Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Additional guidance including Job Aids and instructional videos can be found on the Research.gov About Account Management page. Account management questions may be directed to the NSF IT Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or rgov@nsf.gov.

Version 1.3, Updated August 25,2020

#	Question	Answer
1	I already have an NSF account, but I can't remember the NSF ID. How can I find it?	If you remember the Primary Email address and password associated with your NSF ID, you may use that to login to Research.gov and obtain your NSF ID from your profile. Otherwise, Click on the following link that will take you to FastLane to look up your NSF ID: www.fastlane.nsf.gov/researchadmin/nsfIdLookupRead.do. Enter your first name, last name, and email address and then click "**Submit.**" Your NSF ID will be sent to the email address(es) listed for your account.
2	I am a new user to NSF external systems. How do I register for an NSF account?	New users can obtain an NSF ID by selecting the "**Register**" link located on the top right of the Research.gov homepage. Please refer to the "Register for an NSF Account to Begin Using FastLane and Research.gov" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
3	I have forgotten my NSF account password and no longer have access to my primary email address to receive my temporary password. What do I do?	Password resets can be sent to any of the associated emails with your NSF Account. You must know the primary email address or NSF ID to initiate password recovery. Otherwise contact the NSF IT Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or rgov@nsf.gov to update your primary email address so you can receive the temporary password for your NSF account.
4	I have an existing NSF account. Why am I being asked to verify my information?	NSF has updated its account management system and requires verification of the primary email address and phone number for each existing NSF account. This is a short, one-time process unless the system identifies a data issue with your account.
5	A message appeared saying my email address already exists in the system. What does that mean?	To eliminate the creation of multiple accounts by the same user, NSF has updated its systems to only allow a given email address to be associated with one NSF account. Please sign in to the NSF account with the identified email address. If you have forgotten your password for this email account, you may recover the password by selecting the "**Sign In**" link located on the top right of the Research.gov homepage and clicking "**Forgot Password.**" If you require additional assistance, please contact the NSF IT Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or rgov@nsf.gov.
6	What does NSF mean by a "primary email address"?	You must have ongoing access to the email address (e.g., a Gmail address) listed as your primary email address to make changes to your account or to reset a password. The primary email address must be unique to you and cannot be a group email alias. NSF does not recommend using a work email address for this purpose since you may move to another organization and have a new work email address. This email address and your NSF ID are linked to your account record and are searchable within NSF systems by the organizational Administrators. Changes to this email address can be made on the My Profile page following successful registration.
7	Can I edit my primary email address?	You can change your primary email address by selecting the "**My Profile link**" located on the top right of the Research.gov homepage. NSF will send a verification email to your new email address and a response is required for verification purposes within four hours from the time the change was made. If the primary email address is not verified within four hours, the last verified primary email address will be restored. You must choose a primary email account that you can maintain access to regardless of where you are working (e.g., Gmail address). Please refer to the "View and Edit My NSF Account Profile Information" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.

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#	Question	Answer
8	I am moving to a new organization? Do I keep my same NSF account?	Yes, the new account management system supports you having multiple organizational affiliations. **DO NOT** register for another NSF account at the new organization. Instead, you can request that a role at your new organization be added to your existing NSF account using the "**Add a New Role**" function. Please refer to the "Add a New Role" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps. You will need the DUNS number for the new organization to start that process. For more information on DUNS, please refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - Organizational Functions, question #2." Alternatively, you can work with the new organization's Admin to assign any needed roles at the organization to your existing NSF account. If you are changing organizations, please ensure that the primary email address listed for your NSF account is not dependent on your place of employment. You must have ongoing access to the email address account (e.g., a Gmail address) listed as your primary email address to make changes to your account or to reset a password. You can establish a new work email address in connection with your roles at the new organization. Your primary email address can be updated at any time from the "**My Profile**" link located at the top right on the Research.gov homepage. Please note that updating the primary email address will require a verification step to confirm that you own that email account. For more information, please refer to the "Working at Multiple Organizations or Moving to Another Organization" job aid.
9	I was a Postdoctoral Fellow and now I am going to work at another organization? Do I keep my same NSF account?	Yes, the new account management system supports you having multiple organizational affiliations in addition to a role of Postdoctoral Fellow. **DO NOT** register for another NSF account at the organization. Instead, you can request that a role at the organization be added to your existing NSF account using the "**Add a New Role**" function. Please refer to the "Add a New Role - Principal Investigator PI/Co-PI" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps. You will need the DUNS number for the organization to start that process. Alternatively, you can work with the organization's Administrator to assign any needed roles at the organization to your existing NSF account. If you are changing organizations, please ensure that the primary email address listed for your NSF account is not dependent on your place of employment. You must have ongoing access to the email address account (e.g., a Gmail address) listed as your primary email address to make changes to your account or to reset a password. You can establish a new work email address in connection with your roles at the organization. Your primary email address can be updated at any time from the "**My Profile**" link located at the top right on the Research.gov homepage. Please note that updating the primary email address will require a verification step to confirm that you own that email account. For more information, please refer to the "Working at Multiple Organizations or Moving to Another Organization" job aid.

