

Agency Formatting Requirements*

National Science Foundation (NSF) [Based on NSF's [Grant Proposal Guide](#) effective 2/25/19]

Font:

- Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger; Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger; or Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger.
- A font size less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figures, table or diagram captions, and when using a Symbol font to insert Greek letters or special characters (make sure it's still readable).
- No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.

Margins:

- At least one inch in all directions.

Page Formatting:

- Each section of the proposal that is uploaded as a file must be individually paginated prior to upload to the electronic system.
- Single column format is encouraged.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) [Primarily based on the [SF424 \(R&R\)](#) updated 12/17/2018]

File Type and Name:

- All text attachments are required to be submitted as PDF files.
- Save files with descriptive file names of 50 characters or less. Do not use an ampersand, and don't use more than one space between words or characters.

Font:

- Recommended to use Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia typeface in black font color. The font size must be 11 points or larger.
- A symbol font may be used to insert Greek Letters or special characters, but the font size still applies.
- No more than 15 characters and spaces per linear inch and no more than six lines per vertical inch.
- A smaller font size is acceptable for figures, graphs, diagrams, and charts (must be legible when the page is viewed at 100%).
- Color text is allowed for figures, graphs, diagrams, charts, tables, footnotes, and headings.

Margins:

- At least one-half inch in all directions.

Page Formatting:

- Standard paper size (8.5"x11").
- Single column format is encouraged.
- Do not include any information in the header or footer of the pages.

Grantsmanship:

- Use English and avoid jargon.
- Spell out terms the first time with the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses. The abbreviation may be used thereafter.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Based on the [NIFA Grants.gov application guide](#), updated 12/1/2017]

File Type and Name:

- All attachments are required to be submitted as PDF files, and the PDF files must not be password protected.
- File names must not exceed 50 characters, and can't contain special characters, periods, blank spaces, or accent marks.

Font:

- Font size must be 12 point or larger, including in figures.

Margins:

- At least one inch in all directions.

Page Formatting:

- Each page of an attachment should be numbered sequentially.

* The listed requirements are the general rules for the agencies. However, some of these rules may be overridden by certain solicitations. Additionally, the Grants Hub will try and keep this document up to date, but make sure to check if there's an updated version of an agencies' proposal guide available. Updates could include changes to some of the formatting requirements.

