Electronic Research Administration (ERA) Forum Webinar Series

Research.gov Modernization Updates and Proposal Preparation Demo Site: Available Functionalities for Proposers, Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

National Science Foundation
March 31, 2021

Welcome and Webinar Administrative Logistics

- Attendees will be in listen-only mode during the webinar.

- View real-time captions during the webinar at URL: https://www.captionedtext.com/client/event.aspx?EventID=4706726&CustomerID=321
  - Enter confirmation ID # 4706726
- Presentation and Agenda will be available on the NSF ERA Forum Website https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/era_forum.jsp.

- **For Zoom Support**, call +1-833-966-6468 (+1-833-Zoom-Gov) or email support@zoom.us.

Agenda

- Welcome, Forum Webinar Logistics, and How to Engage with the Forum
- The ERA Forum
- Speakers
- Forum Webinar Discussion Topics:
  - Research.gov Modernization Updates
    - Proposal Preparation Demo Site: Available Functionalities for Proposers
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
  - Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- Questions and Answers
- Next Steps and ERA Forum Resources

How to Engage with the Forum

Forum Participation

- Questions can be sent to nsferaforum@nsf.gov
- Post-webinar Survey
- Future Forum Topics
- Forum Listserv and Email
  - Subscribe: NSF-ERA-FORUM-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov
  - Email us: nsferaforum@nsf.gov
- General Information

The ERA Forum

Background and Purpose

- Provides the approach to regularly engage the research community, which includes collecting individual opinions and perspectives on ERA activities, gathering topics of interest for future Forum Webinars, and soliciting volunteers for usability studies.

Past Forum Webinar:

- November 2020:
  - Key updates included the removal of compliance checks and associated compliance warnings for **font type** and **font size** in Research.gov to align with FastLane.
  - Review of additional proposal types Rapid Response Research (**RAPID**), EArly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (**EAGER**), and Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (**RAISE**) proposal types available in Research.gov.
  - Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site available for all users to perform the proposal **preparation** functions that can be executed by a Principal Investigator (PI) in the actual Research.gov Proposal Submission System. Proposal submission capability is disabled.
  - Three Research.gov Sign-in Options

Panelists

Maria Koszalka	Jean Feldman	Sonya Arora	Jeff Vieceli
Staff Associate, Research.gov, Division of Institution and Award Support	Head, Policy Office, Division of Institution and Award Support	IT Project Manger, Division of Information Systems	Head, Systems Office, Division of Institution and Award Support

Research.gov Modernization Updates: Presentation

Topics

- Proposal Submission Modernization Initiative and Research.gov Proposal Ramp-up
- Advantages of Research.gov Proposal Preparation
- Recent Research.gov Proposal Submission System Enhancements
- Research.gov Proposal Capabilities Overview
- Research.gov Proposal Tips
- Providing Research.gov Proposal Feedback
- Information Resources for the Research Community
- Proposal Preparation Demo Site Overview and Walk-through of Functionality

Proposal Submission Modernization Initiative

Proposal Submission Modernization (PSM) is an initiative to modernize proposal submission capabilities and migrate them from FastLane to Research.gov.

- Research.gov is the custom NSF portal that is tuned for the best user experience and has been developed to replace the aging FastLane portal and infrastructure
- Research.gov is **not** the same as Grants.gov, the interagency portal allowing organizations to search and apply for federal funding opportunities for many federal agencies including NSF

Why is NSF migrating proposal preparation and submission from FastLane to Research.gov?

FastLane, launched in 1994, is built on technology once cutting edge but now considered old and inflexible.

- Research.gov architecture can support current and future improvements and requested features to reduce administrative burden for both the research community and NSF staff (e.g., expanded automated compliance checking)
- Research.gov user interface conforms to modern industry standards and is intuitive and user-friendly

Research.gov Implementation Update – Important Notice No. 147

- NSF is now taking proactive steps to incrementally move the preparation and submission of all proposals from FastLane to Research.gov with a tentative target date for completion by 2022

- FastLane has already been removed from some funding opportunities as a submission option and will continue to be incrementally removed from funding opportunities through the transition

- Funding opportunities clearly specify whether submission via Research.gov is required or available

Important Notice No. 147

Research.gov Implementation Update

Important Notice to Presidents of Universities and Colleges and Heads of Other National Science Foundation Grantee Organizations

September 22, 2020

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has been at the forefront in the development of Federal agency electronic systems designed to prepare and submit proposals for Federal financial assistance. From the introduction of FastLane in 1994, to the incremental development of Research.gov as its eventual replacement, NSF has led the way with modern, agile systems tailored to meet the needs of the research community.

While NSF's FastLane system has been a resounding success story, it is now an aging, antiquated system that has become increasingly expensive to maintain and even harder to improve. Over the past few years, NSF has partnered with and received valuable input from the research community, resulting in the development of a modern, flexible Research.gov system that reduces administrative burden to meet the current and future needs of researchers, administrators and organizations. As a result, NSF has successfully migrated important research functions from FastLane to Research.gov including the preparation and submission of annual and final project and outcomes reports, most notifications and requests and award payments. NSF is now taking proactive steps to incrementally move the preparation and submission of all proposals from FastLane to Research.gov with a tentative target date for completion by 2022.

In support of this effort, in the coming weeks and months, NSF will begin making changes to specific funding opportunities to require the use of Research.gov for the preparation and submission of proposals to NSF.[1] The Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) will soon require the use of Research.gov for the preparation and submission of proposals in response to its core programs that do not have deadline dates. NSF funding opportunities will clearly specify whether submission via Research.gov is available or required.

To ensure that researchers and administrators are prepared for these changes, NSF is developing additional training materials to meet the needs of the community. This includes video tutorials, Frequently Asked Questions, step-by-step guides and a demonstration site. Current training materials are available on the About Research.gov site.

NSF encourages the community to become familiar with Research.gov and to begin using it for the preparation and submission of proposals, as well as to provide NSF with valuable feedback. For additional information, FAQs, opportunities for training and to provide feedback, please visit Research.gov.

Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan
Director

[1]During this time, NSF will continue to permit proposals to be prepared and submitted via Grants.gov.

Research.gov Proposal Preparation: Advantages for Principal Investigators and Research Administrators

Features to reduce proposal preparation administrative burden:

- Improved user experience through intuitive and dynamic interfaces that provide only relevant proposal preparation options
- Immediate feedback within each proposal section and for each document upload rather than at proposal submission in FastLane
- Faster document uploads (a few seconds versus 30-90 seconds for each document upload in FastLane)
- Expanded automated compliance checking utilizing error messages (preventing proposal submission) and warning messages (allowing proposal submission)
  - **104** compliance checks in Research.gov versus **56** compliance checks in FastLane (new Research.gov checks are added with each proposal type release)
  - Specific, actionable error and warning messages
- Higher quality proposal submissions (e.g., PDF uploads are not altered like in FastLane)
- Minimized Return without Reviews due to some proposal formatting issues

Research.gov Font Warning Changes

- Effective November 23, 2020, the compliance checks and associated compliance warnings for **font type** and **font size** were removed in Research.gov to align with FastLane and NSF policy

- NSF made these changes per feedback from the research community

- PAPPG (NSF 20-1) Chapter II.B.2.a. proposal font requirements must be followed

- Proposals may be returned without review if the font type or font size are not compliant with the PAPPG

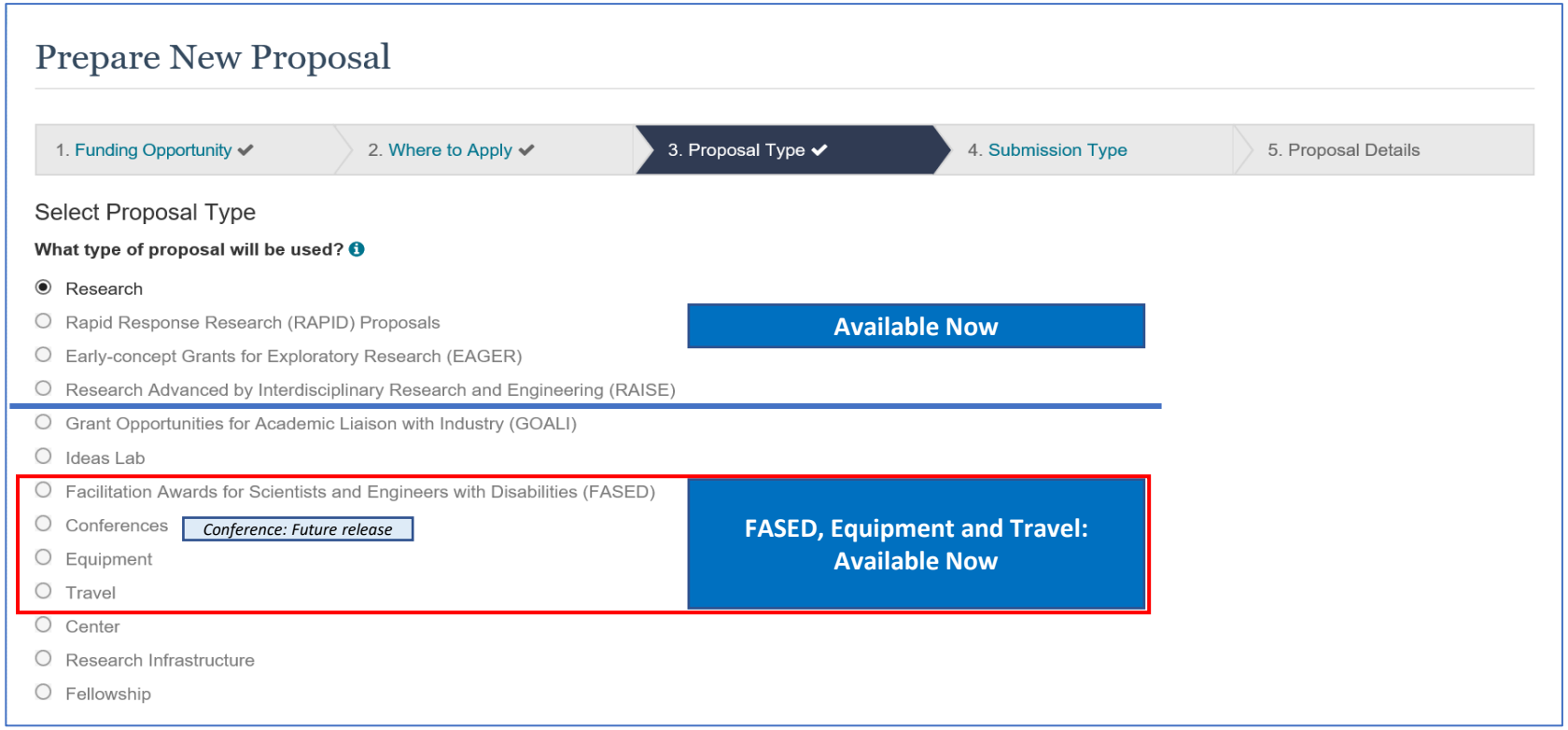
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Proposal Types

New proposal types available March 22:

Additional proposal types and associated automated compliance checks enabled in Research.gov **and** in the Research.gov demo site:

- Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED)
- Equipment
- Travel

Research.gov Proposal Screenshot: Proposal Type Options



Note: *All Proposal Types are listed in Research.gov but only those currently supported will be available for selection (i.e., unavailable selections are grayed out). View the Research.gov Proposal Submission Capabilities for details.*

