



National Science Foundation
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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the Documenting Endangered Languages Program (DEL)

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1. **I would like to submit a proposal to the DEL program. Does my research fit with your program?**

The [DEL Program Solicitation](#) is the best place to start to get a good sense of DEL's program goals. Another excellent source is [NSF's Awards Search feature](#). If you do an Advanced Search, then it is possible to restrict the search to DEL awards by entering 7719 in the Element Code. To view only DEL Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants (DDRIG), you need to also enter "Doctoral Dissertation" in the Keyword box in addition to using the Element Code 7719. To obtain information about research projects that have recently been funded by the program, go to the [DEL Program Website](#) and click on the "What Has Been Funded" link at the bottom of the website. These sources together should provide a good sense for the type of research that is funded by the program. To view DEL awards funded by our program partner, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), go to the [NEH Funded Projects Query Form](#) and under "Grant Program," search on either "Documenting Endangered Languages - Fellowships" or "Documenting Endangered Languages - Preservation" to get a list of awards funded by NEH. If you are still unsure whether your research fits with the program, you are then welcome to email a one-page (single-spaced) description of your project idea to the DEL Program Director, listed on [DEL's program website](#), for additional guidance.

2. **Can I get a copy of a successful NSF proposal from you?**

Please do not contact the DEL Program to request copies of proposals. Copies of awarded proposals may be obtained via a Freedom of Information (FOIA) request; however, there may be applicable fees. Personal and proprietary information will be removed from the proposal documents before they are released. See [NSF's Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) and Privacy Act website](#) for more information.

However, the National Endowment for the Humanities, a DEL partner, does host a [DEL website](#) with examples of recently funded projects. Please note that NEH chooses a specific suite of proposals to fund each year thus the sample of example proposals is not representative of everything funded through the DEL program.

3. I am an independent scholar, how can I get registered in FastLane?

On [FastLane's main website](#), click the "Registration Information" link then click on the "New Organization and FastLane Contact Registration" link and perform a search using your name. When no organization is found according to your search criteria, a screen is displayed with a New Organization Request form as well as a New Individual Registration button. Click the "New Individual Registration" button and complete and submit this form. Print the "Registration Request Submitted for Approval" screen, sign it, and send the signed form to NSF using one of the options provided.

4. The DEL program has a September 15th deadline. How do I submit a proposal and is it possible to be a little late submitting it?

Deadline dates are firm. Proposals must be submitted by 5 PM, proposer's local time. For additional information, see Chapter 1.F of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#).

If you are preparing a proposal as a PI affiliated with an organization: Grant the Sponsored Projects Office representatives (SPOs) access to view/edit/submit your proposal via the "Allow SRO Access" button on FastLane's Proposal Actions screen.

- Click on the "Allow SRO Access" button on the Proposal Actions screen.
- Click on the "Go" button next to Allow SRO to view, edit, and submit proposal.
- Return to [FastLane's home page](#).

Below are the steps that an SPO at your organization can take to sign and submit the proposal (if the SPO also has AOR authorization).

- Click on "Research Administration" on the top menu bar.
- On the login screen, type your Last Name, NSF ID, and FastLane password and then click on the "Log In" button.
- From the Research Administration screen, select "Proposals/Supplements/File Uploads/Withdrawals".
- Under the All Documents List, click on the "Submit" link associated with your proposal's Temp ID.
- Scroll down the screen and review the certification information then click on the "Sign and Submit" button at the bottom of the page.
- A screen should then be displayed with a box showing confirmation that your proposal was successfully submitted to the NSF, the date and time of the submission, the NSF official proposal number assigned to it, verification that your signature has been recorded, and an "OK" button that you should click on.

Note: SRO stands for Sponsored Research Office which is now referred to as the Sponsored

Projects Office (SPO). Pressing the “Allow SRO Access” button automatically sends an email notification to each SPO in the PI’s organization. If the SPO who submits the proposal is also designated as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), the proposal will be signed at the same time it is submitted. If the SPO does not have the permissions to perform AOR functions, the institution’s AOR has 5 business days from the date of FastLane submission to electronically sign the proposal. (Grant Proposal Guide changes for release in January 2016 include requiring the AOR signature at the time of proposal submission).

If you are submitting the proposal as an individual applicant (not affiliated with an organization): You act as the SPO and AOR and can both submit and sign your proposal. On the Proposal Actions screen, you should select your proposal and then click on the “Submit” button. This displays the Certification Screen for AORs or Individual Applicants. Scroll down and review the certification information and then click on the “Sign and Submit” button at the bottom of the screen. A screen should then be displayed confirming that your proposal was successfully submitted to the NSF, the date and time of the submission, the NSF official proposal number assigned to it, and verification that your signature has been recorded.

