



Lobos,

Happy first week of the fall 2026 semester!

As we mentioned in one of our 'back to class' series of messages two weeks ago, the National Science Foundation (NSF) issued a request for comment on its new [Draft Guidance on Financial Assistance](#) (GFA) formerly known as the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG).

Notably, the NSF GFA incorporates changes to allowable costs such as:

- [Academic publishing costs](#) and travel restrictions.
- Regulatory compliance around Data Management and Sharing Plans.
- Definitions of research assets such as:
 - Biological specimens and scientific collections, shifting these to the framework of "property management".

There are also numerous changes to information needed at the proposal-submission stage that are anticipated to place additional administrative burden on both researchers and research administrators. UNM is preparing an institutional response to the proposed new GFA, similar to that submitted in response to the proposed rule changes to Uniform Guidance. Public comments will be accepted through **Aug. 24**.

In a similar vein, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued a [request for information](#) (RFI) on proposed changes to reporting outcomes from NIH peer review. The primary change is that the first level peer review process is proposed to be modified to place an application in one of three overall impact categories:

- "Most competitive" (based on the top 25% of final overall impact scores),
- "Competitive" (based on the 26-50% of final overall impact scores), or
- "Not discussed" (scores >50%, or ND)

Peer reviewers would continue to submit individual overall impact scores, and a final score would still be used internally to place each application into a category. However, these scores would not be shared with the principal investigator(s), applicant institution, NIH program staff, ICO leadership, and the NIH Advisory Council. With the exception of the reporting of final overall impact scores and percentiles, all other initial review group procedures would be retained. The framework calls for NIH institutes, centers, and offices (ICOs) to not rely on numerical scores to develop funding paylines. UNM will prepare an institutional response. Public comments will be accepted through **Oct. 13**.

As a final note, NSF and NIH funding have historically provided a very large fraction of UNM's federal research funding agencies. We encourage researchers funded through these agencies to remain cognizant of these changes and how they may impact your work, if the changes go into effect.

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