Administration and Management

The FY 2001 request for Administration and Management (A&M) of $216.62 million provides support for salaries, benefits, and training of persons employed at the NSF, general operating expenses, including key initiatives to advance the agency's information systems technology, and audit and Inspector General activities. The workforce includes Federal employees, Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignees, detailees, and contractors performing administrative functions.

(Millions of Dollars)

	FY 1999 Estimate	FY 2000 Estimate	FY 2001 Estimate
General Management and Administration	$171.64	$185.14	$210.34
Salaries and Expenses	144.08	148.90	157.89
IPA and Program Support in Program Accounts	27.15	35.91	52.10
Financial Statement Audit	0.41	0.33	0.35
[Travel]	[11.00]	[13.00]	[14.00]
Office of the Inspector General [1]	5.18	5.45	6.28
Total Administration and Management	$176.82	$190.59	$216.62
NSF Workforce:			
Federal Employees	1,194	1,199	1,204
Intergovernmental Personnel Act FTE	111	126	140
Detailees	8	8	10
Administrative Contractors	195	193	210
Total Workforce	1,508	1,526	1,564

[1] Within OIG, $24,000 was carried over from FY 1999 to FY 2000.

FTE

	FY 1999 Estimate	FY 2000 Estimate	FY 2001 Estimate
Total[1]	1,194	1,199	1,204
Office of Inspector General	46	46	50
Salaries and Expenses	1,144	1,150	1,150
Arctic Research Commission	3	3	4

[1]Totals may not add due to rounding.

The Administration and Management function includes administrative costs that are funded through the Research and Related Activities (R&RA) account and the Education and Human Resources (EHR) account as well as the Salaries and Expenses and Office of the Inspector General accounts.

The FY 2001 request for Administration and Management is an increase of 13.7 percent over FY 2000. The increase will fund additional IPA assignees, detailees and contractors performing administrative functions, comparability and locality pay increases for federal employees, a space increase that covers existing and newly-acquired space, staff training, and improved productivity of our staff through investments in information and communications technology. Such investment in information systems technology has been crucial to NSF in the past, as the agency has handled significant increases in program funds and corresponding increases in the quantity and complexity of its workload without equivalent increases in administrative funds.

A&M includes the following components:

Program Accounts

IPA costs and administrative contracts funded by R&RA and EHR are included within A&M. An increase in IPAs and contractor personnel is crucial in order for NSF to provide the workforce necessary to carry out program initiatives and maintain the efficient management of our increasingly complex programs. Also, new activities substantially increase the need for coordination and result in heavy demands on the staff. A single coordinated program can involve dozens of program managers from throughout NSF. A few examples of the increased workload are:

- Research investment requires more coordination within NSF and between NSF and our partners in the research enterprise. NSF's partners include other federal agencies and the academic community both within the United States and internationally. These partnerships continue to increase as the research enterprise looks to pool resources and talent in search of discovery. But these partnerships also require a considerable amount of oversight and coordination by agency staff in addition to normal program activities especially in an effort to avoid duplicating, but rather complementing other federal research programs.

- The agency has placed a high priority on the integration of research and education. The proposal review process has been modified to explicitly include this component as part of the overall process. The complexity of the proposals the agency receives continues to increase as applicants respond to new opportunities that involve increased collaboration. This also has an impact on the workload of NSF program officers, as these proposals require more time and effort to review. The Foundations' program officers manage a merit review process involving over 100,000 requests to active researchers and educators review proposals.

- In implementing the performance plan the Foundation needs to collect information on the results of NSF-supported projects. The agency is requesting more detailed information from awardees and has implemented a new web-based Project Reporting System. Also, NSF has reoriented the Committee of Visitors review process to provide assessments on the performance of NSF programs.

An increase in travel funds in FY 2001 is necessary to continue to support the merit review process while increasing the ability for oversight and outreach travel. Beginning in FY 2001, all travel by staff in the program offices will be funded through R&RA and EHR instead of the Salaries and Expenses account. This change is requested to directly associate oversight and outreach travel with the appropriate program. Good management is critical to the success of the research and education activities that we support, and proper and sufficient oversight is vital to this process. Without an increase in total travel authority, the Foundation will be unable to ensure both a reliable merit review process and the oversight recommended by the agency's Inspector General. Inspector General reports continue to cite the lack of travel funds for oversight of NSF awards as a major management challenge. In addition, management reviews call for more oversight travel.

