

## Questions from the 2020 Post Award Grantee Webinar

### Amendments

#### ***Do you get a new grant agreement when you are approved for an amendment?***

When your amendment has been approved you will receive an email from [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto:Easygrants@nfwf.org) that outlines the approved change to your project. If the amendment impacts a section of the grant agreement, revised terms will be included in this email but a new agreement will not be issued.

#### ***For budget changes below the 10% threshold, should we be reaching out to our GA for an amendment?***

If your budget changes are below 10% of the total award amount and do not involve moving funds between different budget categories (i.e. Personnel, Contractual Services, Indirect Costs, etc.) then you can submit the changes on your next payment request with an explanation in the budget narrative. If your budget changes exceed 10% of the total award amount, involve moving funds across budget categories, or are accompanied with any significant changes to the project scope, you should reach out to your Grants Administrator for guidance.

#### ***How long prior to the project end date should an extension be requested?***

Please notify your Grants Administrator as soon as you think you will need an extension of your period of performance, even if you are not yet ready to submit an amendment or aren't sure how long of an extension you will need. At a minimum, submit any amendment requests at least 30 days prior to your project's scheduled end date.

### Payments and Fiscal Accounting

#### ***What should we do if our project has funds awarded that will ultimately end up not being spent?***

We understand that costs change over the course of a project and that some costs in your proposal are estimates. This means projects may close under their initial award amount. We prefer that you spend down as much of the funding as possible to further and enhance the scope of work, but if you know you're not going to be able to spend your full award amount you should alert your grants administrator as soon as possible. Please note that you will report your final expenditures on the Final Financial Report and will be asked for confirmation over email if you are leaving funds behind.

#### ***It is difficult to accurately report salaries in the budget tool because the value autofills based on annual pay and fringe rate, which can change between years. Is there a preferred solution?***

The best solution is to break out each individual's expenses by year: Person A Year 1, Person A Year 2, Person B Year 1 and Person B Year 2. If an individual receives an unexpected raise or promotion mid-project it will be easier to create a new line item with their new rate. Please note that you cannot go over budget for the project as whole if an individual's rate increases. Make sure to include an explanation in the budget narrative if you add a new line item at any point during the project and stop charging to the old line item.

#### ***How detailed does the reimbursement request have to be? For example, can we just say "supplies", or do we need to list all 20 things purchased?***

In general, you should itemize costs and break things out as much as possible in your proposal. The expense report in the payment request will be the same as the budget you submitted with your proposal, and you will be asked to update it to reflect what items you are requesting for reimbursement. You can add additional line items if necessary, making sure to include a budget narrative for these new expenses. If you need to change a line item by more than 10% of the total award amount, please reach out to your Grants Administrator to see if a budget amendment is necessary.

***What is expected to be included in the narrative accompanying a reimbursement request and should the narrative only be for the period covered by the request?***

The only narrative in the payment request form accompanies the budget. This will already be filled in from the budget narrative you submitted with your proposal. In payment requests the narrative only needs to be edited to provide justification for deviations from the approved budget. For example, explaining instances of budget overages or added line items. You do not need to edit your budget narrative if you are not making substantive changes to your budget.

***Can you provide more information on requesting advanced payments, instead of reimbursement?***

If you anticipate needing an advance payment, contact your Grants Administrator. Advance payment requests are not submitted through the same payment request task you can generate on your own, and must be set up by your Grants Administrator. On the advance request you will be asked to confirm that you will expend all requested funds within 30 days of receiving the payment. After 30 days your Grants Administrator will ask you to confirm what line items in your budget were spent down with the advance and return any unspent funds. Please note that it may take up to three weeks to receive payment after initial payment request submission.

***Do we need to keep receipts for three years after project closure (e.g. meals, incidentals, gas)?***

Yes. For auditing purposes, please keep a record of all project receipts and expenses for three years after your project end date.

***What is the process to report on cost share/matching contributions?***

You will be asked to provide updates on your proposed matching contributions throughout the life of your grant through payment requests and financial reporting tasks. You will be asked to change the status of the contribution (e.g. "proposed" to "in hand"), and provide the amount expended for each listed contribution.

Communications

***Do the social media posts and press releases need pre-approval from NFWF before posting?***

Your award agreement will dictate how NFWF and other project funders should be credited on all communications and written materials about your project. You should reach out to NFWF for approval before adding our logo to any print/digital communications materials including written materials, pamphlets, posters, graphics, etc. Please provide a mockup of the communications material for NFWF to review. Press releases require prior approval when they include quotes from NFWF staff, use of the NFWF logo, or NFWF's boilerplate and prior review is requested when a press release mentions NFWF

by name. In general, social media posts that incorporate already approved content do not require pre-approval, unless they include use of NFWF's logo.

***What is the estimated review time needed by NFWF to approve the use of NFWF and partner logos for different products?***

We ask that you submit materials for review at least one week ahead of when they need final approval. We understand you may on occasion need a very tight turn around on these approvals and we will try to be accommodating for rush requests.

***Can we still credit NFWF and partners for other accomplishments that may result from the project (e.g. a publication, open source dataset, etc.), but which are not mentioned in the original project scope?? Should we include those items in the final report?***

We would love to hear from you on all the additional accomplishment of your project, but we might not want all of these to be included in your final reports. If you have additional accomplishments, you can email these to your Program Lead (Michelle Pico, Kaity Goldsmith or Gray Redding) and they will be able to tell you whether these can be included in your reports and whether NFWF and our funding partners should be credited.

#### Compliance

***Are there further resources to understand specific procurement/sub-contractor requirements that NFWF has? Is there any documentation needed?***

Subrecipients must comply with their organization's procurement policies along with the Procurement Standards and methods outlined in the Uniform Guidance. Please use the following link to access the Uniform Guidance Procurement Standards:

[https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a94fd4e2b1fd1597e6456124e0fd5b3a&mc=true&n=pt2.1.200&r=PART&ty=HTML#se2.1.200\\_1318](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a94fd4e2b1fd1597e6456124e0fd5b3a&mc=true&n=pt2.1.200&r=PART&ty=HTML#se2.1.200_1318)

***Is there any information or guidance on the NEPA review process? What happens if NEPA review cuts deep into the total duration proposed for a project?***

We will contact you if NEPA is required for your project. If you become concerned that NEPA review will have negative ramifications on the timeline or scope of work for your project, please contact your Program Lead.

***How do we provide information to meet data management and public sharing requirements?***

Data management and public sharing requirements are specific to some of our federal funding agreements. If your project is subject to these requirements, more information will be available in the additional terms and conditions of your grant agreement.

#### Contracting

***How long on average does the contract review process take?***

In most cases you will receive a decision (decline or award) on your proposal about 2-3 months after you submit your full proposal. It may take up to three months after this date before your project is activated and you can request funding. NFWF prioritizes getting all projects up and running as soon as possible, but please be patient as NFWF awards more than 800 new projects every year.

***At what point in the contracting process can we start the work and incurring costs?***

You may start working on your project and incurring expenses as long as your requested start date has passed, but you do so at your own risk until the grant agreement is fully executed. Once your project is active, you can start requesting funds for expenses incurred to date and as needed from there forward. If you would like to modify your project start date, contact your Grants Administrator.

***Will the timeline of the grant be modified if the project start date passes before receiving a grant agreement?***

You may start working on your project and incurring expenses as long as your requested start date has passed, but you do so at your own risk until the grant agreement is fully executed. If you do not feel comfortable beginning work and would like to modify your period of performance, please reach out to your Grants Administrator and Program Lead (Michelle Pico, Kaity Goldsmith or Gray Redding).

***How soon after executing the grant agreement can we request funding?***

Once you have been notified via email that your agreement is executed and your project is active, you may immediately submit a payment request online. NFWF processes payments twice per month. It may take up to three weeks to receive payment after you have submitted your payment request.

***Is it possible to bundle the programmatic and financial edits?***

The Marine Team makes every effort to bundle the initial programmatic and budget edits when the timeline permits. However if a significant budget change is requested, the proposal will need to be resubmitted before the more detailed review can be completed.