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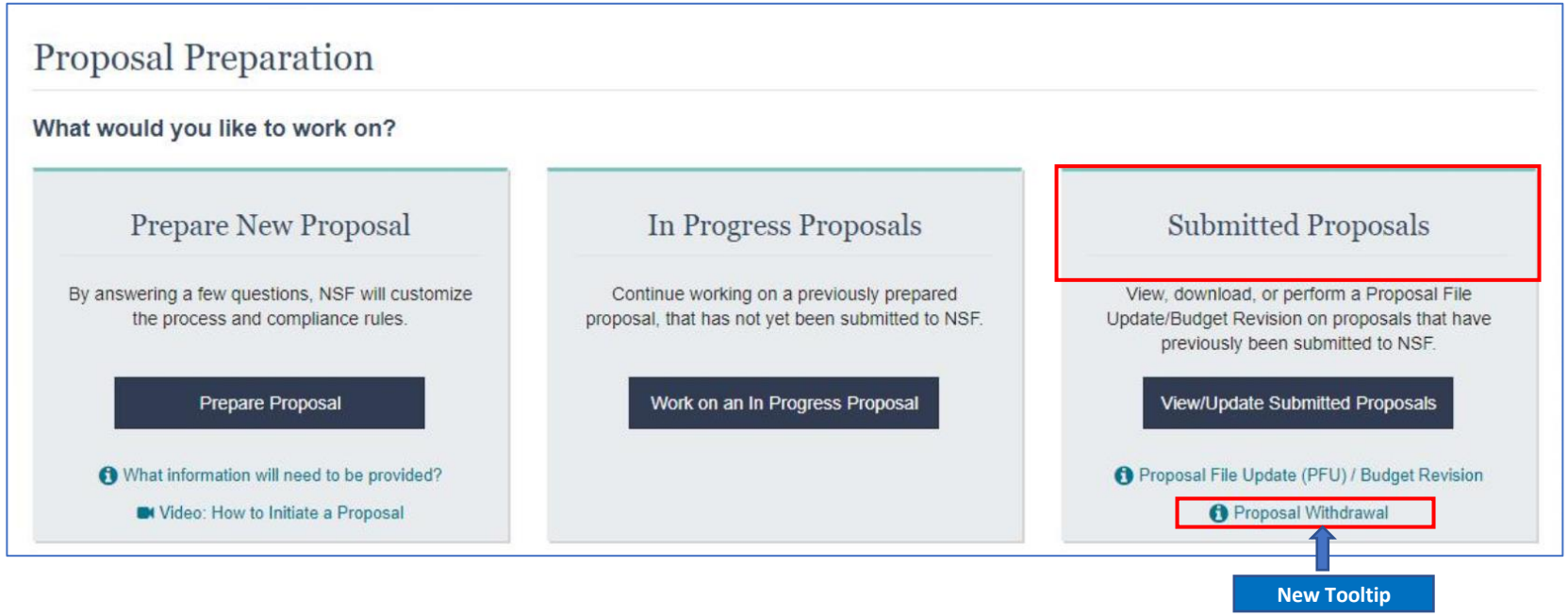
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Proposal Withdrawal

New functionality available March 22:

- Proposers are able to withdraw both **single submission (with and without subawards)** and **separately submitted collaborative proposals** in Research.gov
- New proposal withdrawal FAQs were added to the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page



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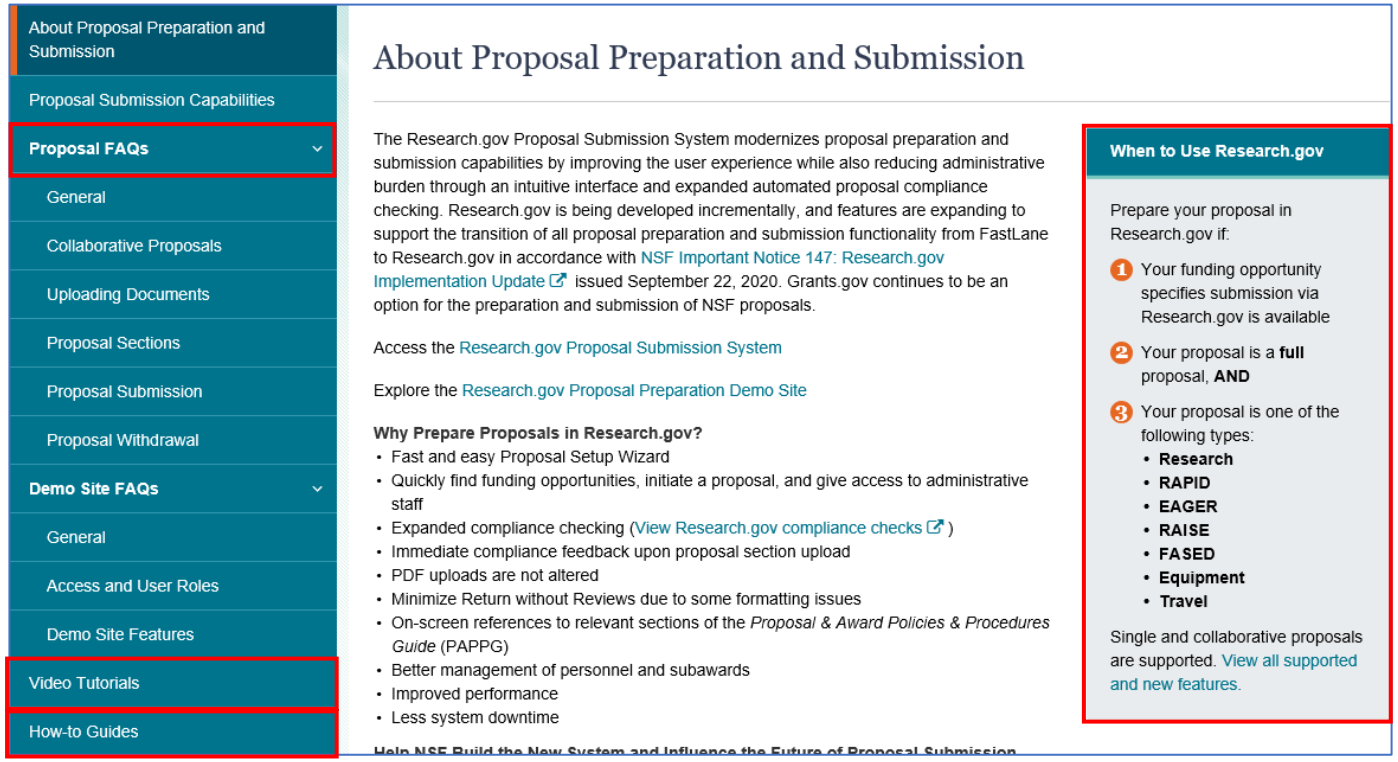
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Training Resources

Training resources on the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page available March 22:

- New 16-minute Research.gov proposal demo video in the Video Tutorials section highlighting key preparation steps including:
  - Setting up a proposal
  - Uploading a document and compliance messaging
  - Preparing Proposal File Updates/Budget Revisions
- New How-to Guides section with the first set of topic-specific resources posted. Additional guides will be posted in this section going forward
- New and updated topic-specific FAQs
- New callout box to help proposers quickly see the proposal and submission types currently supported in Research.gov



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Research.gov Proposals: Capabilities Overview

Current Capabilities	Upcoming Capabilities	Future Capabilities
Proposal Types ✓ **Research:** Single Submissions from One Organization *(April 2018)* ✓ **Research:** Single Submission Collaborative Proposals with Subawards *(June 2019)* ✓ **Research:** Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals from Multiple Organizations *(March 2020)* ✓ **Rapid Response Research** (RAPID) *(November 2020)* ✓ **EArly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research** (EAGER) *(November 2020)* ✓ **Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering** (RAISE) *(November 2020)* ✓ **Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities** (FASED) *(March 2021)* ✓ **Equipment** *(March 2021)* ✓ **Travel** *(March 2021)* **Proposal Features** ✓ **Withdrawal** (Single and Separately Submitted Proposal Submissions) *(March 2021)* **Training** ✓ **Research.gov Proposal Demo Site** *(October 2020)* ✓ **Initial Topic-specific How-to Guides** *(March 2021)* ✓ **Proposal Preparation Demo Video** *(March 2021)*	**Proposal Types** • **Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry** (GOALI) • **Ideas Lab** • **Conference** **Submission Types** • **Letter of Intent** • **Preliminary Proposal** • **Full Proposal related to a Preliminary Proposal** • **Renewal Proposal** • **Accomplishment-Based Renewal Proposal** **Training** • **Additional Topic-specific How-to Guides** *(ongoing)* • **Webinars** *(e.g., NSF Spring 2021 Grants Conference)*	**Proposal Types** • **SBIR and STTR Phases I/II** • **Center** • **Research Infrastructure** • **Fellowship** **Solicitation-specific Requirements** • **Additional specified forms or documents** (e.g., DUE Project Data Form) • **Approved deviations from the PAPPG** (e.g., Project Descriptions exceeding 15 pages)

Notes:
(1) Since July 2020, Research.gov is able to support all Research proposals that conform to standard *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) requirements for formatting and document content.
(2) Two new proposal types (Planning Proposals and Career Life Balance Supplemental Funding Requests) included in the "For comment" draft of the PAPPG (NSF 22-1) are not listed in this table.

Research.gov Proposal Tips

- Proposal information cannot be transferred from FastLane to Research.gov and vice versa
- Proposal file update (PFU)/budget revisions must be executed in the same system as the proposal was submitted (i.e., Research.gov or FastLane)
- All proposals in a separately submitted collaborative from multiple organizations must be prepared in the same system (i.e., Research.gov or FastLane)
- Proposals submitted in Research.gov are evaluated by NSF in the same way as proposals submitted in FastLane and Grants.gov, and this migration does not affect the merit review process in any way
- Additional technical support is available for those who are new to Research.gov and to those who encounter any issues with proposal preparation and submission:
  - For IT system-related questions, please contact the NSF Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov
  - Policy-related questions should be directed to policy@nsf.gov

Providing Research.gov Proposal Feedback

Why?

- Influence the future of proposal submission
- Help NSF continue to build Research.gov

How?

