

Charge from the Business and Operations Advisory Committee to the Subcommittee on NAPA Implementation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) hereby initiates the formation and operation of an ad hoc Subcommittee of the NSF Business and Operations and Advisory Committee (the Committee) on NAPA Implementation (the Subcommittee). The purpose of the Subcommittee is to issue a report to the Committee with recommended ideas for NSF for implementing a subset of National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) recommendations related to NSF-wide oversight of large-scale research facilities in the report [National Science Foundation: Use of Cooperative Agreements to Support Large Scale Investment in Research](#).

Context

The NSF Director and the National Science Board (NSB) requested that the National Academy of Public Administration review NSF's use of cooperative agreements (CAs) to support the development, construction, commissioning, and future operations of state-of-the-art, large-scale research facilities. Specifically, the Academy was asked to:

- Address how CAs are currently used at NSF, examining the effectiveness of NSF's current CA policy;
- Compare the CA mechanism with other federal funding mechanisms;
- Ascertain how comparator scientific agencies manage similarly large, complex research facilities projects; and
- Identify potential improvements to the NSF's processes that support large-scale research facilities.

NSF seeks to ensure effective implementation of a subset of the NAPA recommendations in a manner that provides the greatest benefit to the scientific community served by the NSF while ensuring exemplary stewardship of taxpayer resources. In order to ensure this effective implementation, NSF must be fully informed of the best oversight practices of other agencies and organizations that sponsor, oversee, or manage large-scale research facilities.

Charge to the Subcommittee

Because of the topical nature of the subject matter of the advice requested, the Committee hereby charges the Subcommittee to prepare a report for the Committee to advise NSF on the following areas, and to identify and advise the Committee, and ultimately NSF, on other important topics that the Subcommittee deems relevant. The Committee will then be prepared to provide advice to NSF to support the Foundation's goal to be comprehensively informed and equipped to implement the NAPA recommendations in an expert fashion. **Specifically the Subcommittee should provide options for appropriate agency-wide oversight** for the NSF Office of the Director (OD). In developing options, the Subcommittee should consider the following:

- Re-scope of the role, duties, and membership of the Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) Panel to include status update reviews of projects in the development and construction phases focusing on cost, schedule, and performance. [Recommendation 6.2].
- Evaluate the potential value in extending the MREFC Panel's role to operating facilities, including divestment (i.e. full life-cycle).
- Evaluate the potential value in creating an internal agency "senior official" position in OD charged with reporting to the Director and Deputy Director/Chief Operating Officer on large facilities;

- Evaluate the potential value in creating a new Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) committee to provide the NSF Director with a sounding board for objective insight on large research projects. [Recommendation 6.4]

To carry out this charge, the Committee requests the Subcommittee meet with:

- NSF OD, Directorate, and Office leadership and staff;
- NSB Members, Office leadership and staff;
- NSF's Inspector General
- Representatives from other agencies with analogous facilities, to benefit from experience at those agencies.

The Subcommittee may collaborate with the Committee if the Subcommittee deems it necessary to do so.

Subcommittee Membership: The Committee's Designated Federal Officials (the Heads of the NSF Office of Information and Resource Management and Budget, Finance and Award Management) shall initiate a list of approximately 8 individuals for Subcommittee membership, including at least one Committee member who shall serve as the liaison to the Committee. Final membership shall be approved by NSF with collaboration and advice from the Committee.

Additional Background: *Attach material such as the NAPA implementation chart, any draft guidance, proposed options, etc.*

Activities of the Subcommittee: The Subcommittee is requested to provide a written report to the Committee recommending NSF actions on a priority basis established by NSF so that implementation can take place incrementally, if possible. The Committee requests an update on Subcommittee activities at 3 month intervals and a final report by April 1, 2017.

NSF will organize and convene at least one in-person meeting at NSF, comprised of the Subcommittee, NSF staff cognizant of the projects and issues concerning the Committee, and with the individuals mentioned above necessary to carry out this charge. Additional in-person meetings will be considered depending on need and budgetary resources.

NSF will provide logistical and travel support for invited non-local participants. Participants will be invited to submit written materials to the Subcommittee for reference in their report preparation.

The Subcommittee may organize additional meetings by conference call or other virtual technology as it deems necessary to do so.

The Subcommittee chair will submit its written report to the Committee and provide a verbal presentation at a duly organized Committee meeting subsequent to submittal to NSF. The report will be discussed and deliberated at the meeting, and the Committee will accept it and make it publicly available. The Committee may also provide feedback to NSF and any comments it has to offer on the report by way of a cover letter to NSF.

On or before the meeting where the Subcommittee's written report is discussed, the Committee's Designated Federal Officials may extend the Subcommittee's charge and activities as deemed necessary

by NSF; otherwise, the Subcommittee will terminate upon completion of the activities set forth in the charge.

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