

Categories of Proposal Personnel

Every person who is expected to have significant role (i.e. assigned responsibilities appropriate to a defined category of personnel) in the execution of the proposed effort must be identified on the proposal cover page, using one of the following seven categories of personnel. Each individual proposed must also identify the organization through which they are participating in the investigation, which may differ from their primary employer or preferred mailing address, in order to facilitate organizational conflict of interest checks that must be considered in the evaluation process. Any organization requesting NASA funds through participation in the proposed project must list each team member on the proposal cover page. Other than the category of Principal Investigator, some FAs may specifically disallow some or all of the below categories and/or may add other categories.

Principal Investigator (PI) – The PI is the individual a research organization designates as having an appropriate level of authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the research, including the appropriate use of funds and administrative requirements such as the submission of scientific progress reports to the agency. Every proposal shall identify a PI who is responsible for the quality and direction of the proposed research and for the proper use of awarded funds regardless of whether or not they receive support through the award. The proposing organization

has the authority to designate the PI and to designate a replacement, if that becomes necessary. NASA approval is required for replacement of a PI after proposal selection.

Contact PI - To facilitate communication with NASA when proposing multiple PIs, the submitting organization must designate a "Contact PI" at the time of proposal. The Contact PI will be referred to as the "PI." Any other PIs will be referred to as "Co-PIs." The NASA Award Officer and Program Officer will communicate with the Contact PI, and the Contact PI will be responsible for relaying communications between the Co-PIs and NASA.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) - When multiple PIs are proposed, the Co-PI(s) share the responsibilities of the PI.

NASA strongly encourages PIs to specify only the most critically important personnel to aid in the execution of their proposals. Such personnel must be designated as being in one of the following categories:

Co-Investigator (Co-I) – A Co-I is a member of the team who may hold either a full-time or limited-term appointment and who is a critical "partner" for the conduct of the investigation through the contribution of expertise and/or capabilities. A Co-I will serve under the direction of the PI and must have a continuing role in the proposed investigation. The Co-I may or may not receive funding through the award. Each Co-I, even if not funded, must demonstrate their commitment to participate in the proposed investigation by way of a brief signed statement, which may be the electronic confirmation through NSPIRES, even if they are from the proposing organization. The PI may also designate in NSPIRES one of the following roles for a Co-I who will carry additional responsibilities, as appropriate for the following unique

circumstances:

- One Co-I may be designated as the "Science PI" for those cases where the proposing organization does not permit that individual to formally serve as a PI as defined above (e.g., non-tenured faculty, postdoctoral personnel). In such a case, that Co-I/Science PI will be understood by NASA to be in charge of the scientific direction of the proposed work, although the formally designated PI will still be held responsible for the overall direction of the effort and use of funds.
- A Co-I at an organization other than that of the PI institution who is making a major contribution to the proposal (e.g., providing a significant piece of hardware) and who serves as the point of contact at that Co-I's organization, may also be designated as the "Institutional PI" for that Co-I's organization. If specifically stated in the FA, NASA may elect to provide a separate award directly to the organization of the Co-I. In this case, the Co-I will serve as the "PI" for this separate award for their organization.
- A Co-I from a non-U.S. organization may also be designated as a "Co-Principal Investigator" (Co-PI) should such a designation be required to fulfill administrative requirements of that Co-I's organization and/or to enable the acceptance of funding by that Co-I from their sponsoring funding authority.

Postdoctoral Associate – A Postdoctoral Associate holds a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree, is identified as a major participant (but not explicitly as a Co-I) for the execution of the proposed research, and receives funding through the proposal's budget. Such a Postdoctoral Associate should be identified by name, if known, but may be identified only by designated function in those cases where recruitment depends on the successful selection of the proposal. Postdoctoral Associates might not be named on the proposal cover page, but their effort must be included in the technical description of work assignments and the proposal budget.

Other Professional – This category is appropriate for personnel who support a proposal in a critical manner, e.g., a key Project Engineer and/or Manager, but who is not identified as a Co-I or Postdoctoral Associate. This individual's role on the proposal must be described in the budget narrative budget narrative.

Graduate and/or Undergraduate Students – A proposal may incorporate students working for graduate or undergraduate degrees who will be paid through the proposal's budget to help carry out the proposed research under direction of the PI or one of the designated Co-Is. Such students should be identified by name, if known, but may be identified only by function in those cases where their recruitment depends on the successful selection of the proposal. These students might not be named on the proposal cover page, but their effort their effort must be included in the technical description of work assignments and the proposal budget. Direct support for undergraduate students' tuition is allowed only if so stated in the FA.

Consultant – A Consultant is an individual who possesses a special skill, receives a fee for their services which may include travel in order to consult with the PI, and is not an officer or

employee of the proposing organization. A consultant provides services that support the proposed activities, but unlike a Co-I, is not responsible for project oversight and completion. As opposed to a Co-I who is actively engaged in the proposed activities, a consultant provides information, advice, engages in discussions, and serves as a resource—a person with whom the PI and Co-Is confer. The requirements for the proposal budget includes the identification, justification, and complete breakdown of all costs proposed for all consultants.

Collaborator – A Collaborator is an individual who is not critical to the proposal but who is committed to provide a focused but unfunded contribution for a specific task. If funding support, including travel costs, is requested in the proposal, such a person must be identified in one of the other categories above. For a proposal that is submitted via [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), collaborators should be listed on the Project Role “Other” line of the Senior/Key Person portion of the SF 424 (R&R) form.

If selected, proposers must comply with the policy of the Office of Management and Budget set out in 2 CFR § 200.466, Scholarships and student aid costs. To ensure compliance with this policy, proposers must affirm in their proposals the following:

- a. The individual is conducting activities necessary to the Federal award;
- b. Tuition remission and other support are provided in accordance with established policy of the IHE and consistently provided in a like manner to students in return for similar activities conducted under Federal awards as well as other activities; and
- c. During the academic period, the student is enrolled in an advanced degree program at a non-Federal entity or affiliated institution and the activities of the student in relation to the Federal award are related to the degree program;
- d. The tuition or other payments are reasonable compensation for the work performed and are conditioned explicitly upon the performance of necessary work; and
- e. It is the IHE's practice to similarly compensate students under Federal awards as well as other activities.