

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty  
FROM: Dorota Huizinga, Ph.D.,  
Associate Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies  
SUBJECT: NSF Requirement for Safe and Inclusive Work Environment

The National Science Foundation (NSF) announced in 2023 that, effective January 30, 2023, if a Principal Investigator (PI) submits a new or renewal proposal, the NSF will require the PI to take an additional step when engaging in off-campus and/or off-site research activities. Please see <https://new.nsf.gov/events/safe-inclusive-working-environments-requirements>.

NSF's new requirement states that there must be a plan for a safe and inclusive environment created, and distributed in advance to everyone who will participate in an off-campus or off-site research activity prior to those individuals leaving campus to engage in the off-campus/off-site research. NSF defines off-campus or off-site research as data, information, samples being collected off-campus or off-site, such as fieldwork and research activities on vessels and aircraft. Please refer to NSF Proposal and Award Policies & Procedures Guide or PAPPG, Chapter II.D.1.d(viii) and II.3.9 for additional information.

The creation and distribution of the plan is the **responsibility of the PI**. However, to ease the administrative burden, the Office of Academic Research has prepared a template plan (attached) for PIs to use. Please note:

1. PI should not submit the plan to NSF for review unless specifically requested in the program solicitation.
2. PI should determine if a proposed research includes any off-campus or off-site research as defined by NSF.
3. PIs are responsible for maintaining and retaining a copy of the plan, as well as documentation of who received the plan (email confirmation, signup sheet, etc.) in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) file, Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA) file, or in PI or departmental grant files. These records are subject to the same retention schedule as other grant-related administrative records.
4. Plans may be re-used and re-distributed for multiple off-campus research activities but must be updated, as appropriate, to each specific grant proposal.
5. For purposes of compliance with NSF's new requirement, the following are not considered off-campus or off-site research for purposes of this requirement:
  - Meetings and conferences that do not include data/information/samples being collected
  - Data/information/samples collected by subrecipients or collaborating organizations at their primary place of performance
6. Determinations about plan requirements must be based on the location and nature of the activities; this assessment is independent of the F&A rate determination which is based on where the preponderance of the work is performed

#### Commitment to Safe and Inclusive Research Environments

California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) and University Enterprises Corporation at CSUSB (UEC), or collectively "University" take Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation (DHR), Title IX, sexual misconduct and Whistleblower very seriously. University's goal is to provide the campus community with education, awareness, reporting options and meaningful assistance. Information on University's Institutional Equity and Compliance policy and procedures can be found at: <https://www.csusb.edu/institutional-equity-compliance>, <https://www.csusb.edu/human-resources> and the UEC employee handbook. These policies apply to any university program or externally-funded sponsored program, including programs that take place off-campus or in the field or on an online platform (e.g., Zoom).

For any questions or if you require additional information concerning this NSF requirement, please contact [researchcompliance@csusb.edu](mailto:researchcompliance@csusb.edu)

PROJECT-SPECIFIC PLAN FOR SAFE AND INCLUSIVE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTS  
FOR OFF-CAMPUS OR OFF-SITE RESEARCH ACTIVITY *(should not exceed 2 pages)*

Proposal Project Title:	
Project Performance Period	
Principal Investigator (PI) Name	
Off-Campus/Off-site Location(s)	
Estimated Departure and Return Dates	

*Describe off-campus research activity (fieldwork, research activities on vessels or aircraft, work in an off-campus location, etc), including any specific challenges in that location for personnel and challenges to team dynamics, and pre-fieldwork approaches to manage these challenges.*

*Describe steps PI will take to nurture an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment, e.g., communication process and procedures, training, etc. How will the PI promote communication between and among on-campus and off-campus/off-site personnel as well as other organizations/third parties in the work environment. Describe how PI will avoid a single person serving as a gatekeeper in these communications, and the process or method that will be used to make and respond to incident reports.*

*Describe process(es) to establish shared team definitions of roles, responsibilities, and culture, e.g., codes of conduct, and how the plan will be disseminated to individuals participating in the off-campus or off-site research prior to departure.*

*Describe field support, e.g., mentor/mentee support mechanisms, regular check-ins, or developmental events.*

*Explain/describe special circumstances (if any), such as the involvement of multiple organizations or the presence of third parties in the working environment.*

*Describe the reporting mechanism, responding, and resolving issues of harassment should they occur. Include recommended contact for any suspected misbehavior (note: participants remain free to use this contact or any other contact they prefer to report misconduct; more than one contact may be listed)*

Site mode of communication (select all applicable):

- Site has regular internet or cellphone service available
- Site has and use satellite phones
- Other commercial options to make domestic and international calls

**Principal Investigator Certification:**

*As PI of subject project, I understand that it is my responsibility to implement this plan and to uphold California State University, San Bernardino's and University Enterprises Corporation at CSUSB's policies. I will ensure that everyone (co-PIs, senior personnel, students, etc.) who will participate in the off-campus/off-site research activity are made aware of this requirement, and information will be distributed to each individual in advance of leaving campus to engage in the off campus/off-site research activity. Should reports need to be made to the National Science Foundation (NSF) according to NSF's [reporting requirements](#), this plan may be used as part of NSF's investigation and decision to continue funding of this project.*

PI Signature:

Date:

Name: