**Q. Who should submit a Biographical Sketch?**

A. PAPPG 20-1 states, “A separate biographical sketch (limited to two pages) must be provided through use of an NSF-approved format, for each individual designated as Senior Personnel.”

**Q. Which NSF-approved format should I use?**

According to PAPPG 20-1, “Chapter II.C.2.f, Biographical Sketches, has been modified to require use of an NSF-approved format in submission of the biographical sketch. NSF will only accept PDFs that are generated through use of an NSF-approved format.” We recommend that you use the NSF-approved [SciENcv](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/) format. SciENcv collates information from [ORCID](https://orcid.org/) and [PubMed](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/). It also streamlines the process of creating biographical sketches for both NSF and NIH.

**Q. How does NSF define “Senior Personnel”?**

A. Senior Personnel are defined in PAPPG 20-1 as follows:

1. (co) Principal Investigator/Project Director (PI/PD) -- the individual(s) designated by the proposer, and approved by NSF, who will be responsible for the scientific or technical direction of the project. NSF does not infer any distinction in scientific stature among multiple PIs, whether referred to as PI or co-PI. If more than one, the first one listed will serve as the contact PI, with whom all communications between NSF program officials and the project relating to the scientific, technical, and budgetary aspects of the project should take place. The PI and any identified co-PIs, however, will be jointly responsible for submission of the requisite project reports. The term "Principal Investigator" generally is used in research projects, while the term “Project Director” generally is used for centers, major facilities, or similar projects. For purposes of this Guide, PI/co-PI is interchangeable with PD/co-PD.

2. Faculty Associate (faculty member) (or equivalent) -- an individual other than the Principal Investigator(s) considered by the performing institution to be a member of its faculty (or equivalent) or who holds an appointment as a faculty member at another institution, and who will participate in the project being supported.

**Q. What information should be included in the Biographical Sketch?**

A. Please refer to PAPPG 20-1 Chapter II.C.2.f for specific information about what information should be included in the Biographical Sketch. NSF is clear that “Inclusion of additional information beyond that specified […] may result in the proposal being returned without review.”

**Q. Which appointments should be included in the Biographical Sketch?**

A. According to PAPPG 20-1, “Chapter II.C.2.f, Biographical Sketches, has been supplemented with additional language to the Appointments section, to increase clarity regarding the information that must be provided. *Appointments should include any (foreign or domestic) titled academic, professional, or institutional position, whether or not remuneration is received and whether full time, part time or voluntary or honorary*.” (Emphasis added) Appointments should be listed in reverse chronological order, beginning with the current appointment.

**Q. What does NSF mean by “products”?**

A. NSF PAPPG 20-1 states, “Acceptable products must be citable and accessible including but not limited to publications, data sets, software, patents, and copyrights. Unacceptable products are unpublished documents not yet submitted for publication, invited lectures, and additional lists of products.”

**Q. How many products can be listed in the Biographical Sketch?**

A. NSF PAPPG 20-1 states, “A list of: (i) up to five products most closely related to the proposed project; and (ii) up to five other significant products, whether or not related to the proposed project.”

**Q. What does NSF mean by “synergistic activities”?**

A. NSF PAPPG 20-1 clarifies that a synergistic activity “demonstrates the broader impact of the individual’s professional and scholarly activities that focus on the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as its creation. Synergistic activities should be specific and must not include multiple examples to further describe the activity. Examples may include, among others: innovations in teaching and training; contributions to the science of learning; development and/or refinement of research tools; computation methodologies and algorithms for problem-solving; development of databases to support research and education; broadening the participation of groups underrepresented in STEM; and service to the scientific and engineering community outside of the individual’s immediate organization.”

**Q. How many synergistic activities can be listed in the Biographical Sketch?**

A. A list of up to five *distinct* synergistic activities may be included. (Emphasis added)

**Q. Should any personal information (e.g., address, phone numbers, home e-mail address, driver’s license number, marital status, personal hobbies, etc.) be included in the Biographical Sketch?**

A. PAPPG 20-1 clarifies that no personal information should be included in the Biographical Sketch.

**Important Links:**

* PAPPG 20-1 – <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg20_1/nsf20_1.pdf>
* Approved Formats – <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp>