# Comment on Draft PAPPG

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To:Plimpton, Suzanne H. <splimpto@nsf.gov>;

Dr. Plimpton,

I have a brief comment on the draft PAPPG. First, I'm happy that NSF is officially formalizing a standard template for Conflicts of Interest outside of the biosketch. This is a very welcome change. My comment is on a related note, the clarification of what can be listed as "five examples" within the synergistic activities section of the biosketch. While I am always in favor of clarity, I question the wisdom of even more strictly enforcing the five examples limit, for the following reasons:

* Within reason (e.g. a two-page limit), more information allows reviewers and NSF staff a better ability to judge the qualifications of senior personnel.
* Collaborators/conflicts are no longer part of the biosketch, allowing more room for information in other sections.
* The other remaining sections (professional preparation, appointments, products) are highly formulaic. Further limitations on synergistic activities will make it even more difficult for personnel to highlight unique qualifications and experiences. This problem is already a significant issue for personnel from non-faculty/non-academic backgrounds. With a strict limit on synergistic activities, many PIs will struggle to fully utilize the two pages.
* As the biosketch is already limited to two pages, relaxing restrictions on the synergistic activities section is unlikely to significantly increase the burden of material that reviewers need to digest.

For all of these reasons, I urge NSF to consider either an alternate biosketch format for non-academic PIs, or to relax "synergistic activities" restrictions, while still limiting the biosketch to two pages.

Thank you for considering a view from "in the trenches."

Pete Larsen


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