- Feedback may be submitted on the Research.gov Feedback page
  - Select “Proposal Preparation & Submission” under the Site Area dropdown menu to provide feedback on the Research.gov Proposal Submission System
  - Select "Proposal Preparation Demo Site" under the Site Area dropdown menu to provide feedback on the demo site

Information Resources for the Research Community

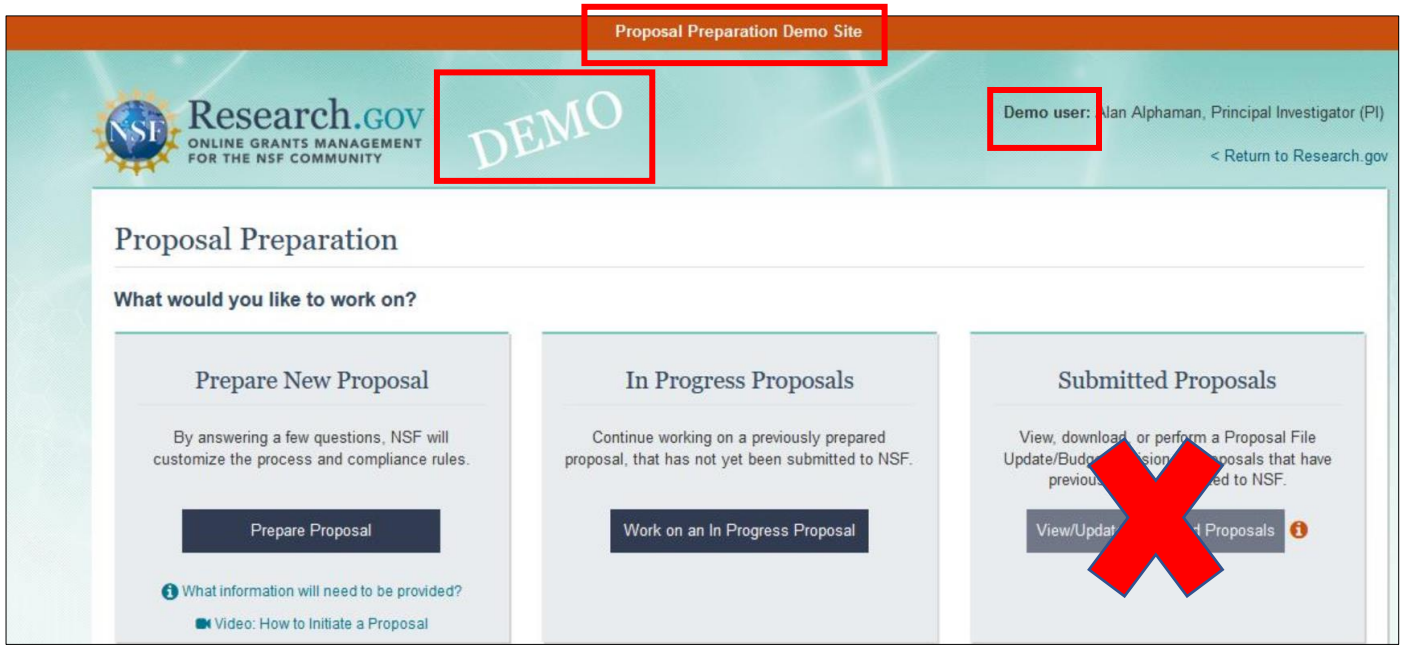
- NSF System Updates listserv to receive the latest Research.gov system enhancement information and FastLane news. Sign up by sending a blank email to: system_updates-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov
- Automated Compliance Checking of NSF Proposals page
- NSF Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support websites with FAQs, as well as links to SciENcv video tutorials and reference resources with step-by-step instructions and screenshots
- Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page (*new information is being added on an ongoing basis, so please check back frequently….*)
- Research.gov About Account Management page

Proposal Preparation Demo Site Available Functionalities for Proposers

Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site

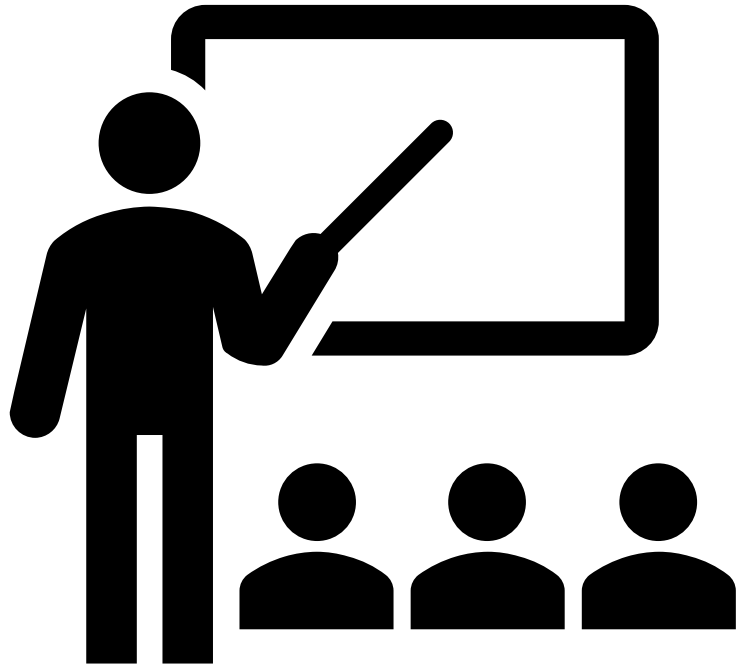
- Launched in October 2020 for use by the research community and NSF staff
- All demo site users are automatically given the PI role for demo site purposes, in order to perform the proposal **preparation** functions that a PI can do in the actual system. Proposal submission capability is disabled
- All users must sign in to Research.gov to access the demo site
- See the demo site FAQs on the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page for additional information on demo site access and features

Research.gov Demo Site Screenshot: Proposal Preparation Homepage



Walk-through of Demo Site Functionality

- Proposal Setup Wizard
- Proposal Main Page
- Document Upload and Compliance Error/Warning Messages
- Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals
- Senior Personnel Documents
- Single Copy Documents
- Budget



Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) Reporting Requirement for NSF

FAPIIS

New Grant Uniform Guidance Requirement – 2 CFR 200

- Published in Federal Register August 13, 2020

- Mainly for submission of Final Project Report (FPR) and Project Outcomes Report (POR)

- (i) If the non-Federal entity does not submit all reports in accordance with this section within one year of the period of performance end date, the Federal awarding agency must report the non-Federal entity's material failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the award with the OMB-designated integrity and performance system (currently FAPIIS). Federal awarding agencies may also pursue other enforcement actions per § 200.339.

FAPIIS

Project Reports - Policy

- 2 CFR 200 (Grant Uniform Guidance)

- NSF Proposal & Award Policy & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)
  - NSF 20-1, Chapter VII.D.

- NSF Grant Terms & Conditions
  - Research Terms & Conditions (RTC), NSF Agency Specific Requirements: Article 8
  - Grant General Conditions (GC-1), Article 15
  - Cooperative Agreement Conditions (CAFATC), Article 15

- Technical Reports – Annual Project Report (APR), Final Project Report (FPR) & Project Outcomes Report (POR)

FAPIIS

Project Reports - General

- NSF Sends Reminder Notices when Due
- Follow-up Reminder Notices every 30-days until submitted
- Send Overdue Notices
- Follow-up Overdue Notice every 2-weeks until submitted
- Notices Sent to active personnel – PI and co-PIs
- Notices cc’d to Awardee Organization and Managing Program Officer

FAPIIS

Project Reports - General

- Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) Format – Research Agency-wide standard format
- Reports submitted via Research.gov
- Report Dashboard available in Research.gov – Available to PI, co-PI and Research Administrators
- **Overdue reports block other action approvals for subject award and associated awards**

FAPIIS

Project Reports – Use of and Importance

- Provide an update on the scientific, technical and programmatic progress of the project
- Helps NSF monitor the progress of the project
- Helps document the project
- Helps inform NSF on funding decisions – continued/supplemental funding
- Stewardship - Provide information on the use of Federal funds
- Required by Terms and Conditions/Policy
- POR is required by law (America Competes Act)
- Provides information about accomplishments, products, participants and impacts

FAPIIS

Project Reports – Impacts of Overdue / Not Submitted Reports

Awardee / PI / co-PI

- Blocks additional funding and non-funding actions for subject award and associated awards – shared personnel
- Presents possible audit issues
- May show issues with the PI, the project, and/or the awardee
- No credit for results/accomplishments – publications, products et cetera
- **Will need to be reported to FAPIIS for material non-compliance with award terms & conditions**
- **May result in no new awards for the Awardee, PI or co-PIs**

FAPIIS

Project Reports – Impacts of Overdue / Not Submitted Reports

NSF

- Slows down end of year processing
- Increases workload
- NSF does not get needed update on the progress of the project making program success and evaluation difficult or impossible
- Presents audit issues
- NSF not in compliance with Federal guidelines
- No reports on training of students or other “core” NSF goals/priorities
- **Is required to report Awardees, PIs and co-PIs to FAPIIS**
- **Will need to review FAPIIS before making new awards**

FAPIIS

Project Reports – Improvements

Awardees / PI / co-PIs

- Add internal controls to ensure timely submission of reports

NSF

- Looking at changes that NSF can implement

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

UEI

What is UEI

- Is a new Government owned unique entity identifier that will replace the DUNS Number for doing business with the Government
- UEI will be a unique 12-character, alpha-numeric number for each “unique” entity
- Is being led by General Services Administration (GSA)
- UEI will be assigned for each DUNS number currently registered in SAM.gov
- A newly registered organization in SAM.gov will receive a UEI
- Organizations should not need to do anything in terms of SAM.gov
- Organization information will be directly maintained at SAM.gov (instead of D&B)
- A DUNS Number will no longer be required starting April 2022 – just the UEI
- **Organizations will need to use the UEI instead of DUNS for their grant proposals**

Current Deadline for Agency Use is April 4, 2022

UEI

For more information

GSA

- https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update

Grants.Gov

- https://grantsgovprod.wordpress.com/2020/03/09/what-is-the-unique-entity-identifier-uei/

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Next Steps and ERA Forum Resources

❑Post-webinar Survey
- https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NSFSpring2021ERASurvey

❑ERA Forum Email
- Questions pertaining to the presentation can be sent to nsferaforum@nsf.gov
- If you are interested in participating in future application usability studies, please send an email with your contact information to nsferaforum@nsf.gov

❑Subscribe to ERA Forum Listserv
- Send an email to Nsf-era-forum-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov

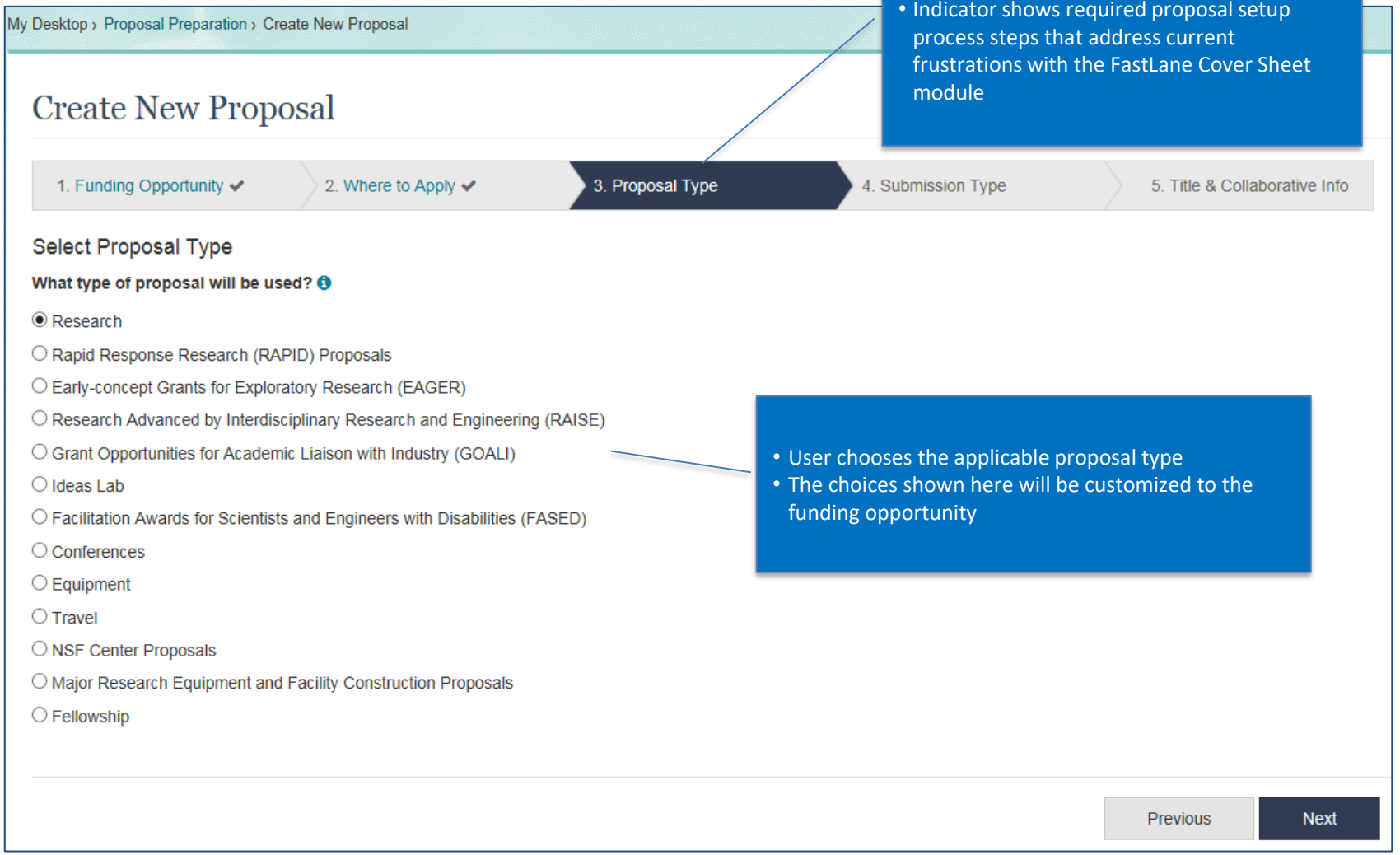
❑NSF ERA Forum Website:
- Agenda and presentation slides will be available soon on the ERA Forum website at: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/era_forum.jsp.

