Proposal Development Timeline

This timeline provides general guidance and resources to support those preparing DRK-12 proposals for the first time. Be sure to check with your organization for specific guidance and deadlines. Work backwards from those deadlines to ensure you have enough time to carefully plan the project and develop the proposal.

IMMEDIATELY...

- Stay abreast of trends and developments in the field (e.g., read journals, attend conferences) and funding opportunities
- Continue to develop ideas for your research agenda
- Communicate with colleagues and potential collaborators and develop your connections with partners in the field
- Learn about NSF's funding process and explore CADRE's NSF Proposal Toolkit
- Ask to be considered as an NSF proposal reviewer
- Get an NSF ID

3-6 MONTHS BEFORE SUBMISSION...

- Read about the NSF DRK-12 program and its solicitation (a request for proposals) and watch the most recent DRK-12 solicitation webinar
- Notify your appropriate institutional departments and contacts (e.g., Office of Sponsored Programs) that you plan to submit a proposal, and become familiar with their internal policies, processes, requirements, and deadlines
- Complete literature review and research about needs
- Review current and completed projects doing similar work, especially projects with DRK-12 funding
- Discuss your idea in-depth with your project team and colleagues (including those who represent your target audience) to get their feedback
- Hone your theoretical framework and theory of change or logic model
- Consider mechanisms to assess success, broader impacts, dissemination, sustainability, and budget issues early in your planning
- Hone your theoretical framework and theory of change or logic model
- Send a 1-page description of your proposal idea to a DRK-12 program officer to see if it's appropriate for funding through the DRK-12 or other NSF program

1-3 MONTHS BEFORE SUBMISSION...

- Create a detailed timeline for completing proposal components
- Identify and contact potential partners (e.g., schools and districts), collaborators, evaluators, and/or advisors
- Read NSF's PAPPG and the Common Guidelines to Education Research and Development and supplement
Submit a preliminary IRB application
- Request a letter of collaboration from substantial collaborators (individuals or organizations) not included in the budget
- Share a draft project description with colleagues for review
- Complete the final project description
- Complete attachments:
  - Budget and budget justification (don’t forget to include these materials from your subawardees) and current and pending support
  - Complete references; biosketches for key/senior personnel; facilities, equipment and other resources; human subjects certification; collaborators and other affiliations; data management plan (this DMP tool may help you); and mentoring plan

Complete the summary
- Copy-edit all documents
- Send final documents to your administrative offices

Submit proposal by 5pm (submitter’s local time) on the deadline date

CONGRATULATIONS! Celebrate, relax, and wait.

Expect to receive notification from NSF of your award or rejection within 6 months. Read the panel reviews and, if you didn’t receive an award this time, consider revising and resubmitting your proposal.

If awarded, read NSF’s Prospective New Awardee Guide and visit the CADRE Project Management Toolkit.