Salaries and Expenses

- Personnel Compensation and Benefits (PC&B) provides support to maintain the current FTE level of 1,150, including comparability and locality pay increases and higher benefit costs. The FTE distribution by account is shown below:

- General Operating Expenses (GOE) support the entire range of operating expenses necessary for the agency to administer its programs. The GOE level for FY 2001 provides for advances in the agency's information systems technology and administration and increased rental payments to the General Services Administration for existing and newly acquired space.

Office of the Inspector General

- OIG activities include resources to support the Office of Inspector General. An FTE increase of 4 is requested in FY 2001. Funding for the financial statement audit contract is charged to the appropriations being audited. OIG support costs such as rent and communications are provided in the Salaries and Expenses appropriation.

Highlights

Highlights of the FY 2001 A&M request include the following major initiatives that support improvements to the Foundation's information technology infrastructure in areas such as management of proposal submission, review, award and financial activities.

Electronic Administration

The recent enactment of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999 has significant implications for NSF's activities and development of electronic systems. The new act sets tight deadlines for planning and implementation of a wide variety of functions that are critical to NSF's mission, including streamlining basic assistance processes, participation in interagency efforts for electronic initiatives, and assisting award recipients in their abilities to meet reporting requirements. While NSF has been a leader in many of these activities, the accelerated deadlines of this Act require accelerated system development and greater concentration of resources in activities supporting

interagency consistency and customer support. Increased funding is necessary to ensure that the Foundation has the resources not only to meet these challenging deadlines, but also to provide a leadership role in this federal effort.

NSF's business has been changing, and Administration and Management funding has not kept pace with program increases. Therefore, in spite of an aggressive use of technology, NSF has found that it takes a significant effort on the part of the agency staff to implement the complex, interdisciplinary programs that are becoming more inevitable and prevalent. These programs require coordination within the Foundation, with other Federal agencies, and among the numerous and diverse science and engineering communities. The scientific complexity that results from these interdisciplinary programs is reflected in the management of proposal submission, review, award and financial activities. It is critical that the Foundation makes further investments in the agency's information systems that will enable NSF to handle its increasing workload. To meet this growing workload, the Foundation has actively pursued the use of advanced information technologies to improve the way NSF does business and to reduce the administrative burden on NSF customers and staff. The key initiatives to advance NSF's information systems technology are:

FastLane

With the FastLane project, NSF has moved toward more streamlined, paperless electronic administrative activities. The Foundation initiated FastLane as a research project in 1994 to test the feasibility of complete electronic handling of proposal processing and grant administration and to explore the capability of electronic processing to reduce the workload burden on both NSF and the research community. FastLane enables NSF and its customer community to conduct and facilitate business transactions and exchange information electronically using the World Wide Web.

In September 1998, the Director of NSF issued Important Notice 123 to university and college presidents and the heads of other grantee organizations. It contains NSF's vision for paperless proposal and award processing. In addition to outlining the steps NSF is taking to bring the vision to reality, the Important Notice included a schedule of when five basic functions will be required for use by our grantees. This notice is NSF's public commitment to using electronic processing for its standard business processes. The major and final deadline in the Important Notice is October 1, 2000 (proposal and review submissions required).

In addition to increased efficiency and reduced administrative burden, the benefits to be derived from FastLane are increased access by researchers and the public to information about NSF-supported research, and reduced proposal and award processing time. Since its inception, FastLane has been tremendously successful and award-winning, and continued to experience substantial growth in all areas in FY 1999. The system that began as an experiment with 16 university partners currently has 3000 registered organizations (up from 1500 in FY 1998).

To date, 41 FastLane functions have been developed that handle the processing associated with proposal preparation and submission, proposal review, proposal status inquiry, award notification, project reports, and award search. These modules were used by grantee institutions to submit 12,734 proposals in FY 1999 (NSF receives about 30,000 proposals each year).