Thank you for participating in today's ERA Forum Webinar

Appendix

Research.gov Demo Screenshots

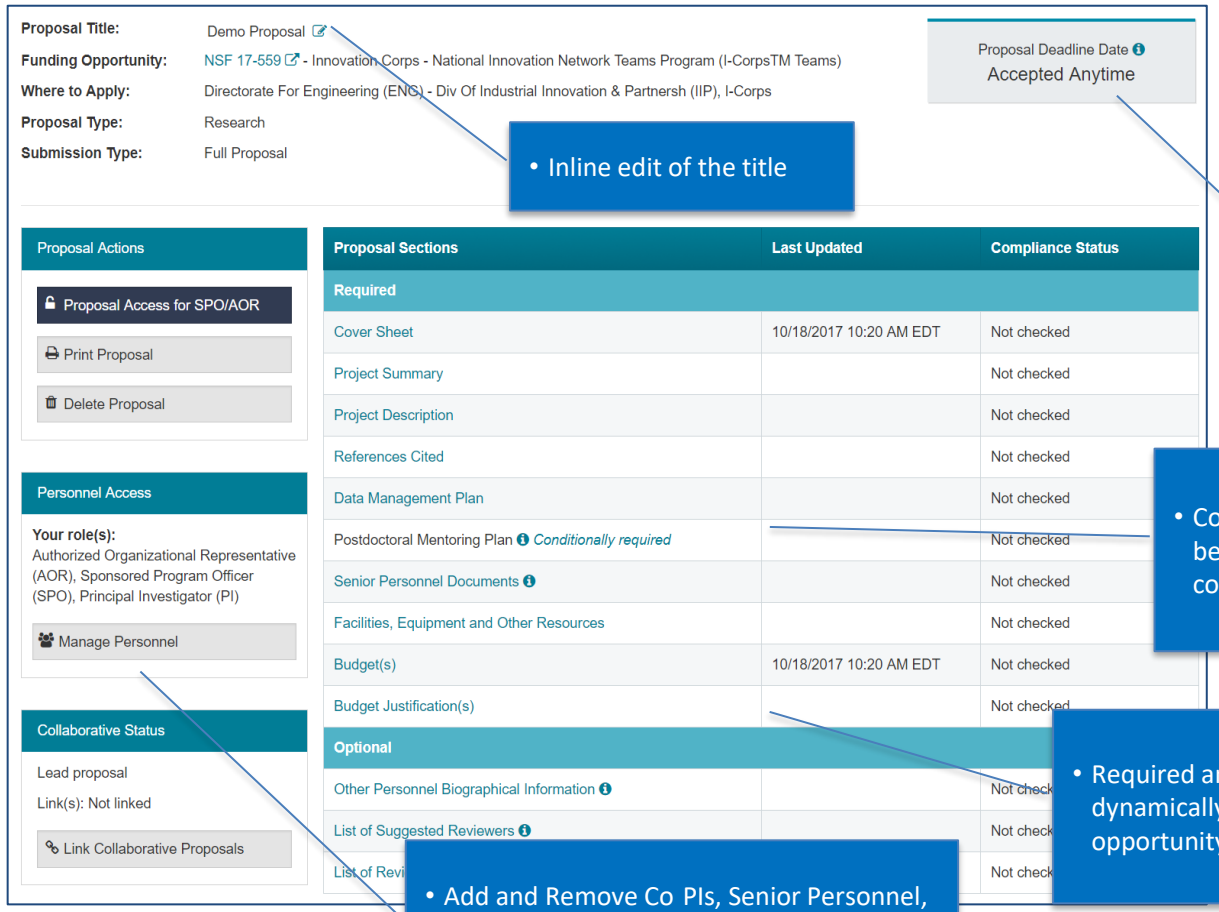
Demo: Proposal Setup Wizard



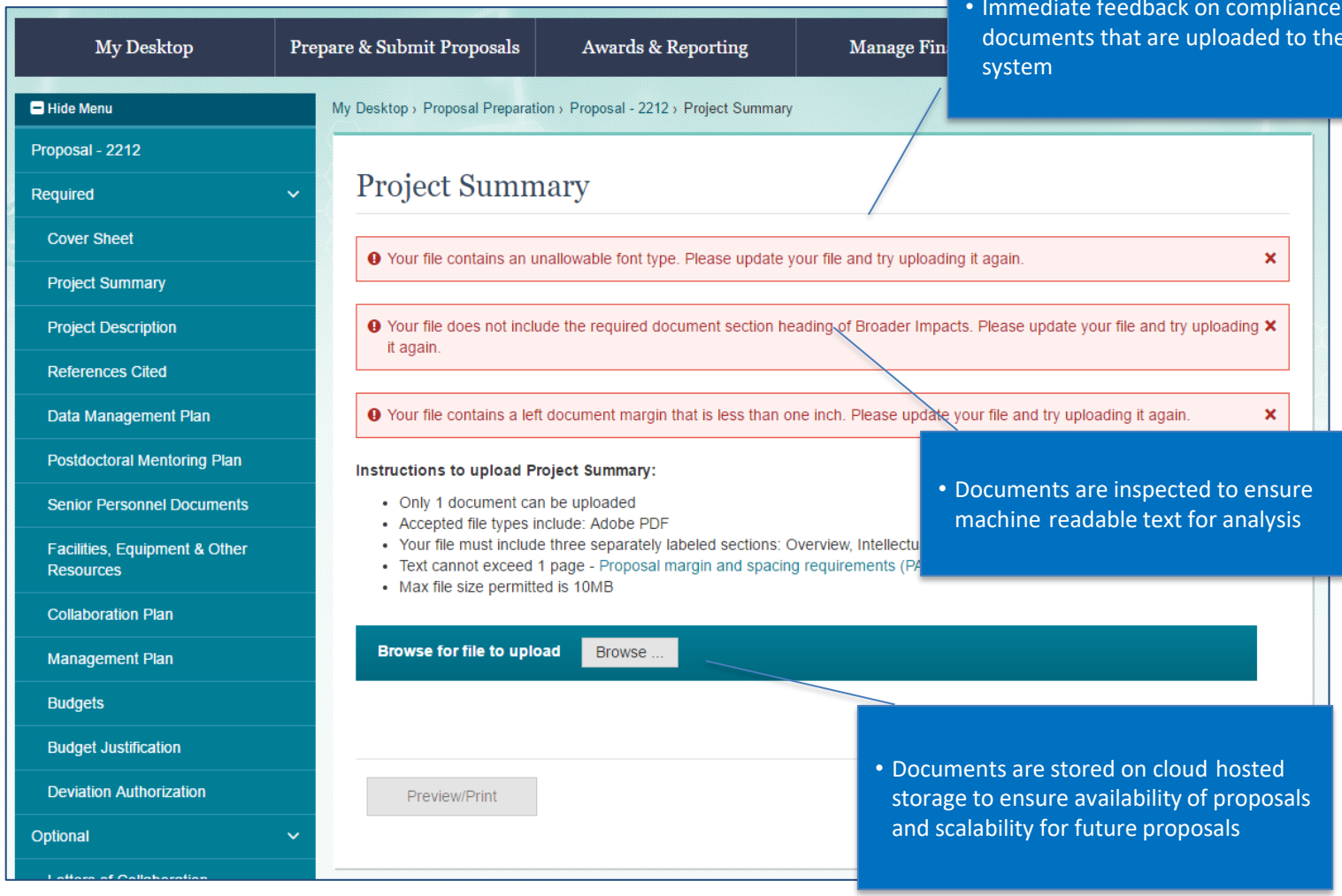
- Indicator shows required proposal setup process steps that address current frustrations with the FastLane Cover Sheet module

- User chooses the applicable proposal type
- The choices shown here will be customized to the funding opportunity

