Federal agencies support diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible work, research, and funding environments that value mutual respect and personal integrity, safe and harassment-free environments wherever science is conducted and where people can learn, grow, and thrive.

Promoting Inclusive and Equity in Research (PIER) – US Department of Energy – New appendix in application submission; must be specific to project and discipline

Safe and Inclusive Work Environments – National Science Foundation – Specific to Project; limited to off-campus, off-site research activities

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CHIPS Act of 2022

Sec. 10505. Cultural and institutional barriers to expanding the academic and Federal STEM workforce.
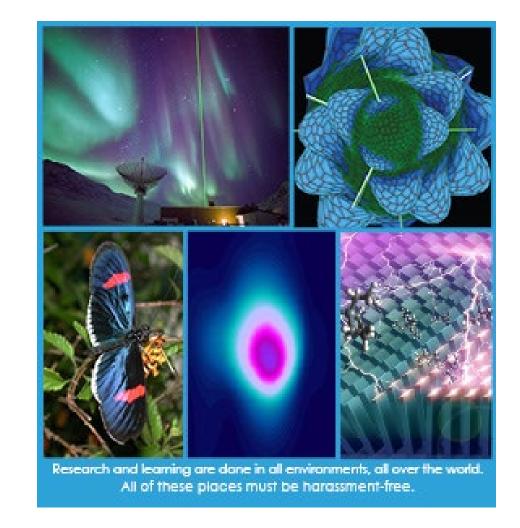
Requires OSTP to develop and disseminate guidance to universities and Federal laboratories on best practices to help identify any cultural or institutional barriers limiting the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM research careers.

Directs NSF and Federal research agencies with Federal laboratories to develop policies requiring institutions and laboratories to report on steps taken based on OSTP guidance.

"The National Science Foundation (NSF) will not tolerate sexual harassment, harassment based on ethnicity, race, gender, or disability, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault, within the agency, at awardee organizations, field sites or anywhere science or education is conducted. NSF has taken steps to help ensure all NSF-funded research and learning environments are free from sexual harassment and other forms of harassment. Additionally, NSF is bolstering our policies, guidelines and communications so that organizations clearly understand expectations and individuals understand their rights."

Research and learning are done in all environments, all over the world. All of these places must be harassment-free.

OECR - Sexual Harassment | NSF - National Science Foundation

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- The [Office of Science (SC) [within the DOE] is deeply committed](#) to supporting diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible work, research, and funding environments that value mutual respect and personal integrity, and SC is committed to promoting people of all backgrounds, including individuals from groups and communities historically underrepresented in STEM fields and SC activities in recognition of our responsibility to serve the public. Transforming our understanding of nature to advance scientific discovery and U.S. energy, economic, and national security can only be accomplished by harnessing a diverse range of views, expertise, and experiences to drive scientific and technological innovation. ==The inclusion of PIER Plans in funding applications makes this commitment to inclusive excellence explicit and a consistent expectation of all SC-funded research and research related activities==.

- Applications to the Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) Programs do not require PIER Plans at this time but will be phased in at a later date. Applications for supplemental funding on existing awards and applications requesting funding for conferences do not require PIER Plans.

[GRANTS Promoting Inclusive and E... | U.S. DOE Office of Science(SC) (osti.gov)](#)

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National Science Foundation Safe and Inclusive Work Environments Plan

- Effective January 2023

- **Safe and Inclusive Work Environments** - For each proposal that proposes to conduct research off campus or off site, in most cases, the AOR must complete **a certification** that the organization has a plan in place for that proposal that describes how the following types of behavior will be addressed:

1. Abuse of any person, including, but not limited to, harassment, stalking, bullying, or hazing of any kind, whether the behavior is carried out verbally, physically, electronically, or in written form; or

2. Conduct that is unwelcome, offensive, indecent, obscene, or disorderly.

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NSF Safe and Inclusive Work Environments (cont.)

