

NPP Fellows and NSPIRES

Background

1. The NASA Solicitation and Proposal Integrated Review and Evaluation System (NSPIRES) is the proposal database and management system that NASA uses for managing proposal submission, review, and selection activities. It is accessed at <http://nspires.nasaprs.com/>. NSPIRES has a number of online help features and tutorials.
2. In order to perform any function in NSPIRES, including reviewing proposals and being a named team member on a submitted proposal, an individual must register as an NSPIRES user. An NSPIRES user may either associate or affiliate with an institution.
 - a. An NSPIRES user associates with an institution just by stating the association when he/she registers. No confirmation is needed from the institution for an association. NPP Fellows should associate with their host NASA Center. This will indicate to program managers that the Fellow has a conflict-of-interest with the Center when they assign reviews.
 - b. When an NSPIRES user affiliates with an institution, the institution is asked to confirm that the user has privileges with that institution including the privilege of submitting proposals as PI. Affiliates are usually employees of the institution. NPP Fellows should not affiliate with ORAU since NPP Fellows are not employees of ORAU nor will ORAU under any circumstances permit them to submit proposals (however, see item # 10 below).
 - c. NPP Fellows should not be affiliated with any institution. There are only two exceptions. 1. Senior NPP Fellows should be affiliated with their home institution. 2. The NPP Fellow may need to affiliate with, and submit proposals from, an institution where the NPP Fellow will be working when the award is expected to be made.

NPP Fellows Serving as Peer Reviewers

3. An NPP Fellow may be a peer reviewer if a NASA program officer requests him/her to be one. In order to be a peer reviewer, the NPP Fellow should register in NSPIRES and associate with his/her host NASA Center. It is not necessary to affiliate with an institution to be a peer reviewer.

NPP Fellows Submitting Proposals as Team Members

4. NPP Fellows (except seniors) are discouraged from participating on proposals in their first year. Their research is fully supported for two years by their NPP Fellowship.
5. There are legitimate reasons why a NPP Fellow might participate on a proposal in his/her second year. The most common situation is when the Fellow participates as a team member (e.g., co-investigator) on a proposal.
6. In order to be a team member (e.g. co-investigator or science PI) on a proposal, the NPP Fellow should register in NSPIRES and associate with his/her host NASA Center. It is not necessary to affiliate with an institution to be a co-investigator or science PI.

NPP Fellows Submitting Proposals as PI

7. Proposals are submitted by institutions, not by individuals. The institution decides to whom it shall grant PI privileges. PI privileges include authority for managing the funds that are awarded to the institution if the proposal is selected. PI privileges are typically reserved for employees.
8. An NPP Fellow may be a PI on a proposal only if an institution, such as a NASA Center, decides to grant the Fellow PI privileges. Allowing a non-employee like a Fellow to be Center PI raises a number of legal questions that should be addressed by Center General Counsel. In cases where a NASA Center requires that the official PI be a civil servant, the NPP Fellow can be designated the "Science PI" in NSPIRES, which conveys the accomplishment and responsibility that the Fellow has achieved as author/science originator, despite the fact that they cannot be the official PI.

NPP Fellows Submitting Proposals for Observing Time

9. A special exception has been made for zero-funding proposals. The most common kind of zero-funding proposal is a proposal for observing time on a NASA space observatory. If a NASA Center wants to permit NPP Fellows to submit zero-funding proposals without permitting them to otherwise be PI, then SMD will work with the Center NPP Representative to create a "dummy institution" and register it in NSPIRES. The NPP Fellow would affiliate with the dummy institution, and the dummy institution will submit the zero-funding proposal with the Fellow as PI.

Using Award Funds to Support a Fellowship via the NPP Program

10. Funds won through ROSES can (with the agreement of the PI) be used to extend the NPP Fellowship by having the funds transferred onto the ORAU contract. This should be initiated by submitting a "Format 2" to Dolores Holland at NASA Headquarters before the funds are sent to the Center, because the funding can be placed onto the ORAU contract only from NASA Headquarters.

NPP Fellows Taking Funding With Them to a New Institution

11. If the Fellow moves from the NASA Center to a new institution while a funded team member on an award, there may be a desire to take the funding to the Fellow's new institution. As is the case with all awards, the funding belongs to the PI institution (in this case presumably the NASA Center), but can follow the Fellow to another institution. If the NASA Center agrees to continue to provide support to the Fellow at his/her new institution, then the Center should issue the Fellow's new institution a grant (if a university) or have the program officer create a new award (if another government institution) with the Fellow as the PI. The expectation that the Fellow would take the funding should be explicitly discussed with the proposal PI before the proposal is submitted. The Fellow does not have an unqualified right to take funding away from the Center, it should occur by mutual agreement between the Fellow and the proposal PI.