Demo: Main Proposal Page

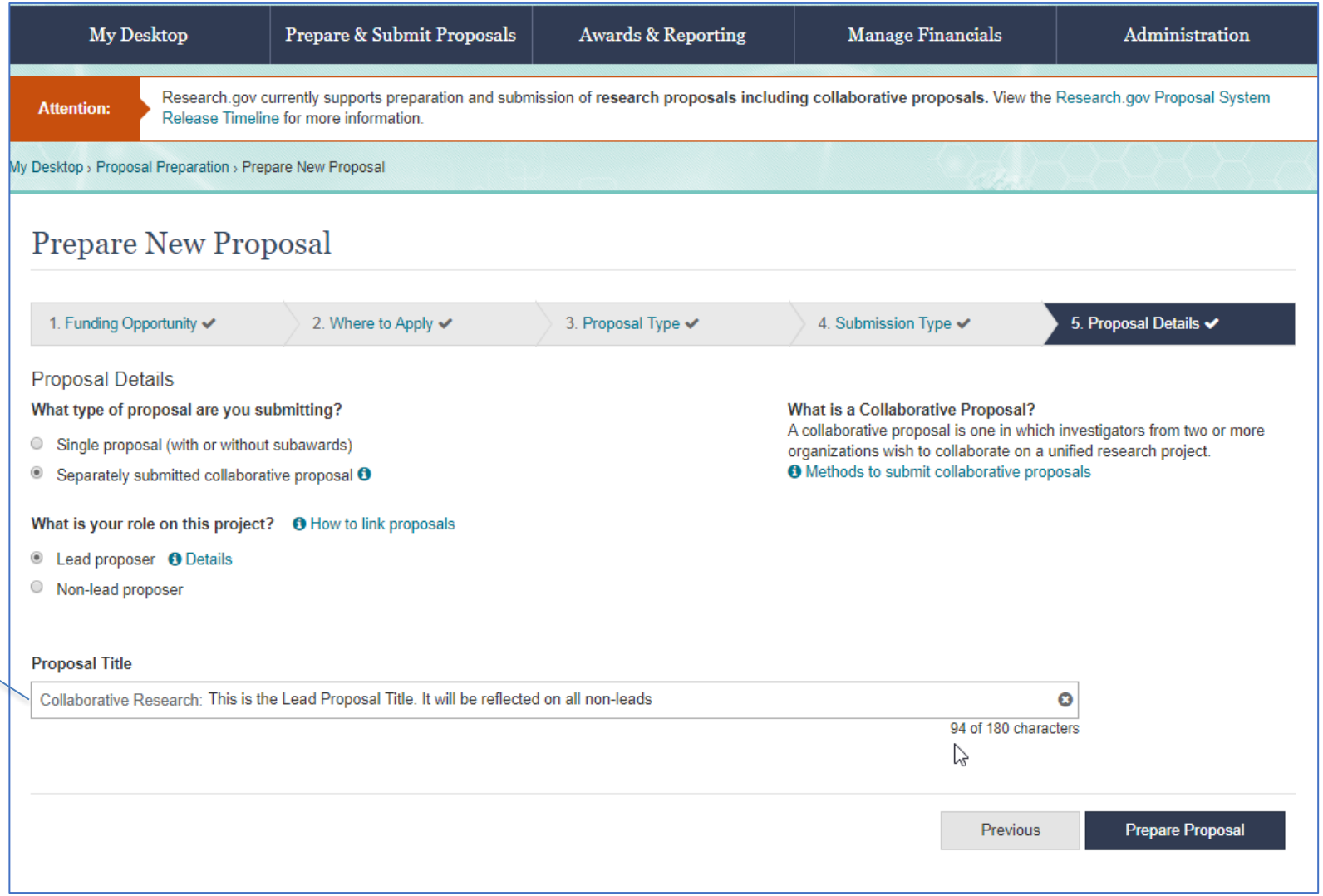


Demo: Document Upload and Compliance Error/Warning Messages

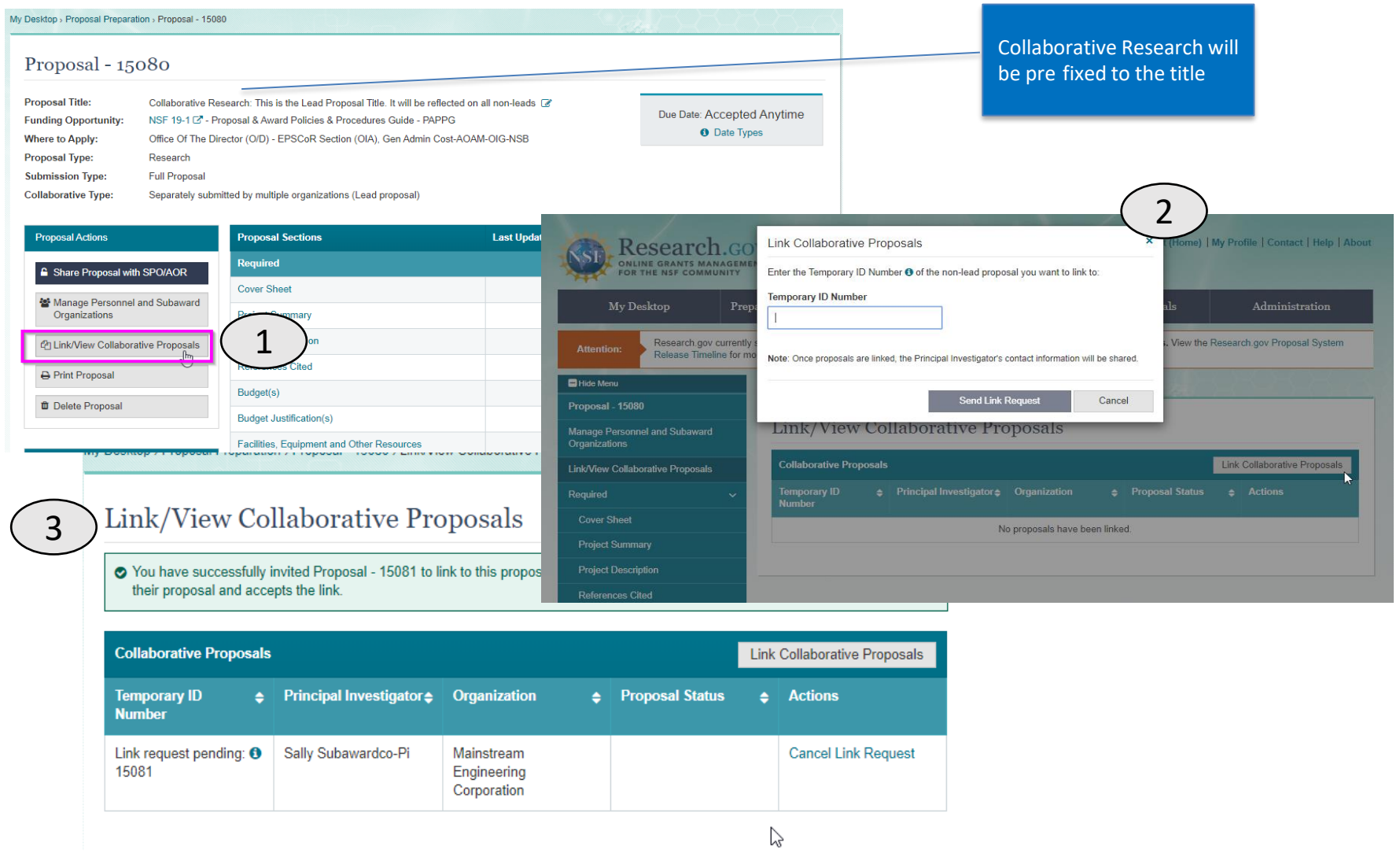


Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals

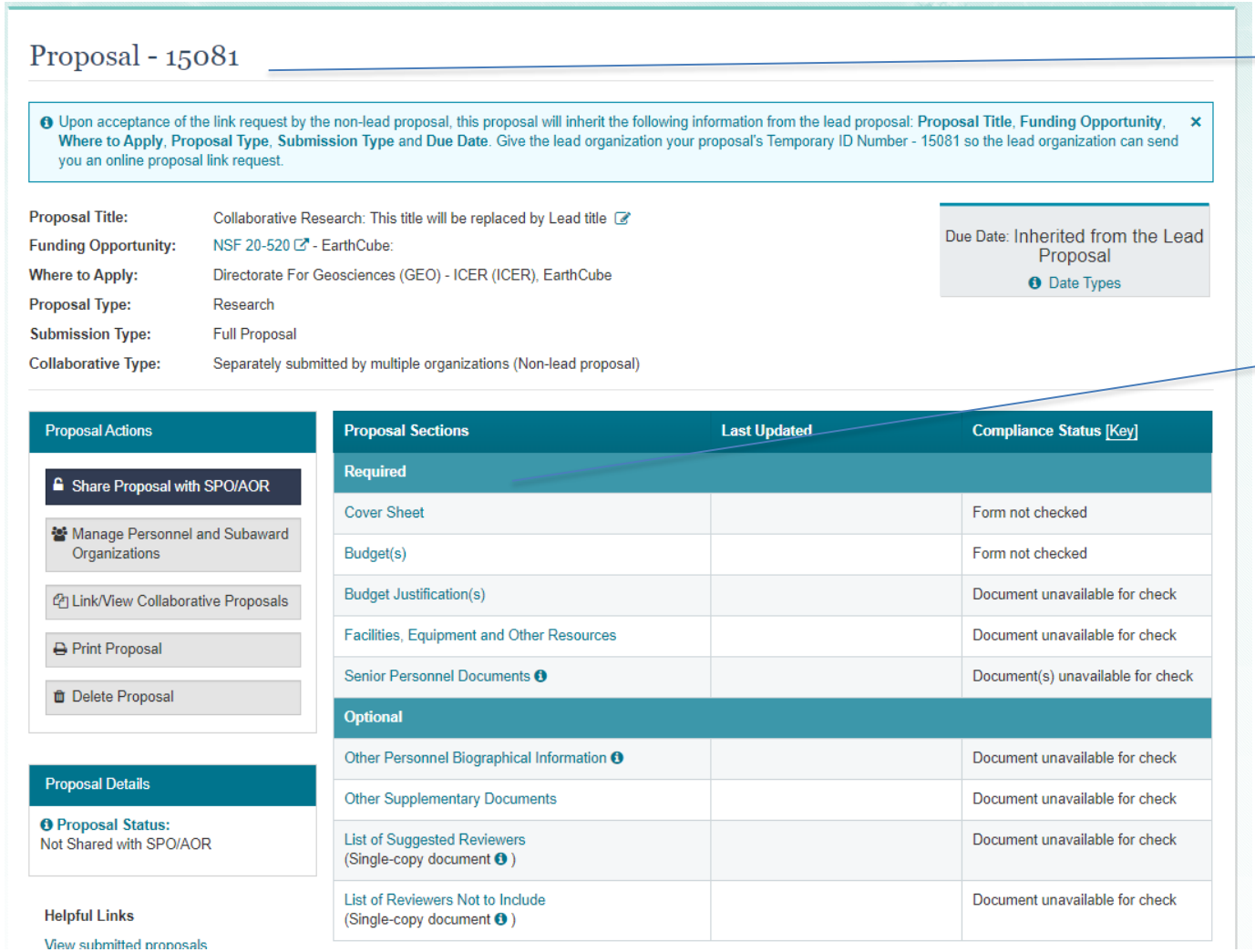
- Collaborative Research will be pre fixed to the title



Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Linking



Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Non-lead



Proposal - 15081

Upon acceptance of the link request by the non-lead proposal, this proposal will inherit the following information from the lead proposal: **Proposal Title**, **Funding Opportunity**, **Where to Apply**, **Proposal Type**, **Submission Type** and **Due Date**. Give the lead organization your proposal's Temporary ID Number - 15081 so the lead organization can send you an online proposal link request.

Proposal Title: Collaborative Research: This title will be replaced by Lead title
Funding Opportunity: NSF 20-520 - EarthCube:
Where to Apply: Directorate For Geosciences (GEO) - ICER (ICER), EarthCube
Proposal Type: Research
Submission Type: Full Proposal
Collaborative Type: Separately submitted by multiple organizations (Non-lead proposal)

Due Date: Inherited from the Lead Proposal
Date Types

Proposal Actions
- Share Proposal with SPO/AOR
- Manage Personnel and Subaward Organizations
- Link/View Collaborative Proposals
- Print Proposal
- Delete Proposal

