarters Office of Procurement (SRBA's URL is <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/lib> <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/srba/>); the Program Operations Division at the Headquarters Office of Procurement; and the Procurement Office at each NASA Center.

The sections of the full text of the announcement are described in the following paragraphs.

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description (Required)**

This section contains the full programmatic description of the announcement. This section may be as long as needed to adequately communicate to potential applicants the areas in which funding may be provided. This section describes NASA's funding priorities and/or the focus areas in which NASA intends to provide assistance. As appropriate, this section may include any program history such as whether this is a new program or a new or changed area of program emphasis. This section may also communicate indicators of successful projects (for example, if the program encourages collaborative efforts), and may include examples of projects that have been funded previously. This section can also discuss the mission and strategic goals of NASA, the organization, and/or the program issuing the announcement. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section can include a cross-reference to the "Introduction to NASA's Sponsored Research Programs" section in the preface of the Guidebook. Any education and/or public outreach responsibilities must be identified. A table describing the roles and responsibilities of each organization involved in the announcement may be helpful. This section may also include other information the program deems necessary such as citations for authorizing statutes and regulations peculiar to the announcement.

NRAs shall include the following statement in this section: "Safety is the freedom from those conditions that can cause death, injury, occupational illness, damage to or loss of equipment or property, or damage to the environment. NASA's safety priority is to protect the following: (1) the public, (2) astronauts and pilots, (3) the NASA workforce (including employees working under NASA

award instruments), and (4) high-value equipment and property."

NRA's shall use the following statement in this section when the NRA is to be issued before funds are available: "Funds are not currently available for awards under this NRA. The Government's obligation to make award(s) is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds from which payment can be made and the receipt of proposals that NASA determines are acceptable for award under this NRA."

Announcements that reference the Guidebook can use the sample language in the following three paragraphs:

"All policies and procedures for the preparation and submission of proposals, as well as those for NASA's review and selection of proposals for funding, are presented in a separate document entitled Guidebook for Proposers Responding to a NASA Research Announcement(NRA)(Guidebook) that is located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nraguidebook/>.

By reference, the newest edition of this Guidebook (January 2004) is hereby incorporated into this NRA, and proposers to this NRA are responsible for understanding and complying with its procedures before preparing and submitting their proposals. Proposals that do not conform to its standards may be declared noncompliant and returned without review.

The other chapters and appendices of this Guidebook provide supplemental information about the entire NRA process, including NASA policies for the solicitation of proposals; guidelines for writing complete and effective proposals; the NASA policies and procedures for the review and selection of proposals; as well as for issuing and managing the awards to the institutions that submitted selected proposals; and Frequently Asked Questions about a variety of the NASA proposal and award processes and procedures. Note that the NASA policy for proposals involving non-U.S. participants is given in section (I) of appendix B of this Guidebook. Comments and suggestions of any nature about this Guidebook are encouraged and welcomed and may be directed to Sponsored Research Business Activity group of the NASA Office of Procurement, NASA Headquarters, 300 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20546-0001; e-mail: [SRBA@nasa.gov](mailto:SRBA@nasa.gov). SRBA's URL is <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/srba/>."

## **II. Award Information (Required)**

Provide sufficient information to help an applicant make an informed decision about whether to submit a proposal. Relevant information could include: the total amount of funding that NASA expects to award through the announcement;

the anticipated number of awards; the expected amounts of individual awards (which may be a range or an estimate); the amount of funding per award, on average, experienced in previous years; and the anticipated start dates and periods of performance for new awards. (Note: not all of the award information categories above will be applicable to every announcement.)

This section also must address whether proposals for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with proposals for new awards. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section can include a cross-reference to Section 1.5.

