How to Apply for Funding to the National Science Foundation (using FastLane) with a Letter of Intent (LOI)

A Quick Guide to Funding with the NSF using a Letter of Intent (LOI)
http://www.nsf.gov/
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A INTRODUCTION

1. The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent US federal agency created by Congress in 1950 “to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense”.

The National Science Foundation fulfils their mission chiefly by issuing limited-term grants -- currently about 10,000 new awards per year, with an average duration of three years. The grants fund specific research proposals that have been judged the most promising by a rigorous and objective merit-review system. Most of these awards go to individuals or small groups of investigators. Others provide funding for research centres and facilities that allow scientists, engineers and students to work at the outermost frontiers of knowledge.

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. They do this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the U.S and the Rest of the World.

B ACTIVATING YOUR ‘NEW’ USER ACCOUNT

NB You will not be able to submit your NSF Application without a User Account.

- If you do not have a FastLane User account, contact the Research Office (rs.compliance@imperial.ac.uk).
- If you have used your FastLane User account before to apply for funding go to Section C.
- If you are using your FastLane account for the first time, continue using Section B.

1. When you have been registered by the Research Office, you will receive a system generated email which contains your account details.
Click on the link within the body of the email to activate your account.

- An example is shown below:

2. To continue, you must read the ‘Rules of Behavior’ as shown in the dialog box.
   You must tick the box and click the 'Accept' button in order to proceed with the registration process. If you do not agree click the Decline button to exit from the system.

3. You must now change your password. Enter/Re-enter your New Password.
   Click the OK button and the following screen will be displayed:

   YOUR ‘NEW USER’ ACCOUNT WILL BE ACTIVATED
C COMPLETING YOUR PROPOSAL

1. Open the NSF FastLane website at: https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/index.jsp

The FastLane Home Page screen will be displayed. Click Proposals, Awards, and Status.

![FastLane Home Page]

The following screen will appear:

In the PI/Co-PI Login section type in the boxes the following information:

- Your Last Name.
- NSF ID - Your NSF Identification number (in registration email)
- Your Password

Click the Login Button.

2. The Principal Investigator (PI)/Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) Management screen will be displayed.

![Principal Investigator(PI)/Co-Principal Investigator(Co-PI) Management]

Click Proposal Functions.
The following screen will be displayed:

Click Letters of Intent.

The Letters of Intent screen will now be displayed. The options for the Letters of Intent are on the Create New LOI from Program Solicitation tab.

This option will list all the available calls for proposals.

3. Click the View All button.

The Letters of Intent screen will be displayed on the Create New LOI from Program Solicitation tab, with all programs listed in the Available Program section.
4. Determine which proposal you want to create a Letter of Intent for. Click Create.

**NB:** Proposals (or solicitations) vary in their requirements for a Letter of Intent. FastLane displays only those information fields that are required for the proposals you are creating the Letter of Intent for.

All Letters of Intent request the following information:

- Title of the project
- Synopsis of the project
- Confirmation of the point of contact for NSF inquiries
- The name and relevant information of the project PI

Open the Letters of Intent screen on the Create New LOI from Program Solicitation tab.

5. The Create New LOI screen will now be displayed:

Complete all sections as described on the following page.
In the Project Information, **Project Title** box type the Project Title of the Letter of Intent.

In the **Synopsis** box type or copy and paste a synopsis of the proposed project.

From the **Organisational Attribute** drop-down list select organizational attribute. (optional)

In the **Point of Contact for NSF Inquiries** section, click the radio button for either of the following:
- Use this user as point of contact (individual’s information is displayed already)
- Use (alternate) name as point of contact.
  - If you use the alternate point of contact, enter the First, Middle Initial, Last Name, Telephone Number and Email Address

In the **Project PI** section enter the First, Middle Initial, Last Name of the PI

In the **Organisation** box, type the name of your organisation (Full Name of Imperial College London).

In the **Other Senior Project Personnel** section you can edit, change, add or delete the name of personnel by clicking on the Add/Edit Personnel button.

In the **Participating Organisations** section you can edit, change, add or delete the name of the organisation by clicking on the Add/Edit Organizations button.

After you have completed the Letter of Intent, you have these options:
- Save the Letter of Intent.
- Forward the Letter of Intent to the SPO (PI only).
- Submit the Letter of Intent (SPO for all Letters of Intent and PI for some types of Letters of Intent).

### 6. Save a New Letter of Intent:

- Check all fields of the LOI before saving. Click the **Save** button.

The **Confirmation LOI Saved** screen will be displayed.
The Letter of Intent is now saved and shown in the LOI Work in Progress section.

### 7. Submit a New Letter of Intent

A research Grants or Research Services Manager may submit any Letter of Intent.

A PI may directly submit Letters of Intent for certain types of solicitations. If a PI can submit a Letter of Intent, the Submit to NSF button displays, rather than the Forward to SPO button, on the Create New LOI screen.

Access the Create New LOI screen (Figure 1) and complete the Letter of Intent form.

Click the Submit button.

The Confirm LOI screen displays with a message for you to confirm that you want to submit the Letter of Intent to the NSF.

The Confirmation LOI Submitted to NSF screen will be displayed.
For further Help click on the link for [National Science Foundation - FastLane Help Menu](#).

The National Science Foundation is based at:

**National Science Foundation**
4201 Wilson Boulevard,
Arlington,
Virginia
22230, USA

Tel: +00-1-703-292 5111 (or if your query is urgent you must call +00-1-703-673-6188)
FastLane Helpdesk is available Monday to Friday 7am to 9pm EST (GMT -5 hours)

- Email fastlane@nsf.gov.