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#	Question	Answer
10	What does NSF mean by a "work email address"?	Your work email address is where NSF will send official communications to you regarding proposals and awards in connection with a particular organization. You can edit your work email address by accessing "**View My Roles"** and selecting "**Edit Contact Info**." Please refer to the "View My Roles – Requested Role(s)" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
11	What does NSF mean by a "secondary email address"?	The secondary email address is optional and can be used as a backup email address for password recovery. Your secondary email address can be your work email address.
12	What does NSF mean by "my primary organization" and can I change my primary organization?	The "primary organization" indicates the organization a Principal Investigator (PI) is associated with for proposal submission. The primary organization defaults to the organization associated with the most recent PI role added to a user's profile. To change your primary organization, sign in to Research.gov by clicking "**Sign In**" located at the top of the screen. Click on "**View My Roles**" located on the left side of the screen. In the "Active Roles" table, locate the organization you wish to designate as your primary organization. Click on the "plus sign (+)" located to the left of the organization name to expand the row. Locate the PI role for the selected organization and click the "**Primary Organization**" checkbox to the right of the Date Added field. Please refer to the "Working at Multiple Organizations or Moving to Another Organization" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
13	I signed in with my InCommon credentials. Why can't I edit anything on the "My Profile" page?	NSF has updated its account management system. To migrate your existing NSF account and establish access to the new features such as the updated "My Profile," you must first sign in with your NSF ID and complete a short, one-time account verification process. Once you complete the verification process, you can then subsequently sign in to your NSF account using your InCommon credentials, and you will have access to update your profile and utilize the other new account management features. To access the "View / Edit My Profile" page, click on "**My Profile**" located at the top right on the Research.gov screen. Then click on "**View / Edit My Profile**" located on the left navigation bar. Please refer to the "View and Edit My NSF Account Profile Information" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
14	Will I be able to sign in with my ORCID credentials?	No, there are currently no plans to use ORCID for signing into NSF external systems. However, you can store your ORCID iD in an optional field in your NSF account profile data.
15	Can I continue to use a group email alias as my primary, secondary, or work email address? Can group email alias accounts be used at all?	No, email addresses cannot be shared across different NSF accounts. You must be associated with a unique email address.

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#	Question	Answer
16	How do I view and edit my demographic information?	Demographic information has moved from FastLane to Research.gov, so you can manage your profile data in one location. To view or edit your demographic information, sign in to Research.gov by clicking "**Sign In**" located at the top of the screen. Click on "**My Profile**" located on the top of the screen. Your demographic information is located on your View/Edit Profile page. Scroll down to the Demographic Information section at the bottom of your profile to view demographic information you previously provided in FastLane or entered on your Account Management View/Edit Profile page in Research.gov. Click on 'Edit' to enter or update your demographic information and click on 'Save' to capture your changes. Please refer to the View and Edit My NSF Account Profile Information job aid for a walk through of the specific steps.
17	Do I have to provide my demographic information?	Submission of the requested demographic information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.
18	If I do not provide any demographic information or do not provide demographic information for a particular question, what will appear on my profile?	If demographic information is not provided for any or all demographic questions, the answer(s) will be shown as blank in the My Profile Edit mode and "Not Provided" will be displayed in the My Profile View mode.
19	Why is my demographic information being collected?	NSF asks for demographic data relating to gender, ethnicity/race and disability to gauge whether our programs and other opportunities in science and technology are fairly reaching and benefiting everyone regardless of demographic category; and to ensure that those in under-represented groups have the same knowledge of and access to programs, meetings, vacancies, and other research and educational opportunities as everyone else.

#	Question	Answer
1	How do I register a new organization?	If an organization is new to NSF, you must first set yourself up as the Administrator for the new organization. You must have an NSF account to start this process. After signing in to Research.gov and clicking on the "**My Profile"** link located at the top right, select the "**Add A New Role"** menu option in the left navigation bar. Then select the "**Add Organizational Role**" button. After entering the DUNS number, the system will automatically detect that the organization is new and will walk you through setting up the organization and Administrator role. Please refer to the "Register a New Organization" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
2	What is a DUNS number?	DUNS stands for Data Universal Numbering System. Organizations must have a valid DUNS number issued by Dun & Bradstreet and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) in order to use Research.gov account-controlled services. To register in SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov. Please be advised that it could take up to two weeks to complete the SAM registration process.
3	How do I find my organization's DUNS number?	You should be able to obtain DUNS number information from your organization's Administrator(s). If you've been invited to register for an NSF account by your organizational Administrator, the DUNS number is included in the invitation email. Alternatively, you can look up your organization's DUNS number. Please see the System for Award Management (SAM) at http://www.sam.gov to search for your organization's record or use the DUNS number lookup site.
4	How can updates be made to my organizational information?	If any updates are required after your organization is registered with NSF, your organization's Administrator can make the updates in FastLane.
5	Where is the new organization registration form and where do I send it?	New registrations are submitted electronically and your organization will be automatically registered