If you are an individual applicant and after selecting your proposal on the Proposal Actions screen you do **NOT** see the “Submit” button, check your “Edit PI Information” screen and ensure that it is identical to the awardee institution listed on the Coversheet of your proposal (i.e., change it if necessary).

5. What are the most common proposal compliance mistakes made by PIs?

NSF has implemented new features for automated compliance checking in the FastLane system. A PI should check his or her proposal for compliance before submitting it. See Exhibit II-1: Proposal Preparation Checklist under Chapter 2.D of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#). Below are some of the common compliance issues we have seen with DEL proposals.

- Missing *Current & Pending Support* form for each Co-PI and Senior Personnel. Each submission must include a declaration of all current and pending proposals of the PI, Co-PIs, and all other Senior Personnel listed on the proposal. The current submission counts as a pending proposal.
- The *Biographical Sketch* is not in the correct format. The Biographical Sketch:
 - Should be no more than two pages
 - Should be submitted for each individual identified as Senior Personnel
 - Must adhere to the Biographical Sketch guidelines. Information on the Biographical Sketch guidelines can be found in Chapter II.C.2.f of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#).
- The *References Cited* Form should include only the works cited in the Project Description. This would include scholarly works, news articles, and websites. Do not provide website URLs in the Project Description. Links to databases and archives can be cited in the Project Description and the URLs should be provided under the References Cited Form.
- Name and Address in registration systems are not identical. Your name and address in your SAM (System for Award Management) registration should be identical to that in FastLane. If your institution has made any submissions through Grants.gov, your institution will be registered in SAM. You can read more about SAM registration on the [Grants.gov Applicants Step 2: Register with SAM webpage](#). If you are an individual applicant, you do not need SAM registration.
- The institution does not have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. To submit a proposal, your institution must have a DUNS number. You can use the [Online DUNS Request Portal](#) to receive one free of charge. Allow for several days to get your registration in DUNS complete. If you are an individual applicant, you do not need a DUNS number.

6. Should I upload a budget for a DEL Fellowship?

DEL Fellowship applicants must include a Budget with a Budget Justification. The total amount of the Fellowship should be entered on the Budget Form under the section for Senior Personnel. The Budget Justification may simply state that the requested amount will go towards Fellowship activities. However, it is beneficial to the applicant to include some information either in the Project Description or Budget Justification of how critical elements of the project will be funded, e.g., international travel, payment to consultants, recording equipment, and archiving costs.

7. Do I need to submit IRB clearance documentation?

If human participants are involved, a proposal cannot be recommended for an award without a current Human Subject Review clearance document. If your institution does not have an Internal Review Board (IRB) to review proposed work with human subjects, you should contact your Sponsored Projects Office (SPO). NSF regulations give grantee institutions the responsibility for setting up "Institutional Review Boards" (IRBs) to review research protocols and designs and ensure the protection of the rights of human subjects. You can learn more about NSF IRB requirements by accessing the [NSF Human Subjects website](#).

If you are an unaffiliated individual, you might approach the IRB of a local university or organization in your area and inquire as to whether they are willing to review your protocol for research involving human subjects. Alternatively, there are for-profit "independent IRBs" that will review such protocols for a fee.

8. What special documentation do I need to submit if my institution is a New Awardee (an institution that has not received a major award from NSF in the past 5 years)?

New Awardee institutions must be reviewed for accounting system adequacy. Let your Program Officer know if your institution has not received an award in the past 5 years. If your institution is a new awardee, NSF will review your institution for accounting system adequacy. In anticipation of that review, it is advisable to gather documents in the [New Awardee Checklist](#). Please note: awards from other federal agencies do not guarantee that your institution will count as an established awardee for NSF purposes.

9. How can I track my application once it is submitted?

It is highly recommended that you check the status of your proposal after submission. If the proposal was submitted via FastLane, you may view its status by accessing [FastLane](#), clicking on the "Proposals, Awards and Status" top line menu option, logging in as a PI, clicking on the "Proposal Functions" link and then clicking on the "Proposal Status" link. If the proposal was submitted via Grants.gov, you may monitor its status by accessing Grants.gov, clicking on the "Applicant Login" link, clicking on the "Applicants" top line menu option and then on the Applicants page, clicking on the "Track your Application" link.