This section may indicate the type(s) of assistance instrument (for example, a contract, grant, cooperative agreement, and/or other instrument) that may be awarded if proposals are successful. If cooperative agreements may be awarded, this section either must describe the "substantial involvement" that the agency expects to have or should reference where the potential applicant can find that information, such as in Section I, "Funding Opportunity Description," or Section VI, "Award Administration Information." NRAs must also indicate in this section whether procurement contracts may be awarded.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

This section addresses considerations or factors that make an applicant or proposal eligible or ineligible for consideration. This includes the eligibility of particular types of applicant organizations, any factors affecting the eligibility of the principal investigator or project director, and any criteria that make particular projects ineligible. This section must make clear whether an applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of a proposal deadline will result in NASA returning the proposal without review, or even though a proposal may be reviewed, will preclude NASA from making an award. Key elements to be addressed are as follows:

1. Eligible Applicants (Required). This section must clearly identify the types of entities that are eligible to apply. If there are no restrictions on eligibility, this section may simply indicate that all potential applicants are eligible. If there are restrictions on eligibility, then it is important to be clear about the specific types of entities that are eligible, not just the types that are ineligible. For example, if the program is limited to applicants that submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI), or to nonprofit organizations subject to section 501(c)(3) of the tax code, this section of the announcement must state this fact. Eligibility also can be expressed by exception: for example, open to all types of domestic applicants other than individuals. This section must refer to any portion of Section IV, "Application and

Submission Information" in order to specify documentation that must be submitted to support an eligibility determination; for example, proof of nonprofit 501(c)(3) status as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. To the extent that any funding restriction in Section IV, paragraph 5, "Funding Restrictions" could affect the eligibility of an applicant or project, this section must either restate that restriction in this section or provide a cross-reference to its description in this section.

If there are no restrictions on eligibility, the announcement can use the following sample language: "Participation in this program is open to all categories of U.S. and non-U.S. organizations, including educational institutions, industry, nonprofit institutions, as well as NASA Centers, and other U.S. Government agencies. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, other minority educational institutions, and small businesses and organizations owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals or women are particularly encouraged to apply. Participation by non-U.S. organizations in this program is encouraged subject to NASA's policy of no-exchange-of-funds. For NRAs, NASA policy on research with foreign organizations is covered in paragraph (l) of NFS 1852.235-72, "Instructions for Responding to NASA Research Announcements," located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/5228-41.htm>. Scroll down the page to find the clause. For grants and cooperative agreements, NASA policy on research with foreign organizations is covered in Section &sec;1260.12(e), "Choice of award instrument" of the NASA Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook (Handbook), located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/granta.html#126012>.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching (Required). This section must state whether there is required cost sharing, matching, or cost participation, without which, a proposer would be ineligible. If cost sharing is not required, this section must explicitly say so. Required cost sharing may be a certain percentage or amount, or may be in the form of contributions of specified items or activities; for example, provision of equipment. It is important that the announcement be clear about any restrictions on the types of cost (for example, in-kind contributions) that are acceptable as cost sharing. The announcement should include cost sharing language substantially similar to the following three paragraphs. (If the announcement limits awards to grants and cooperative agreements, then the first paragraph below is not applicable.)

- "Cost sharing is not required for contract awards except as provided in NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) 1816.303-70 for awards resulting from

unsolicited proposals for research submitted by commercial organizations. NFS 1816.303-70 is located at

[http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1816.htm#16\\_303-70](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1816.htm#16_303-70).