The secondary Compliance review looks at the budget in more detail. Our goal in the initial review is that all errors have been addressed and all expenses and documents are within federal and NFWF policies prior to the proposal going to Compliance for review. Detailed budget narratives and timely responses help expedite projects through this review.

COVID-19

***Are there any expected changes due to the COVID-19 situation?***

Please see the additional FAQ document we have attached to cover COVID-19. In general, NFWF is working hard to maintain normal capacity and are willing to work with you on a case-by-case basis to provide as much assistance as possible during this difficult time. Please reach out to your Program Lead (Michelle Pico, Kaity Goldsmith or Gray Redding) directly if you think this will cause significant changes or problems for your projects outcomes or meeting your matching contributions requirements.

Programmatic Questions

***How should we report on metrics, and how are they used?***

There are two places where NFWF captures metrics in the full proposal application. In the 'Metrics Tab' NFWF provides a small list of standardized metrics that best match with the priority activities of the program under which you applied. Your project may only align with 1-3 of these metrics depending on the breadth and depth of the program. These metrics are the standardized metrics that NFWF uses to report back to the Board of Directors and partners, and more generally talk about the accomplishments across the program and NFWF in general.

In the proposal narrative you will also have an opportunity to talk about metrics. While you should include the program metrics you selected on the Metrics Tab, you are also encouraged to provide project specific metrics that you will use to track progress on your project specifically. These metrics should tie directly to the activities and outcomes listed in your narrative and can also be used in interim reporting.

***At what point is a NOAA Point of Contact assigned?***

Gray Redding, Fisheries Conservation Program Manager, will contact you directly if your Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Project must complete an implementation plan and notify you of the NOAA Point of Contact who you should work with to develop the plan.

NFWF aims to provide you information on the implementation plan and your NOAA Point of Contact when you receive your grant agreement.

***Are we eligible to apply for phase 2 funding for our project in upcoming RFPs, or should we wait until our current projects have progressed or completed?***

There are no eligibility constraints on organizations or even specific projects that have active awards. We suggest that you talk with the relevant program manager to talk through timing and competitiveness for your situation.

Resources and Guides

***How do we access the guidance documents that were mentioned in the webinar?***

Application tip sheets can be found under "Related Content" on the right hand side of every Request for Proposals webpage which can be found on each program's webpage. Additional documents were referenced in the webinar including [10 Things Every NFWF Grantee Should Know](#), and guidance for completing the interim and final reports. These documents are attached with this FAQ and will also be added to program pages under Applicant Information.

***Are there checklists or guides available for each step in this process?***

There are steps in Easygrants to cover every step of the proposal, payment request, amendment and reporting tasks. We do not, at this time, have one comprehensive guide to take you through every step of the process from submitting your proposal to closing your project. As always, if you have any questions or anything is ever unclear please reach out to your Grants Administrator or the Easygrants Help Desk ([Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto:Easygrants@nfwf.org)) and they will be able to assist you further.

***Is there a narrative and financial report format to submit through Easygrants?***

Programmatic and Financial Reports will be submitted through Easygrants. We do not have templates for the whole report but these will be very similar to your proposal task with a narrative to upload in the programmatic reports and your budget in the financial reports.

***Will you provide a pdf of the webinar power point?***

We do not provide a PDF of the slides. A recording of the webinar is available here, and will be provided on all Marine Team program pages on the NFWF website:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/4368978028844220675>

### Systems

***Can more than one person at our organization have access to the project in Easygrants?***

Once your project is active, you can add additional contacts to the grant. Every individual should have their own easygrants account and all contacts will have access to generate payment requests. Each individual task can only be assigned to one person at a time, but your Grants Administrator can transfer a task between approved project contacts upon request. By default, all reports will be assigned to the project PI. Please contact your Grants Administrator if you would like to change the project PI.

***Can you further explain the required use of Internet Explorer? Firefox can also disable pop up blockers.***

You can use any web browser as long as pop up blockers has been turned off for the site.