

## Senior Personnel Salaries on NSF Awards

As defined in the [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#), research is regarded as a normal function of faculty members, and the NSF generally expects compensation for this time to be part of a faculty member's regular organizational salary.

As a general policy, the NSF limits senior personnel salary requests to no more than two months of an individual's regular salary in any one year, from all NSF awards. To meet the NSF requirement for a consistent definition and application of the term "year" within this context, Cornell has elected to use the calendar year (i.e., January through December) for this purpose. We recommend that the budget justification state "Cornell utilizes the calendar year for purpose of compliance with the NSF's limitation on senior personnel salary requests."

When the need for NSF-funded compensation beyond that level is anticipated, it must be disclosed in the proposal budget, justified in the budget justification and, if appropriate, specifically approved by the NSF in the award notice. Under normal rebudgeting authority, an increase or decrease in person-months after an award is made is allowable, even if it would go beyond the two-month threshold. Prior approval by the NSF is not necessary unless the change constitutes a change in objectives or scope.

For further information please contact your [Grant and Contract Officer](#) (proposal and pre-award questions) or [Sponsored Financial Services Accountant](#) (post-award).