- For a NASA Center, an institution of higher education, hospital, or other non-profit organization seeking to receive a grant or cooperative agreement, cost sharing is not required; however, NASA can accept cost sharing if it is voluntarily offered. For these recipients, Section B, Provision &sec;1260.123, "Cost sharing or matching," located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grantb.html#1260.123>, describes the acceptable forms of cost sharing.
  - For a commercial organization seeking to receive a grant or cooperative agreement, cost sharing is required, unless the commercial organization can demonstrate that they will not receive substantial compensating benefits for performance of the work. If no substantial compensating benefits will be received, then cost sharing is not required, but can be accepted. Section B, Provision 1260.123, "Cost sharing or matching," and the special conditions at section A, subpart 1260.4(b) describes cost sharing and allowability for awards with commercial firms that do not require cost sharing. Section D, Provision &sec;1274.204, "Costs and payments," located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grantd.html#1274204> of the NASA Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook describes the acceptable forms of cost sharing for commercial organizations."
3. Other (Required, if applicable). If there are other eligibility criteria, the other eligibility criteria must be clearly stated. Other eligibility requirements include criteria that have the effect of making a proposal or project ineligible for award; whether the criteria is referred to as "responsiveness" criteria, "go no-go" criteria, "threshold" criteria, or other criteria. For example, it is important that this section state if entities that have been found to be in violation of a particular Federal statute are ineligible. If there are no other eligibility criteria, this section must state this fact. This section must also state any limit on the number of proposals an applicant may submit under the announcement and make clear whether the limitation is on the submitting organization, individual investigator/program director, or both. Also use this section to address any eligibility criteria for beneficiaries or for program participants other than award recipients.

## **IV. Proposal and Submission Information**

1. Address to Request Proposal Package (Required). This section must

inform potential applicants how to get proposal forms, kits, or other materials that are required to apply. If this announcement contains all of the proposal materials, this section must include a statement to that effect. This section may give an Internet address where potential applicants may access the materials. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section can include a cross-reference to chapter 3.

2. Content and Form of Proposal Submission (Required). This section must identify the required content of a proposal and the forms or formats that an applicant must use to submit the proposal. If any requirements are stated elsewhere because they are general requirements that apply to multiple programs or funding opportunities, this section may refer to where those requirements may be found. This section also must address any preliminary submissions, for example, an NOI or Advance Notice that the agency requires or encourages, either to facilitate its own planning or to provide potential applicants with feedback to help them decide whether to submit a full proposal.

This section must include all content and forms or formats that constitute a complete proposal, including: general information (for example, applicant name, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address, and address), budgetary information, narrative programmatic information, biographical sketches, and all other required information (for example, documentation that an applicant meets stated eligibility criteria or certifications or assurances of compliance with applicable requirements, such as evidence of compliance with human subjects requirements). This section must either include required forms or formats as part of this announcement or state where the applicant may obtain them. For NRAs, the content and form of proposal submissions are addressed in NFS 1852.235-72, "Instructions for Responding to NASA Research Announcements," located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/5228-41.htm>. Scroll down the page to find the clause. This section should include NFS 1852.235-72 and any additional proposal instructions. For NRAs that reference the Guidebook, this section can include cross-references to chapter 2 of Appendix B of the Guidebook (which incorporates NFS 1852.235-72) and Appendix E of the Guidebook. There are no standard NASA proposal instructions for announcements of grants and cooperative agreements other than NRAs; however, the standard certifications and assurances that are required for every grant and cooperative agreement announcement may be found on the SRBA Web page at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/srba>.

This section must specifically address content and form or format requirements for:

- NOIs, preapplications, letters of intent, or advance notices that NASA requires or encourages. (Refer to Section IV, paragraph (3), "Submission Dates and Times"). Any limitations on the number of pages or other formatting requirements for the NOIs, preapplications, letters of intent, or advance notices must be addressed in this section. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to chapter 3.1.
- The proposal as a whole. For hard copy submissions, this may include any limitations on the number of pages, font size and typeface, margins, paper size, number of copies, and sequence or assembly requirements. If electronic submission is permitted or required, that could include special requirements for formatting or signatures. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to chapter 2. Any unique instructions apart from chapter 2 should be included in this section; for example, specific instructions for NASA Civil Service Employees applying for an award.
- For announcements that do not reference Guidebook, this section must include language substantially similar to the following three paragraphs:

"The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database is the primary vendor database for the U.S. Federal Government. The CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of agency acquisition missions. Active registration in the CCR database is required prior to submitting a proposal. Information for registering in the CCR and online documents may be found at <http://www.ccr.gov>.

The Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). The DUNS number is required for registration in CCR and must be provided on the cover page of the proposal. A DUNS number may be obtained by contacting D&B at 1-866-705-5711 or <http://www.dnb.com/us/>. The process to request a DUNS number is free of charge. Please note that the DUNS number is site-specific.

A Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code must be included on the cover page of the proposal."

- Component pieces of the proposal. (For example, if all copies of the proposal must bear original signatures on the face page or the program narrative may not exceed 10 pages). This includes any pieces that may be submitted separately by third parties; for example, references or letters confirming commitments from third parties that will be contributing a

portion of any required cost sharing.

Information that successful applicants must submit after NASA notifies them of its intent to make awards, but prior to award. This could include, for example, an updated budget, information NASA needs to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and other environmental laws, regulations, and Executive orders.

3. Submission Dates and Times (Required). The announcement must identify due dates and times for all submissions, including not only the full proposals but also any preliminary submissions. Examples of submissions include NOIs, preapplications, letters of intent, or advance notices. This section also includes any other submissions of information before award that are separate from the full proposal. If the funding opportunity is a general announcement that is open for a period of time with no specific due dates for proposals, this section must include a statement to that effect. Note that the information on dates that is included in this section also must appear with other overview information in a location preceding the full text of the announcement. Refer to Overview Information, paragraph (a)(6), "Dates" for this format.

For each type of submission that is addressed, indicate whether the submission is encouraged or required and, if required, any deadline date for submission (or dates, if the agency plans more than one cycle of proposal submission, review, and award under the announcement). The announcement must state or provide a reference to another document that states:

- Any deadline in terms of a date and local time.
- The effect of missing a deadline. For example, whether late applications are neither reviewed or are reviewed and considered under some circumstances. For NRAs that do not reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to NFS 1815.208, located at [http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1815.htm#15\\_208](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1815.htm#15_208). For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include cross-references to NFS 1815.208 and chapter 3.2 of the Guidebook. For announcements of grants and cooperative agreements other than NRAs, there is no standard NASA policy on the effect of missing a deadline.
- What the deadline means. For example, whether the deadline is the date and time by which the agency must receive the proposal, the date by which the proposal must be postmarked, or if the deadline represents another event. State how the deadline depends, if at all, on the submission method: for example, mail, electronic, or personal/courier delivery. For

announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to chapter 3.2.

- How the receiving NASA office determines whether a proposal, NOI, or preapplication has been submitted before the deadline. This includes the form of acceptable proof of mailing or system-generated documentation of receipt date and time. This section also may indicate whether, when, and in what form the applicant will receive an acknowledgment of receipt. This section must display the above information in ways that will be easy to understand and use. It can be difficult to extract all needed information from narrative paragraphs, even when they are well written. A table that provides a summary of the information may help applicants and serve as a checklist to verify the completeness of their proposal package before submission. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to chapter 3.2.
4. Intergovernmental Review (Required, if applicable). This section must state whether Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," is applicable. This requirement rarely applies to NASA programs. Executive Order 12372, refers to actions "that have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national governmental and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government," and is accessible at: [http://12.46.245.173/pls/portal30/catalog.REQ\\_FOR\\_12372.show](http://12.46.245.173/pls/portal30/catalog.REQ_FOR_12372.show). In alerting applicants that they must contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the state's process under EO 12372, this section may contain the names and addresses of the SPOCs listed on OMB's home page at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.
  5. Funding Restrictions (Required). This section must include information on funding restrictions in order to allow an applicant to develop a proposal and budget consistent with program requirements. Examples include whether construction is an allowable activity, if there are any limitations on direct costs such as foreign travel or equipment purchases, and if there are any limits on indirect costs (or facilities and administrative costs). This section must also indicate whether awards will allow reimbursement of pre-award costs. The following three paragraphs provide sample language:

"Allowable costs for contract awards are covered in part 31 of the FAR, located at <http://www.arnet.gov/far/loadmainre.html> and part 31 of the NASA FAR Supplement (NFS), located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/183> <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1831.htm>. Pre-contract costs are covered in FAR 31.109, located at <http://www.arnet.gov/far/loadmainre.html>; NFS 1831.205-32, located at

[http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1831.htm#31\\_205-70](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1831.htm#31_205-70); and NFS 1852.231-70, located at [http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/5228-41.htm#52\\_231-70](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/5228-41.htm#52_231-70).