Proposal Details
Proposal Status:
Not Shared with SPO/AOR

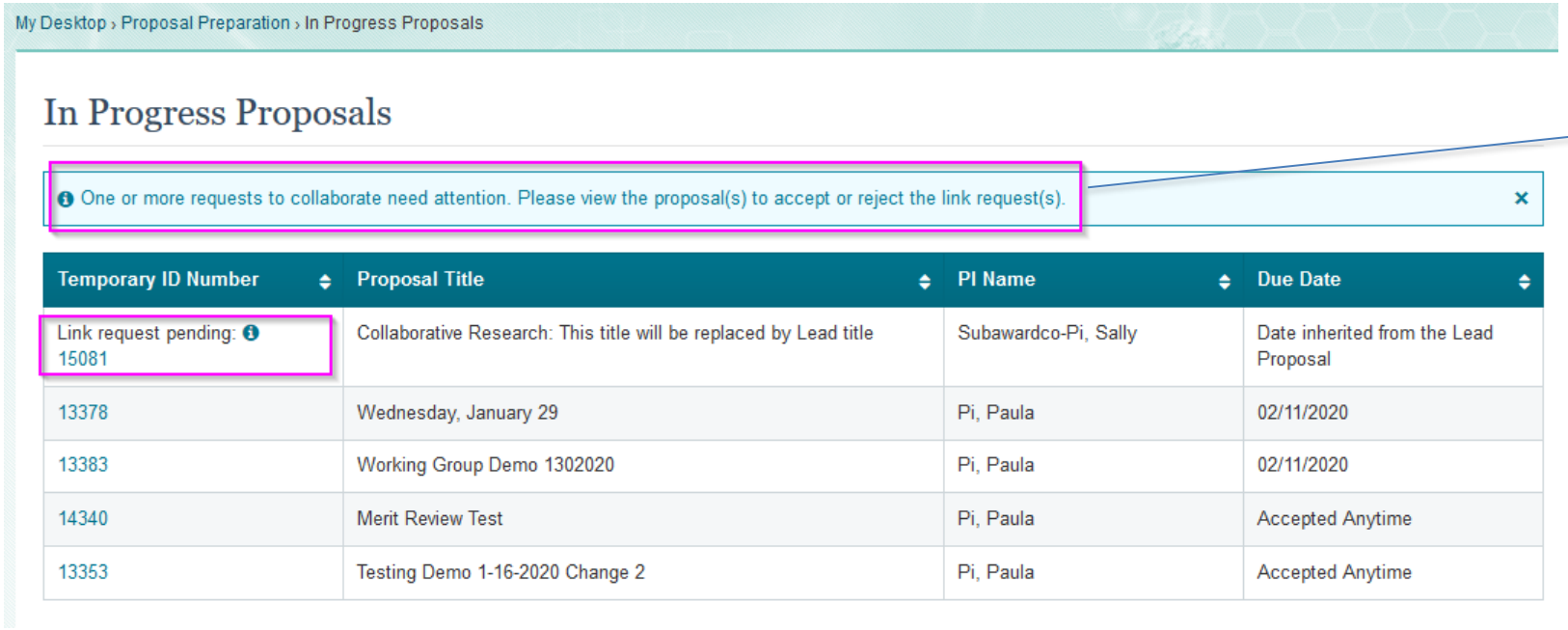
Helpful Links
View submitted proposals

Proposal Sections	Last Updated	Compliance Status [Key]
Required		
Cover Sheet		Form not checked
Budget(s)		Form not checked
Budget Justification(s)		Document unavailable for check
Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources		Document unavailable for check
Senior Personnel Documents		Document(s) unavailable for check
Optional		
Other Personnel Biographical Information		Document unavailable for check
Other Supplementary Documents		Document unavailable for check
List of Suggested Reviewers (Single-copy document)		Document unavailable for check
List of Reviewers Not to Include (Single-copy document)		Document unavailable for check

