



How to Volunteer to Review Proposals for NSF

Through its merit review process, the U.S. National Science Foundation ensures the proposals it receives are reviewed in a fair, competitive, transparent, and in-depth manner. Reviewers from the research community are an essential part of the peer review process. Visit the [How We Make Funding Decisions](#) page, [Volunteer as an NSF Reviewer](#) page, and watch a [six-minute overview of NSF's merit review process](#) for more information.

To be added to NSF's reviewer pool, please follow the steps below to register for an NSF account and to complete your reviewer profile. Once these tasks are complete, NSF program staff will contact you if there is an opportunity to participate in a proposal review panel or complete an *ad hoc* proposal review.

If you need assistance with the steps below, please contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM – 9:00 PM Eastern Time; Monday – Friday except federal holidays) or rgov@nsf.gov.

Step 1: Create an NSF Account in Research.gov (One-time Process)

- Skip to Step 3 if you already have an existing NSF account and NSF ID in Research.gov and have enrolled in multifactor authentication. Users should not have more than one NSF account and NSF ID.
- New users register for an NSF account on the Research.gov [Account Registration](#) page to obtain an NSF ID.
 - Refer to the [Register for a New NSF Account job aid](#) for step-by-step instructions with screenshots or view the [Register for a New NSF Account video tutorial](#) for a demonstration of steps.

Step 2: Sign Into Research.gov and Set Up Multifactor Authentication

Per Dear Colleague Letter [NSF 25-011](#), all users must use multifactor authentication (MFA) to sign into Research.gov as of October 27, 2024.

View the [MFA Options Overview](#). Users can sign into Research.gov using **NSF account credentials** (NSF ID / Primary Email Address + Password), **organization credentials** (InCommon Federation participating organizations only), or **Login.gov credentials**. The sign-in option you use impacts how you will enroll in MFA. You must use the MFA method that you are enrolled in each time you sign into Research.gov. For information on setting up a secondary MFA method, please see the MFA [FAQs](#).

Click [Sign In](#) on the top right navigation bar to access Research.gov and sign in using one of the three options.

- If you sign into Research.gov with your **NSF credentials**, you must enroll in one of the seven Research.gov [MFA options](#). MFA setup will be required in Research.gov if you have not yet completed this one-time step. After Research.gov MFA enrollment, you must use your selected MFA method each time you sign into Research.gov with your NSF credentials.
 - Reviewers without an additional administrative or financial role in Research.gov can use a standard MFA method (Google Authenticator or Okta Verify) to sign into Research.gov.
 - Use the **Google Authenticator** [how-to guide](#) and [video tutorial](#) (2:25 minutes) to enroll in MFA using Google Authenticator **OR** use the **Okta Verify** [how-to guide](#) and [video tutorial](#) (3:44 minutes) to enroll in MFA using Okta Verify. See the [About Signing Into Research.gov page](#) for additional MFA guidance and [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
 - If you've forgotten your NSF account password, see the [NSF Account Password Reset Guide](#). If you've forgotten your NSF ID or primary email address or do not have access to your primary email address for your NSF account, you must contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or rgov@nsf.gov for assistance. Please ensure that you maintain access to your NSF account primary email address as you may be required to complete a validation step with a one-time passcode sent to this email.

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- If you sign into Research.gov with your **organization credentials**, your MFA enrollment is through your InCommon participating organization.
 - You must register for an NSF account first if you plan to sign into Research.gov with your organization-issued credentials.
 - When signing into Research.gov with organization credentials the first time, ensure your organization email address and your NSF account primary email address are the same so the two accounts can be automatically linked. If the NSF account primary email address does not match your organizational email address, you will not be able to sign in with your organization-issued credentials.
- If you sign into Research.gov with your **Login.gov credentials**, your MFA enrollment is through Login.gov. You must use a phishing-resistant MFA. The phishing-resistant MFA options in Login.gov are face or touch unlock and security keys. You set up your MFA in Login.gov. See <https://www.login.gov/help/get-started/authentication-methods/>.
 - You must register for an NSF account first if you plan to sign into Research.gov with your Login.gov credentials.
 - When signing into Research.gov with Login.gov credentials the first time, ensure your Login.gov email address and your NSF account primary email address are the same so the two accounts can be automatically linked. If the NSF account primary email address does not match your Login.gov email address, you will not be able to sign in with your Login.gov credentials.

After you have signed into Research.gov using you selected MFA method, you will be navigated to the Research.gov homepage.

Step 3: Provide Reviewer Profile Information (One-time Process)

- Locate the “**Reviews & Meetings**” tile on the Research.gov homepage.
- Click the “**Volunteer to Review**” link to begin the one-time process to provide your reviewer profile information. For additional information about reviewing for NSF such as the time commitment required, please click on the “**Reviewing for the National Science Foundation**” link below the Volunteer to Review link.
 - Provide your reviewer profile information by completing the five-step wizard.
 - Refer to the **Provide Reviewer Profile Information job aid** in the [Account Management User Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions with screenshots.

After completing your reviewer profile, you will be added to NSF’s pool of potential proposal reviewers. Thank you for your interest in supporting NSF’s merit review process.