Allowable costs for grant and cooperative agreement awards with universities, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations and awards with commercial organizations that do not involve cost sharing are covered in Provision &sec;1260.127 of the Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook, located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grantb.html#1260.127>. Pre-award costs are covered in Provision &sec;1260.125, located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grantb.html#1260.125>.

Allowable costs for grant and cooperative agreement awards with commercial firms involving cost sharing are covered in Provision &sec;1274.204 of the Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook, located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grantd.html#1274204>. Pre-award costs are covered in FAR 31.109, located at <http://www.arnet.gov/far/loadmainre.html> and NFS [1831.205-32](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1831.htm#31_205-32), located at [http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1831.htm#31\\_205-70](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1831.htm#31_205-70)."

6. Other Submission Requirements (Required). This section must address any other submission requirements not included in the other paragraphs of this section. This may include the format of submission, paper or electronic, for each type submission. Applicants should not be required to submit in more than one format. This section must also indicate whether proposals are to be submitted in hard copy, electronically, or either.

This section must also indicate where proposals (and any NOIs or preapplications) are to be submitted if sent by postal mail, electronic means, or hand-delivery. For postal mail submission, this should include the name of an office, official, individual or function (for example, proposal receipt center) and a complete mailing address. For electronic submission, this should include the URL or e-mail address, whether a password(s) is required, whether particular software or other electronic capabilities are required, what to do in the event of system problems, and a point of contact that will be available in the event the applicant experiences technical difficulties. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to chapter 3.

## V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria (Required). This section must address the criteria that NASA will use to evaluate proposals. This includes the merit and other review criteria

that evaluators will use to judge proposals, including any statutory, regulatory, or other preferences such as, minority status or Native American tribal preferences that will be applied in the review process. Criteria that NASA uses to evaluate proposals are distinct from eligibility criteria that are addressed before a proposal is accepted for review and any program policy or other factors that are applied during the selection process after the review process is completed. The intent is to give applicants visibility into the evaluation process, so that they can make informed decisions when preparing their proposals and so that the process is as fair and equitable as possible.

The announcement must clearly describe all criteria, including any subcriteria. If criteria vary in importance, the announcement must specify the relative percentages, weights, or other means used to distinguish them. For statutory, regulatory, or other preferences, the announcement must provide a detailed explanation of those preferences with an explicit indication of their effect; for example, whether they result in additional points being assigned. This section must include language substantially similar to the following: "Cost sharing is not part of the evaluation criteria; however, cost sharing may affect NASA's evaluation of the intrinsic merit of the proposal." For NRAs, this section may include a cross-reference to paragraph (i) of NFS 1852.235-72. In accordance with NFS 1852.235-72, the standard evaluation factors used in NRAs are: (1) relevance to NASA's objectives, (2) intrinsic merit, and (3) cost. These instructions state the relative importance of the factors as approximately equal in weight. The instructions may be supplemented, but only to the minimum extent necessary. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include cross-references to appendix B of the Guidebook (which incorporates NFS Clause 1852.235-72) and appendix C of the Guidebook. There are no standard NASA evaluation criteria for announcements of grants and cooperative agreements other than NRAs.

2. Review and Selection Process (Required). This section may vary in the level of detail provided. The announcement must list any program policy or other factors or elements, other than merit criteria, that the selecting official may use in selecting proposals for award. Examples include geographical dispersion, program balance, and diversity. If the review and selection process is covered in other areas of the proposal, this section can include a cross-reference.

