

## Appendix: Instruments, instructions and scripts

### Recruitment

#### Feedback survey:

In future surveys disseminated by NSF's Office of Legislative and Public Affairs, we will include the following question (these surveys will be submitted to OMB for review separately):

[heading/question label] Join us for a user feedback session

[paragraph] NSF wants to learn more about your experience on NSF.gov. If it is ok for NSF to contact you to schedule a feedback session, please provide your email below. Your email address will not be shared with any third parties or used for any other purpose.

[label] Email address for scheduling

[input field - email address]

#### GovDelivery email:

Included at the bottom of one or more funding-related email campaigns sent to individuals who have opted to receive communications from NSF regarding funding:

#### Participate in user research

NSF talks with real users to understand their needs and test website improvements. If you would like to participate in a user research session, please register at [link] NSF user research.

#### Participant referral email

This email will be sent to individuals who our other user testers recommend we reach out to.

Dear [prospective participant name]/Good morning/Good afternoon,

I'm reaching out to you at the recommendation of [referral name]. I'm a member of a design team working with the National Science Foundation to refresh NSF.gov.

We're working to improve the online funding search tool for researchers working in a wide range of scientific fields. To that end, we're interested in learning more about how researchers like you currently search for funding through NSF.gov, and elsewhere. We would also like to identify pain points and needs in this area.

If you use NSF.gov to look for funding opportunities relevant to your field of research, or plan to, would you let us know your availability the week of [date] using the [link] scheduling tool. Once we have you scheduled, I'll follow up with instructions for joining the video call and a link to a research participant agreement form for you to review and sign.

I'd be happy to answer any questions, and I hope to hear from you soon!

Regards,

[NSF staff member name]

NSF.gov team

## **NSF user research information webpage:**

A new page on the NSF website where users can learn more about NSF user research and can click on a recruitment form to sign up to participate:

### **Participate in NSF.gov user research**

#### **User research and testing**

The U.S. National Science Foundation wants to learn more about your experience on NSF.gov to better understand your needs and test website improvements. If you'd like to participate in a user feedback session, use the recruitment form below.

[button - [Go to recruitment form](#)]

#### **Types of user research**

NSF conducts a range of user research tasks to inform the design and development of key features on NSF.gov. The types of research we conduct include:

- *Ethnographic interviews* – These interviews help us understand users' contexts and broader goals.
- *Top-tasks* – This activity helps us prioritize the most important and common user tasks.
- *Card sort* – This activity, which involves arranging topics into categories, helps us understand helpful ways to group information on our website.
- *Tree tests* – This activity helps us examine how easy it is to find items in the website's navigation menus and better understand user tasks.
- *Usability tests* – This form of observational testing helps us uncover issues for new site features.

#### **What to expect**

When conducting a study, we will reach out by email to confirm your interest in participating and will ask about your availability. There is no obligation to participate, and you are always free to decline. If you are interested in proceeding, we will schedule a time to conduct a remote user research session.

During the research session, a facilitator, accompanied by a note taker, will run you through a list of tasks. The session will be recorded to share with the NSF.gov project team. Depending on the topic, your session will run between 30 and 60 minutes.

Upon completing a feedback session, we'll provide you with a gift card as a thank you. You will be free to contact the researcher with any follow-up questions.