Today, NSF handles over $2.5 billion in cash transactions on FastLane. FastLane features include electronic capabilities for cash requests, Federal Cash Transaction Reports (FCTRs) and no cost award extensions. Among the enhancements added in FY 1999 were new means for preparing proposals, allowing principal investigators control over editing their own contact information and professional affiliations, new reports for NSF grantees, interactive ways for panel reviewers to coordinate evaluations of proposals, allowing organizations control of adding new principal investigators to NSF's

official lists, support of Portable Document Format (PDF) files in our project reporting function, and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) for proposal submission. In FY 1999, a FastLane Help Desk was established to provide centralized, dedicated support to our external users.

Currently, FastLane is NSF's preferred method of proposal submission, and our goal under the Results Act is for 60% of all NSF proposals to be received and processed via FastLane during FY 2000. In order to handle the increased FastLane operational workload expected from this initiative, we must continue to support and enhance FastLane operations and maintenance, expand the Help Desk, and train personnel in its use. The required infrastructure includes high-speed servers, additional file space, scanning equipment, monitors, software, and other equipment. It also includes system security and contracts to maintain and enhance the FastLane computer programs.

The FastLane system is being continuously enhanced and updated as new technologies emerge and based on feedback from the research community. When the project began in 1994, we recognized that the opportunities presented by advances in the Internet and World Wide Web would have a significant impact on how work is accomplished. The initial project was based on what was known of the capabilities of the Internet and Web at that time. Based on their experience with FastLane, the user community has identified new opportunities that were not envisioned in 1994. We expect the requirement for new enhancements to continue as new opportunities emerge and as the Web continues to evolve.

Budget Internet Information System (BIIS) and Enterprise Information System (EIS)

The Budget Internet Information System (http://ntalpha.bfa.nsf.gov) contains information on GPRA issues such as processing time and award size. It is easily accessible to the public via the Web and is used extensively by the university community and R&D press. Information currently available includes:

- Funding Rate by State and Organization: Contains information on number of competitive proposals and awards, funding rate, NSF processing time, award duration and award size. The information can be obtained by discipline and includes ten years of trend data.

- Award Listings, by Organization, State, and Institution: Includes information on funding by state and institution, broken out by academic and industrial performers with detail by discipline and award.

- Award Summary, by Top Institutions: Shows information on funding by the top institutions, broken out by academic and industrial performers with detail by discipline and award for the past five years.

The Enterprise Information System (EIS) is an internal NSF, user-friendly system that informs and empowers NSF program and financial managers as they make budget and planning decisions. The EIS includes financial and personnel information.   For example, a summary of grant budgets for all NSF awards is available. This includes budgets for investigator salaries, funding for undergraduates and graduates, indirect costs and equipment costs. Trends and current status of projects also are available.

FinanceNet

NSF is the innovator, developer, and custodian for FinanceNet (www.financenet.gov), the government's Internet "home page" for financial management improvement initiatives and the government-wide Internet portal site for information on all Federal, state and local surplus, abandoned and unclaimed property. The Chief Financial Officers' Council is FinanceNet's sponsor through Memoranda of Agreement with

its member agencies and departments. In FY 1999, FinanceNet World Wide Web visits increased to the rate of 30 million "hits" per year with subscriptions to its more than 100 topical and organizational Internet list servers increasing to over 100,000. The Foundation also further broadened FinanceNet's outreach. In FY 1999 FinanceNet integrated all of its collaborative Internet tools, developed for more than two dozen governmental organizations, into one seamless turnkey web application. In response to tasking within OMB's "FY 2000 Financial Management Status Report and Five Year Plan," FinanceNet is expanding the scope of its government-wide asset sales web portal to include the development of an interagency support team, government-wide data warehouse and pilot auction site.

Migration to Client-Server Environment

NSF is replacing its aging central mainframe computer by migrating to a client-server computing environment that allows more processing to be performed at individual workstations rather than on the mainframe. This migration is scheduled for completion in FY 2001.

FY 2001 Performance Goals for Administration and Management

The performance goals for NSF's investment process provide information about the means and strategies NSF uses in support of its outcome goals and articulates performance goals for the investment process by which NSF shapes its portfolio of awards. Performance goals for management address whether centrally funded and coordinated administrative activities are managed efficiently and effectively in support of NSF's mission.   See the FY 2001 Performance Plan included in this justification for further detail.