NSF Pilot – Safe and Inclusive Workplace Plan must be ***submitted as part of the proposal*** for the following solicitations:

- BIO core solicitations:
  - Division of Environmental Biology (NSF 23-549)
  - Division of Integrative Organismal Systems (NSF 23-547)
  - Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (NSF 23-548)
- Biodiversity on a Changing Planet (BoCP, NSF 23-542)
- Pathways into the Geosciences (GEOPAths, NSF 23-540)
- Cultural Transformation in the Geosciences Community (CTGC, NSF 23-539)

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NSF Specific Requirements

- considered part of Broader Impacts review criteria

- two (2) page maximum

- a brief description of the field setting and unique challenges for the team;

- the steps the proposing organization will take to nurture an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment,
  - including processes to establish shared team definitions of roles, responsibilities, and culture,
  - e.g., codes of conduct, trainings, mentor/mentee mechanisms and field support that might include regular check-ins, and/or developmental events;

- communication processes within the off-site team and to the organization(s) that minimize singular points within the communication pathway
  - (e.g., there should not be a single person overseeing access to a single satellite phone); and

- the organizational mechanisms that will be used for reporting, responding to, and resolving issues of harassment if they arise.

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US Department of Energy Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plan

- Effective October 1, 2022
- PIER Plans should describe the activities and strategies applicants will incorporate to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in their research projects.
- PIER plans will be evaluated as part of the merit review process and will be used to inform funding decisions
- Submitted as an appendix to the proposal – three (3) page maximum
- Must be specific to the project

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DOE Specific Requirements

- describe the activities and strategies of the applicant to promote equity and inclusion as an intrinsic element to advancing scientific excellence in the research project within the context of the proposing institution and any associated research group(s).

- may include, but are not limited to:
  - strategies of your institution (and collaborating institutions, if applicable) for enhanced recruitment of undergraduate students, graduate students, and early-stage investigators (postdoctoral researchers, and others), including individuals from diverse backgrounds and groups historically underrepresented in the research community;
  - strategies for creating and sustaining a positive, inclusive, safe, and professional research and training environment that fosters a sense of belonging among all research personnel; and/or training, mentoring, and professional development opportunities[1].

- may incorporate or build upon existing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion efforts of the project key personnel or applicant institution(s) *but should not be a re-statement of standard institutional policies or broad principles*.
  - The complexity and detail of a PIER is expected to increase with the size of the research team and the number of personnel to be supported.

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Most important:

- Agencies are not looking for "boilerplate" responses:
  - University statements on diversity do not satisfy the requirement

- Plans should not be an afterthought
  - There are no "examples" to mimic

- Your plan should be reflected throughout your proposal
  - E.g., include how you will recruit underrepresented students in your personnel
  - Demonstrate your commitment

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Advice from the Office of Research Development

- Consult official guidelines

- Customize your plan

- Integrate your strategies

- Be detailed and thorough

- Build mutually beneficial relationships

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Consult official guidelines

- Different agencies may define/emphasize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in different ways

- Consulting official guidelines can help shape your DEIA plan so that it's best suited for that agency/opportunity

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Customize your plan

- One size does not fit all here

- Different research activities require different DEIA plans

- Reviewers want to see that you're taking this seriously, which will come across in how much thought/detail you put in

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Integrate your strategies

- Integrate DEIA strategies throughout the proposed activities

- Don't relegate these plans to only those involving students/education

- Infuse DEIA strategies throughout everything you plan to do with your team

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Be detailed and thorough

- If you choose to mention groups such as PEER and WISE, describe their involvement carefully and be detailed regarding their role in the project

- Don't push this off for other entities/organizations to take care of

- Reviewers can judge your commitment from the level of detail provided

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Build mutually beneficial relationships

- If you're partnering with other organizations/entities, make sure to build and foster mutually beneficial relationships

- You should be helping these organizations as much as they're helping you

- Effort needs to be invested on both sides

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Resources

- [NSF Safe and Inclusive Work Environments](#)

- [US DOE Guidance for Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research Plans](#)

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Questions?