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - Administrator Functions

#	Question	Answer
1	I am an organizational Administrator. How do I assign roles to users in my organization?	Organizational Administrators can assign roles to individual users by going to their "View My Users" dashboard and selecting the "**Manage Roles"** link to the right of the user's name. Administrators can assign the following roles within their organizations: • Principal Investigator • Award Cash Management Service (ACM$) • Awardee Preparer • Awardee Certifier • Awardee Financial Representative • Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) • Coordinating Official • Alternate Coordinating Official • Financial Official • Administrator • Authorized Organizational Representative • Sponsored Projects Officer • View Only • Other Authorized User (OAU) Please refer to the "View My Users – Administrator Dashboard" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
2	If multiple users have an Administrator role at an organization, will each Administrator be emailed when a user requests a new role?	Yes, when a user requests a new role at an organization, all Administrators listed for the organization will receive a notification email at their organization's work email address. In addition, alerts will be posted on each Administrator's "View My Users" dashboard in Research.gov.
3	I am an organizational Administrator. How do I add users to my organization?	You can add users to your organization by going to your "View My Users" dashboard and selecting the "**Add User"** button. You will be prompted to search for a particular user by NSF ID or email address (i.e., primary, secondary or work email address). You can also invite individuals at your organization to register for an NSF account (i.e., NSF ID) if they do not already have one by using the "**Add User"** button. However, please note that individuals do not need a new NSF account if they are changing organizations. Instead, users should provide you with their current NSF ID, so that roles at your organization can be added to the user's existing NSF account. Please refer to the "View My Users – Administrator Dashboard" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
4	How can Administrators search for users to add to their organization?	Administrators can search for users to add by entering their NSF ID or email address (i.e., primary, secondary or work email address). Individuals do not need a new NSF account if they are changing organizations. Instead, they should provide the Administrator with their current NSF ID, so that roles at your organization can be added to the user's existing NSF account. Please refer to the "View My Users – Administrator Dashboard" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.

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#	Question	Answer
5	Why can't I search by name to add a new user?	NSF's policy is to minimize the use of personally identifiable information (PII) for data retrieval.
6	Since users can now self-register, who is responsible for updating their accounts when they move to another organization?	Administrators at the user's previous organization are responsible for removing the user via the "View My Users" dashboard. The user is responsible for updating any contact information for roles at the new organization using the "View My Roles" dashboard. In most cases, the user's profile data, including primary email address, should remain the same. If changes are needed, the user can make updates using the "My Profile" link.
7	How do I remove a user that is no longer affiliated with my organization?	To remove a user from your organization, access the "View My Users" page. In the "Manage User Roles" table, locate the user you want to remove and then click "**Remove,**" located in the Action column for the user record. Please refer to the "[View My Users – Administrator Dashboard](#)" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
8	What does "Invite to Register" mean?	The Invite to Register option allows Administrators to send an email to individuals to ask them to register for NSF accounts. Individuals must have an NSF account before the Administrator can add them to their organization.
9	What does "Invite to Update Profile" mean?	The Invite to Update Profile option allows Administrators to send an email to individuals to ask them to sign in to [Research.gov](#) to verify their account information. Individuals must complete the verification process and have their existing account migrated to the new system before the Administrator can modify a user's roles.
10	As an Administrator, how do I remove a user that has not migrated to the new NSF account management system?	Administrators can remove users from their organizations who have not migrated to the new account management system, including those users who have left the organization. Unmigrated users are indicated by the "Invite to Update Profile" link in the View My Users Administrator Dashboard Action column. Note that removing a user from the organization does not in any way impact the user's NSF account or that user's ability to become affiliated with any other organization. To remove a user, open [Research.gov](#) and sign in with your NSF ID and password. Click "**My Profile**" at the top right of the screen, then click "**View My Users**" from the left navigation bar. In the Action column, click the "**Remove User**" link located below "**Invite to Update Profile**". Please refer to the "[View My Users – Administrator Dashboard](#)" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.

