

## Memorandum

To: University Research Community

From: Roberto M. Gutierrez  
Associate Vice President for Research  
Office of Research and Economic Development

Subj.: Reminder of National Science Foundation (NSF) Requirements for Safe and Inclusive Working Environment Plans for off-campus or off-site research

Date: March 25, 2024

As previously communicated to the University Research Community, effective January 30, 2023, the National Science Foundation (NSF) required institutions to certify at the time of proposal submission that a project specific plan was in place for each NSF project engaging in any off-campus or off-site research activities to address safe and inclusive working environments.

The requirement (available at <https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2E9>) indicated that the plan must be distributed to each participant—in advance of departure for an off-campus research activity. Off-campus or off-site research is defined by the NSF, for the purposes of compliance with this requirement, as "data/information/samples being collected off-campus or off-site, such as fieldwork or research activities on vessels and aircraft." The creation and distribution of the plan is the responsibility of the NSF funded PI.

In an effort to facilitate this NSF mandated requirement, the Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) created a template plan that could be used by all PIs. The template plan has been available for download on the ORED forms page at <https://research.fiu.edu/forms/> under the **Proposal Preparation Forms** section. The plan has been required to be uploaded by PIs into the attachments section of the ePRAF but not submitted to the NSF, unless specifically requested to do so by the NSF.

Effective immediately, a copy of the finalized and executed plan, signed by the PI, will be required to be provided to the ORED Award Services unit prior to the release of funds for NSF projects that are engaging in any off-campus or off-site research activities. Additionally, the PI is reminded that the signed plan needs to be provided to all personnel on the NSF funded project **prior to departing for off-campus or off-site research activities**. PIs should maintain documentation that clearly documents that all project personnel have received such plans.

Additionally, if a PI's project changes to include off-campus or off-site research activities and a Plan for Safe and Inclusive Working Environments was not provided to ORED for said award, then the PI must provide to the ORED a copy of the finalized and executed plan, signed by the PI.

Details about the FIU research community's shared responsibility to ensure that all sponsored activities are carried out in an atmosphere that is free of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation are available at <https://research.fiu.edu/discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/>.

If you have any questions about this requirement from the NSF then please reach out to me directly at [gutierrr@fiu.edu](mailto:gutierrr@fiu.edu).

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