Include other details as deemed appropriate. For example, this section may indicate the officials that are responsible for evaluation against the merit criteria

(such as peers external to the agency or Federal agency personnel) and/or which official makes the final selections for award. If the program has a multiphase review process (for example an external panel advising internal agency personnel who make final recommendations to the deciding official), this section may describe the phases. This section may also include: the number of people on an evaluation panel and how it operates, the way reviewers are selected, reviewer qualifications, and the way that conflicts of interest are avoided. In addition, if NASA permits applicants to nominate suggested reviewers of their proposals or suggest those they feel may be inappropriate due to a conflict of interest, that information must be included in this section. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to appendix C of the Guidebook.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates (Optional). This section provides applicants with information for planning purposes. If there is a single proposal deadline followed by the simultaneous review of all proposals, this section may include information about the anticipated dates or timeframes for announcing or notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants and for having awards in place. If proposals are received and evaluated on a "rolling" basis at different times during an extended period, it may be appropriate to give applicants an estimate of the time needed to process a proposal and notify the applicant of NASA's decision. A "rolling basis" means that there are multiple due dates for the same program. This method is commonly used when the announcement is open for a long period of time and there is a need to level the workload required for evaluating the proposals.

## VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices (Required). This section must address what a successful applicant may expect to receive following selection. If the practice is for the selection official to provide a separate notice stating that a proposal has been selected before the award is made, this section would be the place to indicate that the letter is not an authorization to begin performance (to the extent that charging to awards of pre-award costs is allowed or at the recipient's own risk). This section must also indicate that the notice of award signed by the grant officer (or equivalent) is the authorizing document and whether it is provided through postal mail or by electronic means and to whom. This section may also address the timing, form, and content of notifications to unsuccessful applicants. This section must also state the type of funding instruments (such as grant, cooperative

agreement, contracts, etc.) that are expected to be awarded as a result of this announcement. NRAs typically result in the award of both contracts and grants. If a grant is expected to be awarded, this section must state the type(s) of grants that may be awarded (research, education, training, and/or facilities.) For NRAs, this section should include a cross-reference to paragraph (d) of NFS 1835.016-71, located at [http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1835.htm#35\\_016-71](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1835.htm#35_016-71). For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section can also include a cross-reference to appendix D of the Guidebook.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements (Required). This section must identify the usual administrative and national policy requirements that NASA's awards may include. Providing this information lets a potential applicant identify any requirements with which it would have difficulty complying if its proposal is successful. In those cases, early notification about the requirements allows the potential applicant to decide not to apply or to take needed actions before award. The announcement need not include all of the award terms and conditions, but may refer to a document (with information about how to obtain it) or Internet site where applicants can see the terms and conditions. Language similar to the following should be used when the announcement may result in grant or cooperative agreement awards: "Grant and cooperative agreement awards are subject to the NASA Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook. This handbook consists of four sections that prescribe the policies and procedures relating to the award and administration of NASA grants and cooperative agreements. Section A provides the text of provisions and special conditions and addresses NASA's authority, definitions, applicability, amendments, publications, deviations, pre-award requirements and post-award requirements currently covered by 14 CFR part 1260. Section B relates to grants and cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations. Sections A and B, with the special considerations in subpart 1260.4(b), apply to awards with commercial firms that do not involve cost sharing. Section C adopts the administrative requirements of OMB Circular No. A-102 and relates to administrative requirements for grants and cooperative agreements to state and local governments. Section D relates to awards with commercial firms. The Handbook is located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grcover.htm>" NRAs that will result in the award of both contracts and grants should use the language similar to the sample language above plus the following: "Contract awards are subject to the FAR and NASA FAR Supplement, located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/v-reg.htm>. Applicants are advised that contract awards are subject to the subcontracting requirements of FAR and

NFS Part 19. The NASA Contracting Officer will choose the appropriate award instrument."

If this funding opportunity will lead to awards with some special terms and conditions that differ from NASA's general terms and conditions, this section must highlight those special terms and conditions. Doing so will alert applicants who have received awards from NASA previously and might not otherwise expect different terms and conditions.