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#	Question	Answer
1	Can I have multiple roles at an organization?	Yes. Administrators can assign additional roles to users through the "View My Users" dashboard page, and users can request roles at an organization through the Add a New Role page. Please refer to the "Add a New Role" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
2	I am an Administrator. Will I need to request a Sponsored Project Officer (SPO) and View Only Role?	No. When you add the Administrator role, the SPO and View Only roles will be automatically added to your profile as well.
3	How do I register as an Other Authorized User (OAU)?	To register as a an Other Authorized User (OAU), sign in to Research.gov by clicking "**Sign In**" located at the top of the screen. Access the "**Add a New Role**" page and click on "**Add Investigator or Authorized User Role.**" Then select the "**Yes, prepare and manage proposals within an organization as an Other Authorized User**" and click "**Submit.**" The system will walk you through a five-step role request wizard. Individuals with existing OAU access will not need to take additional action to continue their access.
4	How do I register as a Postdoctoral Fellow user?	To register as a Postdoctoral Fellow, sign in to Research.gov by clicking "**Sign In**" located at the top of the screen. Access the "**Add a New Role**" page and click on "**Add Investigator or Authorized User Role.**" Then select the "**No, prepare and manage proposals independently (e.g. unaffiliated or post-doctoral fellowship)**" and click "**Submit.**" The system will walk you through a three-step process to set up the unaffiliated Principal Investigator role. Please refer to the "Add a New Role – Unaffiliated / Postdoctoral Fellowship Principal Investigator" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
5	Where is the Financial Administrator role?	There is no longer a Financial Administrator role. However, the related permissions are now part of the Administrator role.
6	I am an Administrator but I can't sign and submit proposals. Why not?	The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) role is no longer given to Administrators by default. The AOR role must either be assigned or requested as an additional role.

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#	Question	Answer
1	I can no longer register a new organization or register as an individual in FastLane. Where do I go?	These functions have moved to Research.gov. Please refer to the "Register a New Organization" job aid and the "Add a New Role – Unaffiliated / Postdoctoral Fellowship Principal Investigator" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
2	How do I know if my new organization has been successfully registered with NSF?	The System for Award Management (SAM) contacts listed for your organization will receive an email notifying them that the organization has been successfully registered with NSF. Additional approval will not be required. You can look up your organization's SAM organizational contacts at http://www.sam.gov. You can also go to Research.gov and click on the "**My Profile"** link located at the top right and then select the "**Add A New Role"** menu option in the left navigation bar. Then select the "**Add Organizational Role**" button. After entering the DUNS number, the system will return a record with a "Yes" in the Registered at NSF column.
3	Where do I edit Principal Investigator information in FastLane?	The new account management functionality supports the ability for the user to edit Principal Investigator and other role information. The ability to update demographic information will remain in the FastLane Proposals, Awards, and Status (PAS) Module. Please refer to the "View and Edit My NSF Account Profile Information" job aid and "View My Roles – Requested Role(s)" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
4	How do I register as a FastLane contact for an existing organization in FastLane?	The role of FastLane contact has been retired. You can request that a role at your organization be added to your existing NSF account using the "**Add a New Role**" function. You may request any of the following roles for an organization using the new Research.gov account management functionality: Administrator, Principal Investigator, Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR), Sponsored Projects Officer (SPO), View Only, Award Cash Management System (ACM$), and Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP). In addition, an individual can add the unaffiliated Principal Investigator role. Please refer to the "Add a New Role" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
5	As an Administrator, where do I view, modify, or delete a user's role information or add a new user?	You have a dashboard to assign and remove roles for users as well as add and remove users from your organization. You also have the ability to approve or disapprove role requests from your users. Please refer to the "View My Users – Administrator Dashboard" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.
6	I can no longer manage my users in the User Account tab in FastLane. Where do I go to manage them?	NSF has updated its account management system and one of the changes affects how Administrators manage their users. Please refer to the "View My Users – Administrator Dashboard" job aid for a walkthrough of the specific steps.

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Account Management

#	Question	Answer
7	I can no longer manage my demographic information in the PI Demographic Information page in FastLane. Where do I go to view, enter, or update my demographic information?	Demographic information has moved from FastLane to Research.gov, so you can manage your profile data in one location. To view or edit your demographic information, sign in to **Research.gov** by clicking "**Sign In**" located at the top of the screen. Click on "**My Profile**" located on the top of the screen. Your demographic information is located on your View/Edit Profile page. Scroll down to the Demographic Information section at the bottom of your profile to view demographic information you previously provided in FastLane or entered on your Account Management View/Edit Profile page in Research.gov. Click on 'Edit' to enter or update your demographic information and click on 'Save' to capture your changes. Please refer to the **View and Edit My NSF Account Profile Information** job aid for a walk through of the specific steps.
8	I previously provided my demographic information in FastLane. Do I need to provide the information again?	Demographic information previously provided in FastLane will now display in your Research.gov profile. You do not need to re-enter the information.

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