Provide the lead organization with the temp prop ID

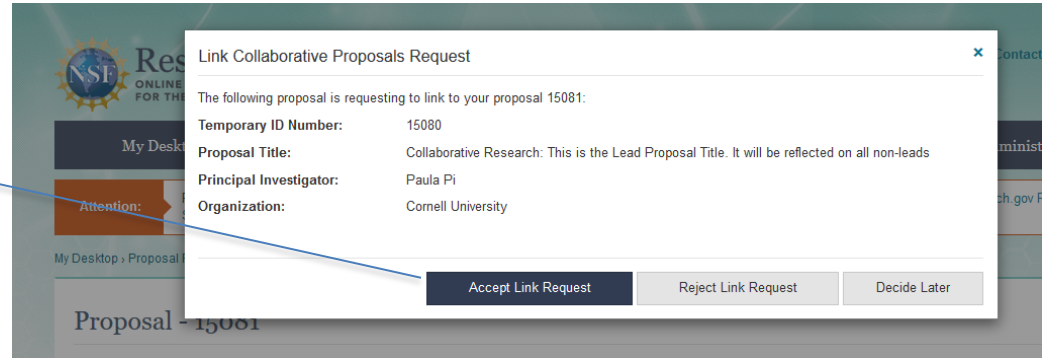
Fewer required sections

Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Non-lead

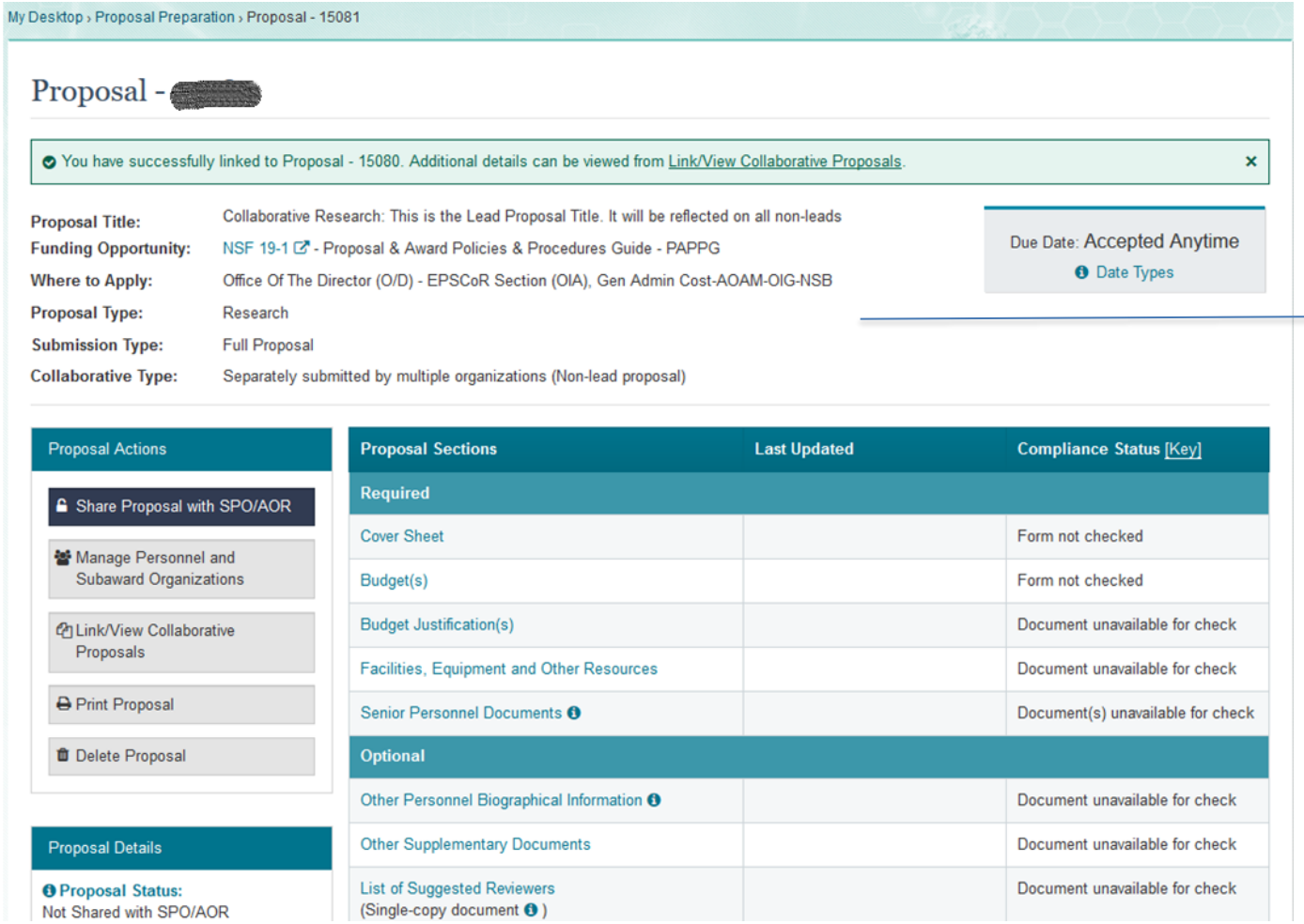


Link requests are automatically at the top

Once link is accepted, non lead cannot unlink. Must contact the lead

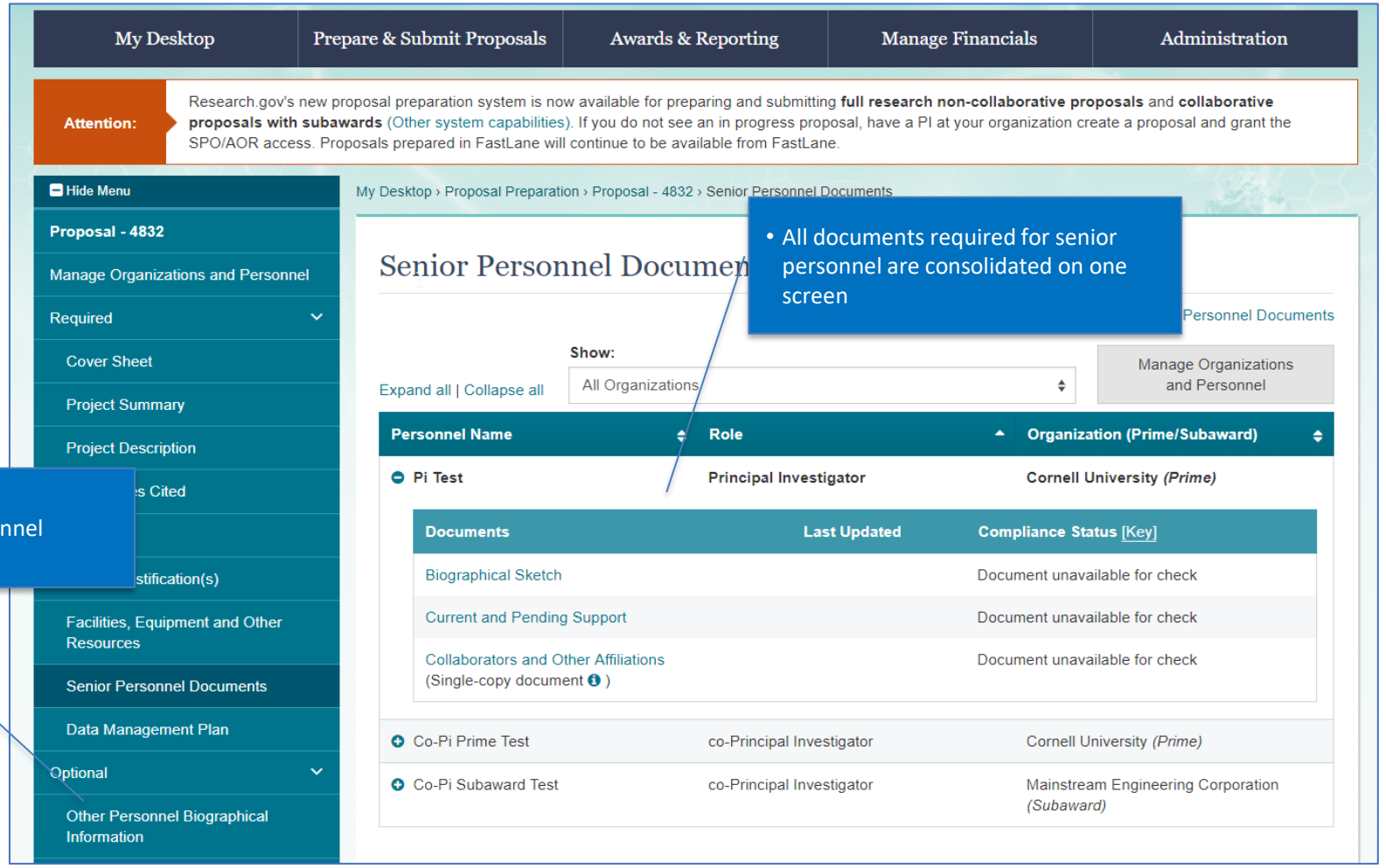


Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Non-lead

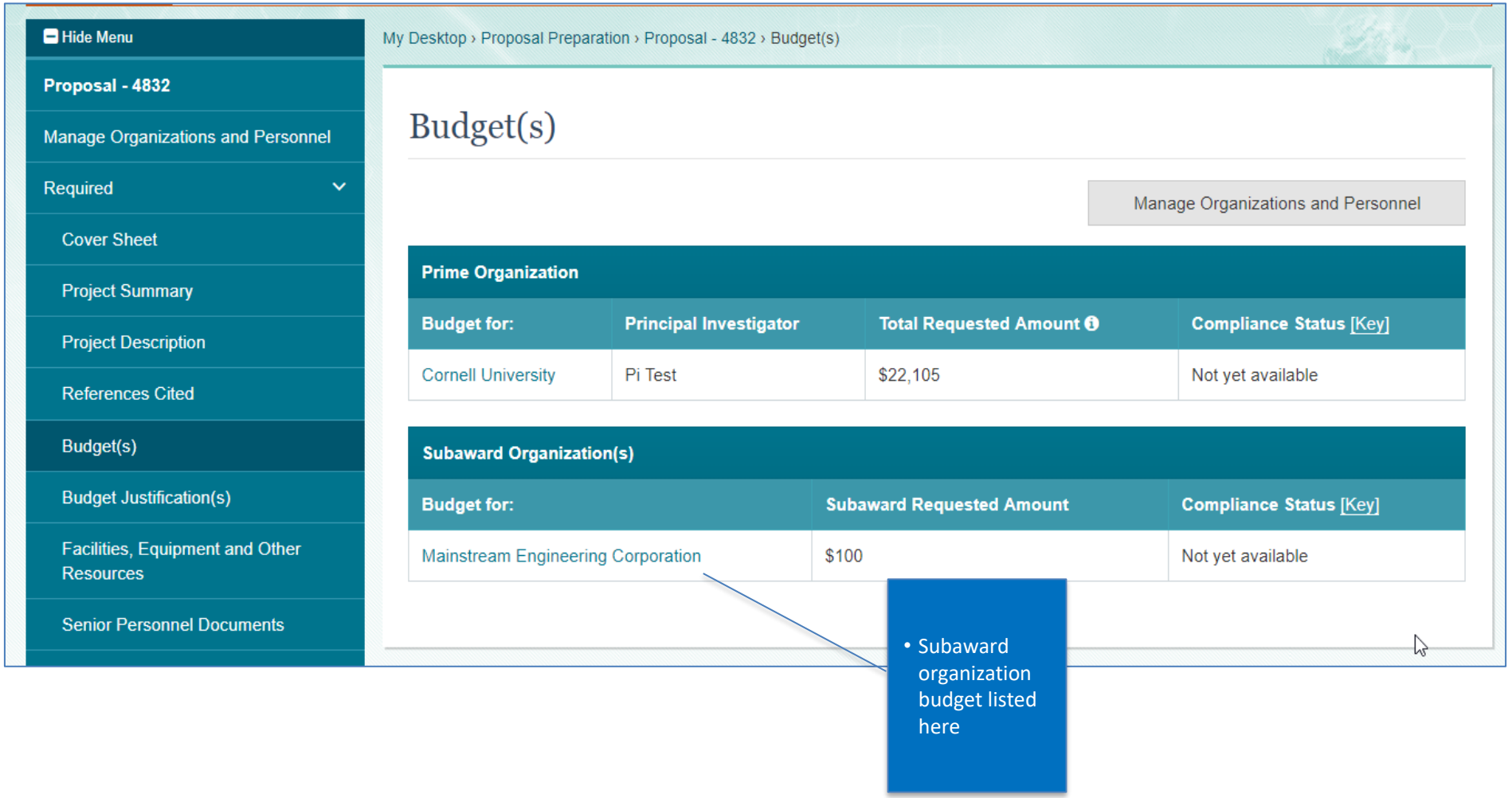


Once linked, non lead will inherit Title, Funding Opportunity, Where to Apply (units of consideration), Proposal Type, Submission Type, and Due Date

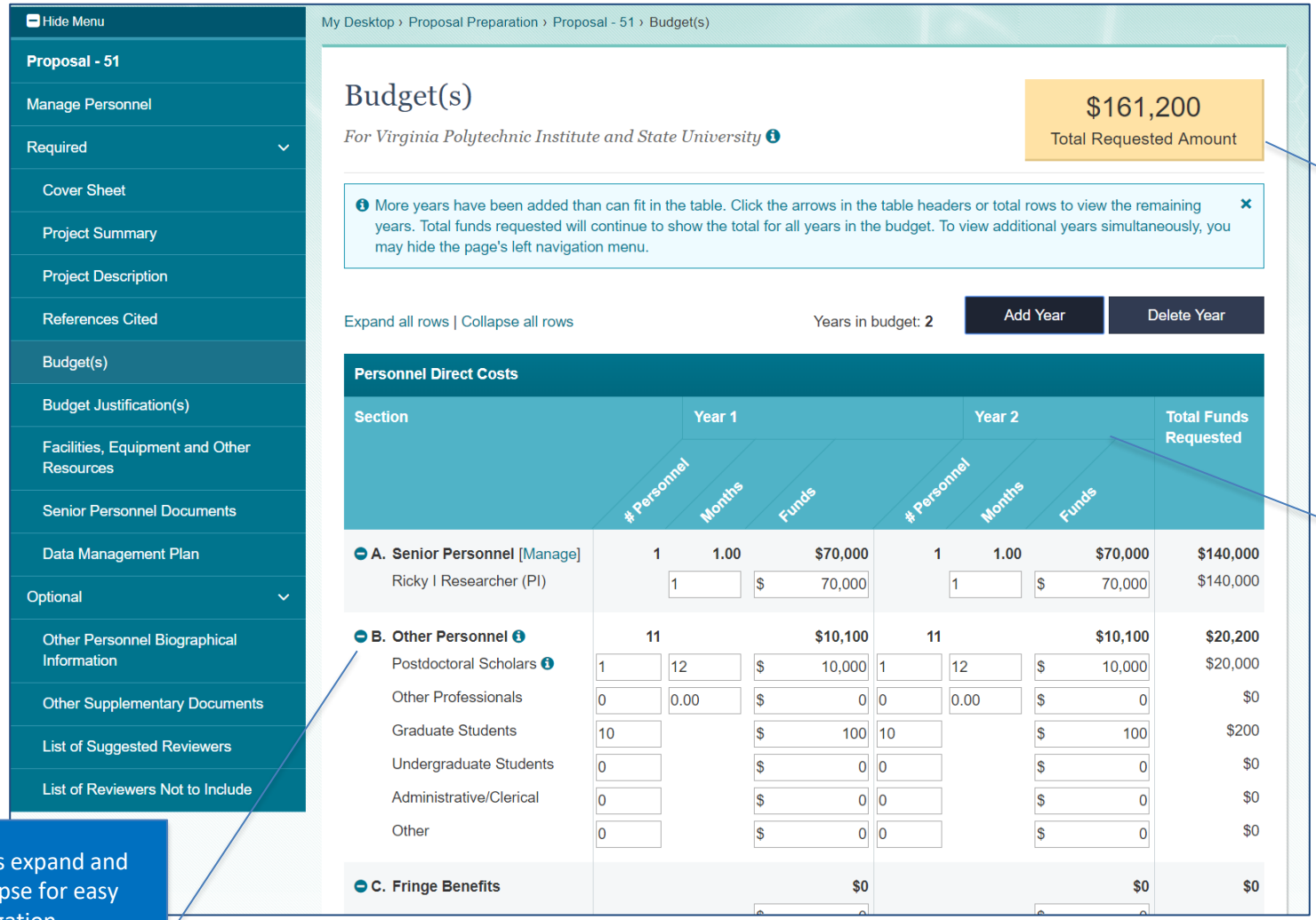
Demo: Senior Personnel Documents



Demo: Budget


Hide Menu
Proposal - 4832
Manage Organizations and Personnel
Required
Cover Sheet
Project Summary
Project Description
References Cited
Budget(s)
Budget Justification(s)
Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources
Senior Personnel Documents
My Desktop › Proposal Preparation › Proposal - 4832 › Budget(s)
Budget(s)
Manage Organizations and Personnel
Prime Organization
Budget for:
Principal Investigator
Total Requested Amount
Compliance Status [Key]
Cornell University
Pi Test
$22,105
Not yet available
Subaward Organization(s)
Budget for:
Subaward Requested Amount
Compliance Status [Key]
Mainstream Engineering Corporation
$100
Not yet available
• Subaward organization budget listed here

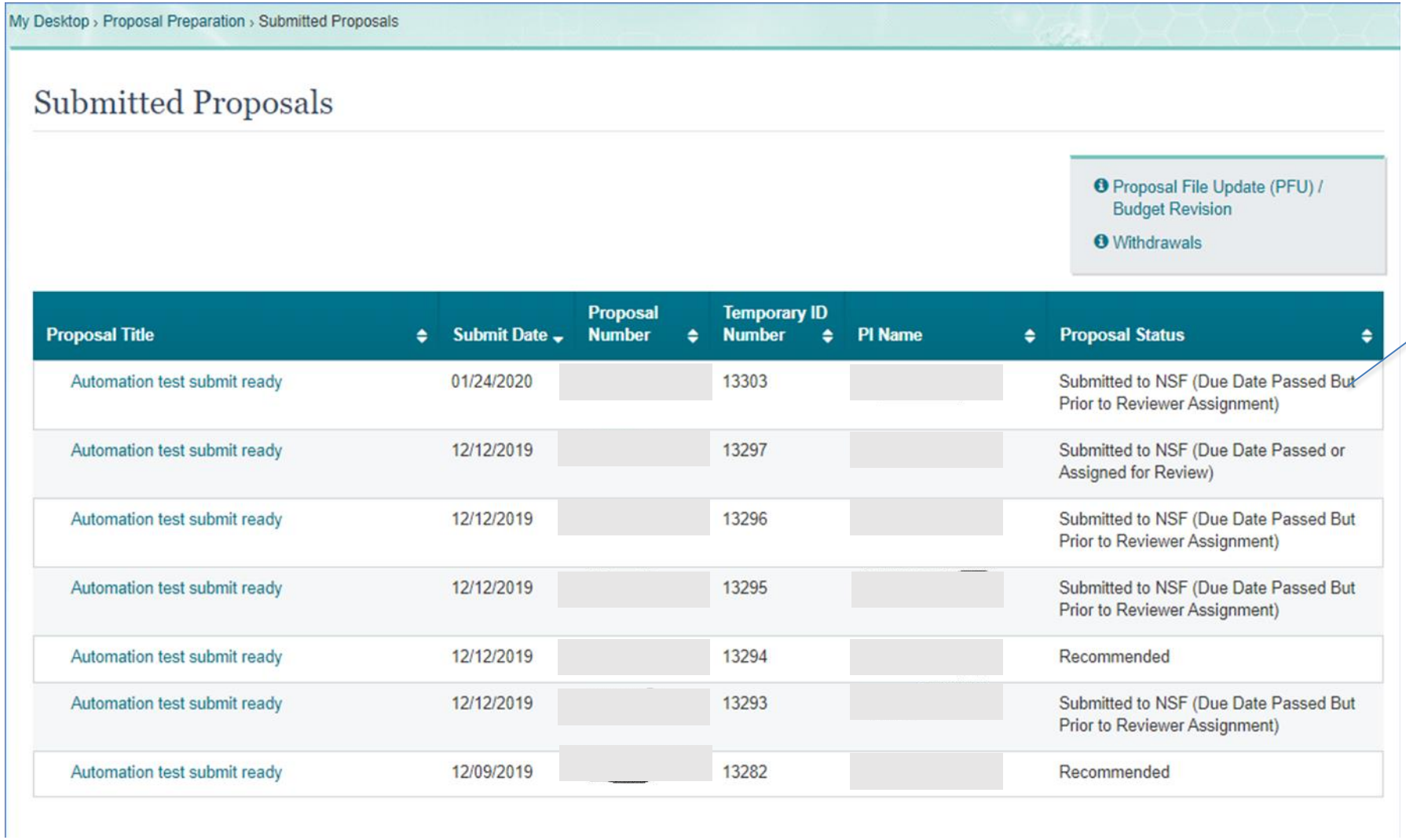
Demo: Budget



- All totals are dynamically summed and the total amount is placed on the Cover Sheet
- Multiple years displayed on one screen
- Rows expand and collapse for easy navigation