Annual Performance Goals for Management[1]

Critical Factor for Success	Performance Goal
NSF Business Practices	
Electronic proposal submission	NSF will receive at least 95% of full proposal submissions electronically through FastLane, improving upon the FY 1998 baseline of 17.5%, the FY 1999 achievement of 44% and the FY 2000 goal of 60%.
Electronic proposal processing	NSF will conduct ten pilot paperless projects that manage the competitive review process in a totally electronic environment. (New Goal)
Project reporting	During FY 2001, at least 95% of eligible project reports will be submitted through the electronic Project Reporting System, improving on the FY 1999 baseline of 59% and the FY 2000 goal of 85%.
Video-conference/long distance	By the end of FY 2001, NSF will increase usage of a broad-range of video-conferencing/long distance communications technology by 100% over the FY 1999 level, from 50 VTC's to 100. (New Goal)
NSF Staff	
Diversity	NSF will maintain the FY 2000 goal: NSF will show an increase over 1997 in the total number of hires to S&E positions from underrepresented groups. FY 1997 baseline: Of 54 hires, 22% were female and 19% were from underrepresented groups.
Work Environment	In FY 2001, NSF will strive to provide NSF staff with a physical environment that is safe and well equipped with current technology tools, and a work culture that promotes high performance, life-long learning, and recognition of high achievement. (New Goal)

[1] In FY 2001, NSF continues to emphasize the area of managing information technologies.

Annual Performance Goals for NSF's Investment Process

Performance Area	FY 2001 Annual Performance Goal
Proposal and Award Processes	
Use of Merit Review	*At least 90 percent of NSF funds will be allocated to projects reviewed by appropriate peers external to NSF and selected through a merit-based competitive process, maintaining the FY 1999 and FY 2000 goal of 90%. FY 1999 result: 95%.*
Implementation of Merit Review Criteria [1]	NSF performance in implementation of the new merit review criteria is successful when reviewers address the elements of both generic review criteria appropriate to the proposal at hand and when program officers take the information provided into acount in their award decisions. FY 1999 result: Largely Successful
Implementation of Merit Review Criteria - Integration of Research and Education in Reviews [1]	NSF performance is successful when reviewers of research grant proposals address elements of both generic review cirteria, and explicitly address the integration of research and education. (New Goal)
Implementation of Merit Review Criteria - Integration of Research and Education in Proposals	In a pilot effort, at least 50% of research grant proposals will explicitly address elements of both generic review criteria, and explicitly address the integration of research and education. (New Goal)
Customer Service - General	NSF's overall customer satisfaction rating on applicant surveys will show continued improvement over FY 2000 applicant survey results. FY 2000 goal: American Customer Satisfaction Survey (ACSI) of 58+
Customer Service - Time to prepare proposals	Maintain the FY 2000 goal that 95% of program announcements and solicitations will be available at least three months prior to proposal deadlines or target dates. FY 1998 baseline: 66%. FY 1999 Goal: 95%. FY 1999 result: 75%
Customer Service - Time to decision	Process 75% of proposals within six months of receipt, improving upon the FY 1998 baseline of 59% and FY 1999 and 2000 goal of 70%. FY 1999 result: 58%
Award Size	NSF will increase the average award size for research projects to $108,000. (New Goal) FY 1998 baseline: $90,000. FY 1999 data: $94,000. FY 2000 estimate: $98,000.
Award Duration	NSF will increase the average duration of awards for research projects from an FY 1998 base of 2.7 years to at least 3 years. FY 1999 goal: 2.8 years. FY 1999 result: 2.8 years. (Goal dropped in FY 2000)
Broadening Participation	
Underrepresented Groups - Women and Minorities	NSF will begin to implement the mechanisms/approaches developed in FY 2000 for increasing the number of women and underrepresented minorities in the proposal application pool. (New Goal)
	NSF will begin to implement the approaches identified in FY 2000 for retaining women and underrepresented minorities in the proposal applicant pool. (New Goal)

[1] These performance goals are stated in the alternative format provided for in GPRA legislation.