(It may not be possible to identify every special term and condition at the time the announcement is released. Programs are advised to list all special terms and conditions that are known at the time of announcement release.) For the same reason, this section must inform potential applicants about special requirements that could apply to particular awards after review of proposals and other information, based on the particular circumstances of the effort to be supported, for example: if human subjects were to be involved; if historical properties may be affected; or if some situations may justify special terms on intellectual property, data sharing or security requirements.

3. **Reporting (Required)**. This section must include general information about the type (for example financial or performance), frequency, and means of submission (paper or electronic) of post-award reporting requirements. Highlight any special reporting requirements for awards under this funding opportunity that differ (for example, by report type, frequency, form/format, or circumstances for use) from what NASA awards usually require. Sample language follows: "Required reports for contract awards will be negotiated with the contractor, subject to the terms and conditions of the FAR and NASA FAR Supplement, located at: <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/v-reg.htm>. Required reports for grants and cooperative agreements are covered in Exhibit G, "Required Reports and Publications" of the NASA Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook. Required reports for Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) grant awards are covered in Exhibit H, "Federal Demonstration Partnership - Required Publications and Reports". The Handbook is located at <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/grcover.htm>."

## **VII. NASA Contact(s) (Required)**

This section provides potential applicants with a point(s) of contact for answering questions or helping with problems while the announcement is open. The intent of this requirement is to be as helpful as possible to potential

applicants, so this section should include the following information:

- Points of contact that may be reached in multiple ways; for example, by telephone, fax, and/or e-mail, as well as regular mail.
- A fax or e-mail address that multiple people can access, so that someone will respond even if others are unexpectedly absent during critical periods.
- Different contacts for distinct kinds of help, for example, one for questions of programmatic content and a second for administrative questions.

## **VIII. Other Information (Optional)**

This section may include any additional information that will assist a potential applicant. For example, the section might:

- Indicate whether this is a new program or a one-time initiative.
- Mention related programs or other upcoming or ongoing NASA funding opportunities for similar activities.
- Include Internet addresses for agency Web sites that may be useful to an applicant in understanding the program.
- This section can alert applicants to the need to identify proprietary information and inform them about the way NASA will handle it. For NRAs that do not reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to paragraph (c) of NFS 1852.235-72. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section may include a cross-reference to paragraph (c) of Appendix B of the Guidebook (which incorporates NFS 1852.235-72).
- Include certain routine notices to applicants. Examples include: confirmation notices, notices that the Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of the announcement, or notices that only contracting officers/grant officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. For announcements that reference the Guidebook, this section can include a cross-reference to Appendix D of the Guidebook.
- Include a list of appendices to the announcement. Examples of appendices include: a definition of key terms used, a more detailed description of the funding opportunity, and a model contract, grant and/or cooperative agreement.

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## APPENDIX A. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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The following questions and answers provide for additional clarifications.

### A.1

Question: What is an announcement, and how does it differ from a synopsis?

Answer: In the context of this NPR, an announcement refers to NRAs, CANs, and other solicitations used to announce grant and cooperative agreement funding opportunities. A synopsis is a notice of proposed contract actions and/or a notice of grant and cooperative agreement funding opportunity published in the Government-wide point of entry (GPE), currently Federal Business Opportunities (<http://www.fbo.gov>) for procurement contracts, and FedGrants.Gov (<http://www.fedgrants.gov/>) for grants and cooperative agreements. The standard announcement format applies to NRAs, CANs, and announcements of grants and cooperative agreements and does not address the format or content of synopses.

### A.2

Question: Does the standard announcement format apply to announcements issued at NASA Centers?

Answer: Yes. The requirement to implement the standard announcement format applies across the Federal Government. The standard announcement format applies to all NASA announcements for grants and cooperative agreements, including announcements issued at NASA Headquarters and at NASA Centers.

### A.3

Question: Does the standard announcement format apply to all Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)?

Answer: The standard announcement format applies to all BAAs except for Announcements of Opportunity (AOs). AOs are addressed in NFS Part 1872, "Acquisitions of Investigations," located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/regs/1872.htm>. The decision was made to apply the standard announcement format to NRAs and CANs and not AOs because NRAs and CANs typically result in the award of grants and cooperative agreements, while AOs typically result in the award of contracts.

### A.4

Question: Does the standard format apply to NRAs when a predetermination has been made that the

NRA will result either in the award of a contract(s) only, or in a combination of grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts?

Answer: Yes. The NASA Office of Procurement has decided to require the same format for all NRAs, regardless of the type of award instrument that will result from the NRA. A consistent format for all NRAs will benefit the research community by helping them more easily and quickly find the information they need about NRAs.

## **A.5**

Question: Is the standard announcement format applicable to announcements for education, facility, and training grants and cooperative agreements?

Answer: Yes.

## **A.6**

Question: How does NASA's standard announcement format for grants and cooperative agreements differ from the standard announcement format issued by OMB in the Federal Register?

Answer: In most respects, NASA's standard announcement format is the same as the format issued by OMB in the Federal Register. There are a few differences. Specific NASA requirements are inserted throughout the format, for example, the NASA Safety Statement is added. The NASA format includes additional guidance to assist the writer of the announcement. For example, the OMB format states: "If the funding opportunity is subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," you must say so." The NASA format includes a discussion of when this Executive order applies and how to find the text of the Executive order on the Internet. Another change is that the NASA format deletes any requirements that are not applicable to NASA. For example, since NASA does not publish announcements in the Federal Register, that portion of the OMB format that addresses publication in the Federal Register is deleted from the NASA format.

## **A.7**

Question: Is the writer of the announcement permitted to add any information that is not covered in the standard announcement format?

Answer: Yes. If the writer of the announcement needs to include information on a subject that the format does not specifically discuss, the writer may address that subject in whatever section(s) is most appropriate. Please note that the standard announcement format was written with much flexibility, and in most cases, there is an appropriate section in the format to include the information.

## **A.8**

Question: Which sections of the standard announcement format are required and which sections are optional?

Answer: Each section is marked "Required" or "Optional." Within each section, the terms "must" and "shall" denote required sections. Use of the terms "should," "may," or "can" implies that the writer has discretion in including the information.

## A.9

Question: What is the Guidebook for Proposers Responding to a NASA Research Announcement (NRA) (Guidebook)?

Answer: This Guidebook, located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nraguidebook/>, includes information that is standard for all NASA Headquarters NRAs: for example, all policies and procedures for the preparation and submission of proposals, as well as those for NASA's review and selection of proposals for funding. NRAs will often reference the standard information in this Guidebook, rather than repeating this information in the announcement. One advantage of the Guidebook is that potential applicants can familiarize themselves with NASA requirements well in advance of writing a proposal.

## A.10

Question: What is the difference between the standard announcement format and the Guidebook?

Answer: The standard announcement format provides a uniform format for writing announcements that may result in the award of a grant or cooperative agreement. The standard announcement format is directed towards the writer of the announcement. The Guidebook includes all standard information for responding to NASA HQ NRAs and is directed toward the person submitting proposals in response to an NRA

## A.11

Question: Is the Guidebook applicable to either NRAs issued at NASA Centers or announcements of grants and cooperative agreements issued at NASA HQ and NASA Centers?

Answer: The Guidebook is not directly applicable to NRAs issued at NASA Centers and announcements of grants and cooperative agreements issued at NASA HQ/NASA Centers; however, the Guidebook has standard information that can be applied to announcements (i.e. the NASA mission, the Vision for Space Exploration, and instructions on certifications and assurances). Writers of announcements can "cut and paste" applicable portions of the Guidebook into their announcements and tailor this information to their unique circumstances, or refer to a section(s) of the Guidebook in the applicable section of the announcement. Centers issuing NRAs are encouraged to use the Guidebook to the maximum practical extent.