Additional Research.gov Screenshots

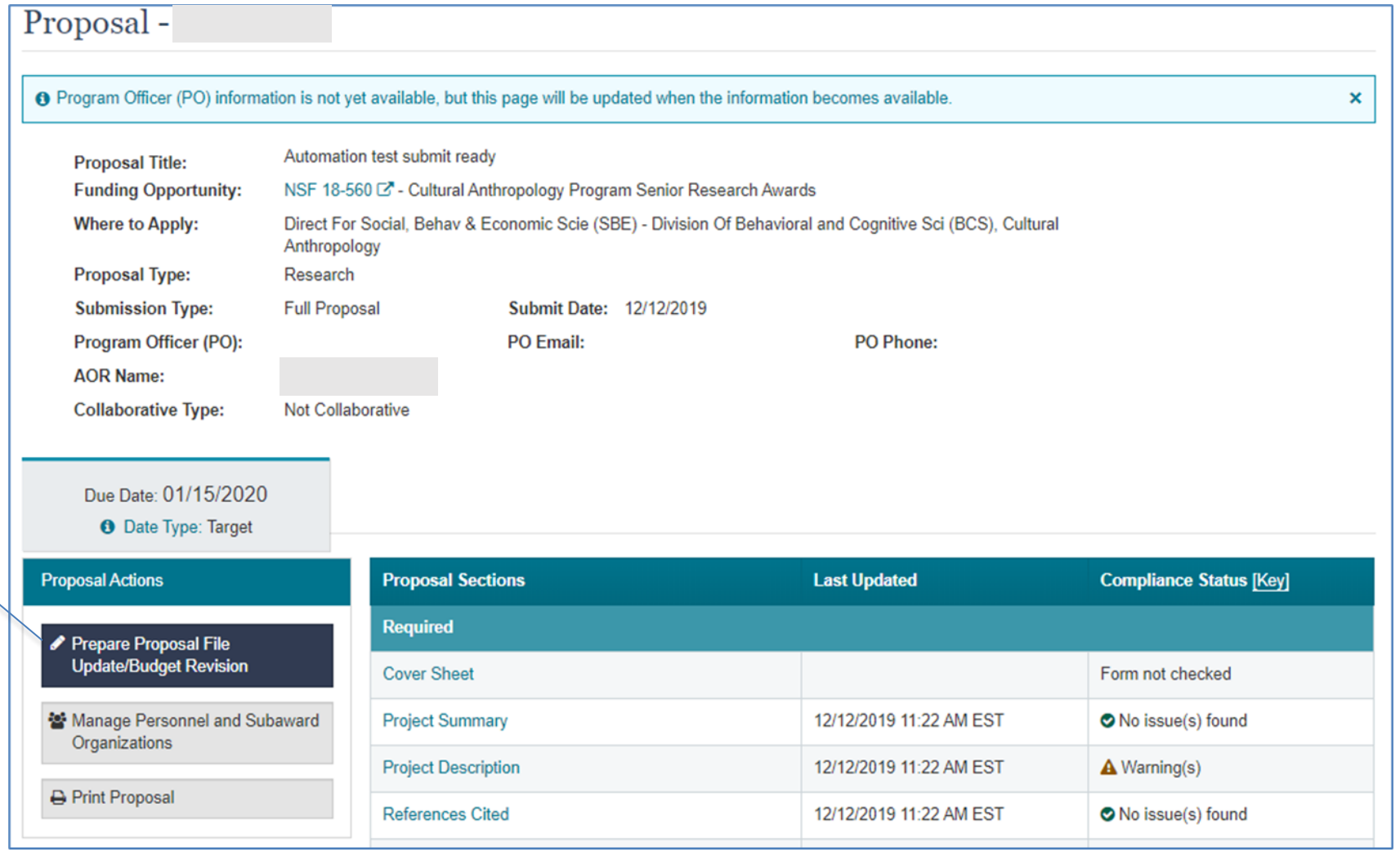
Proposal File Update/Budget Revision



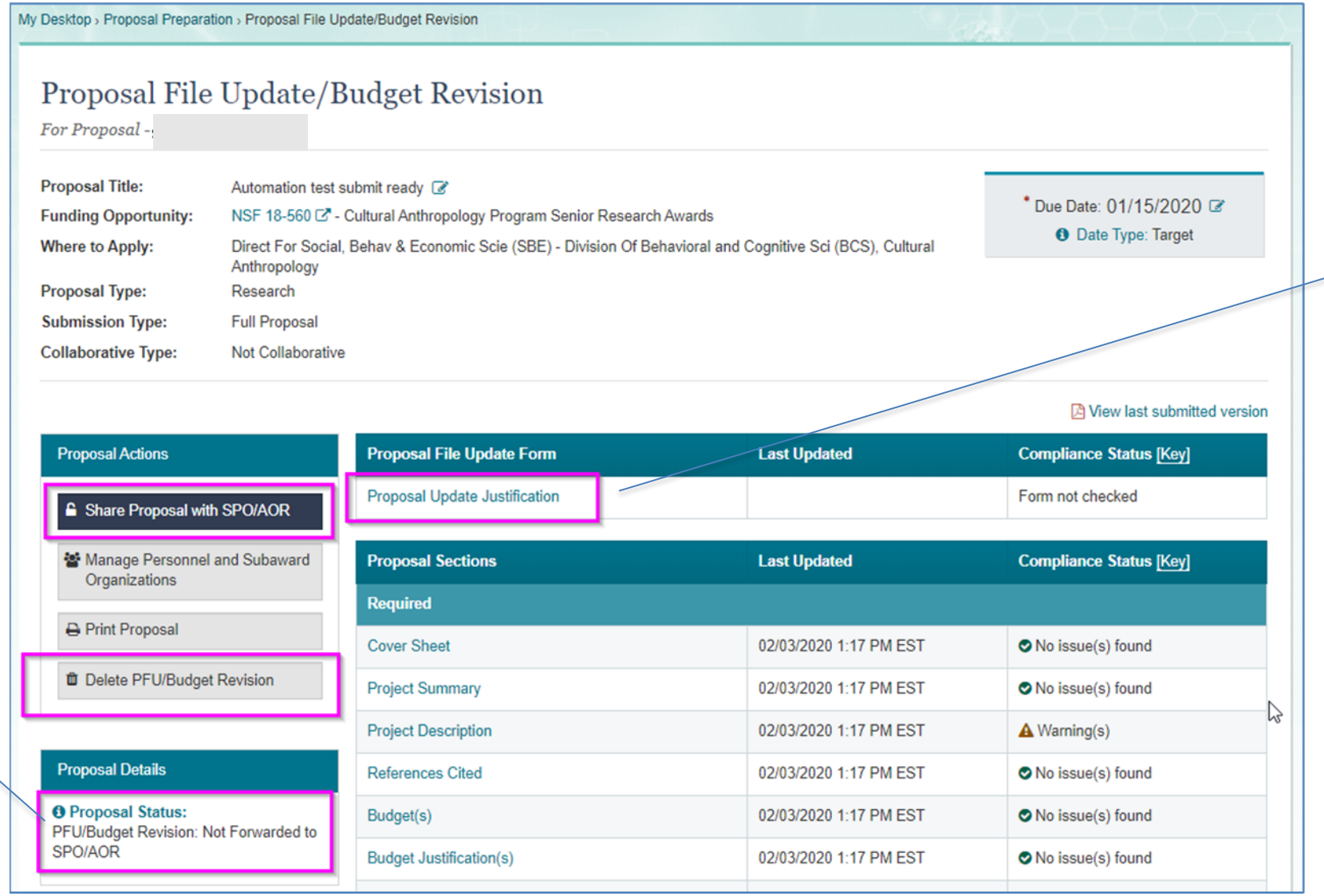
- Prior to Review Assignment

Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

- Prepare Proposal File Update/ Budget Revision



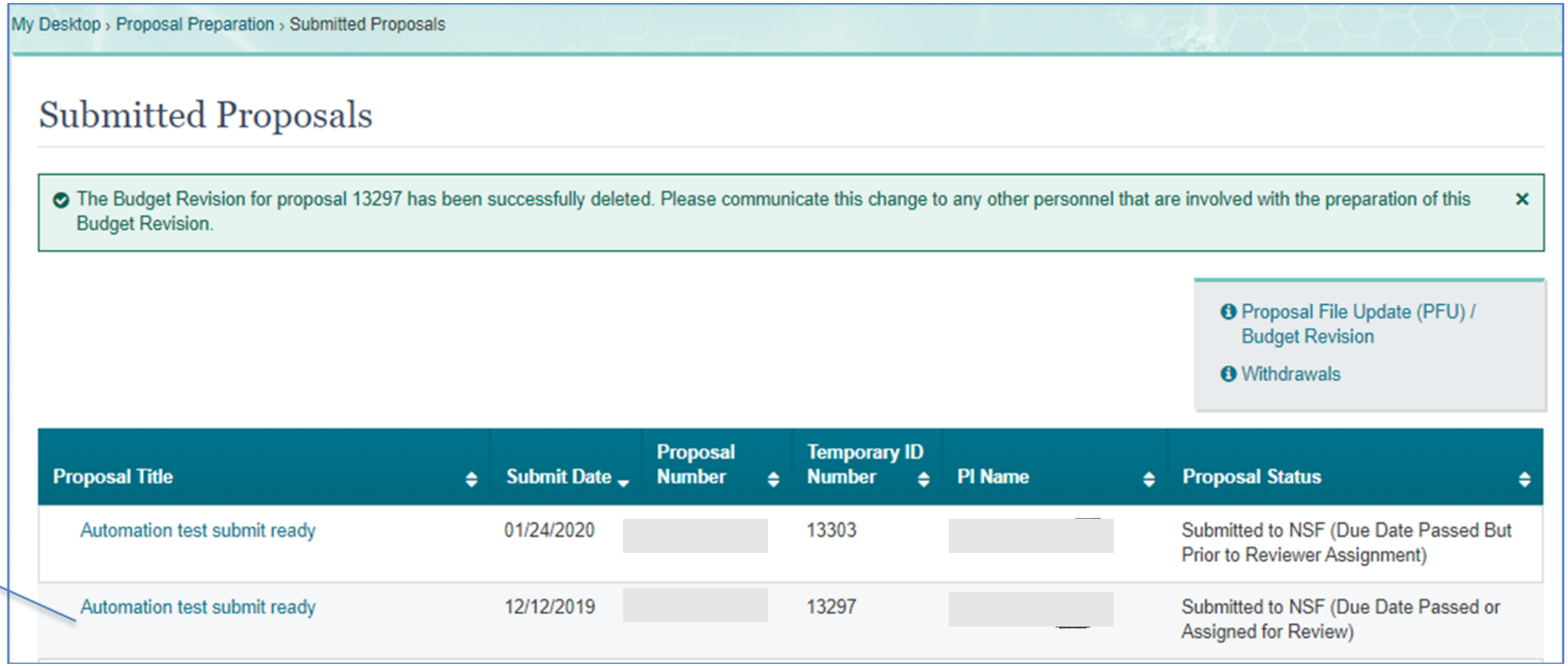
Proposal File Update/Budget Revision



- Budget Revision Status

- Proposal Update Justification is required if there is a change in proposal content, not budget content

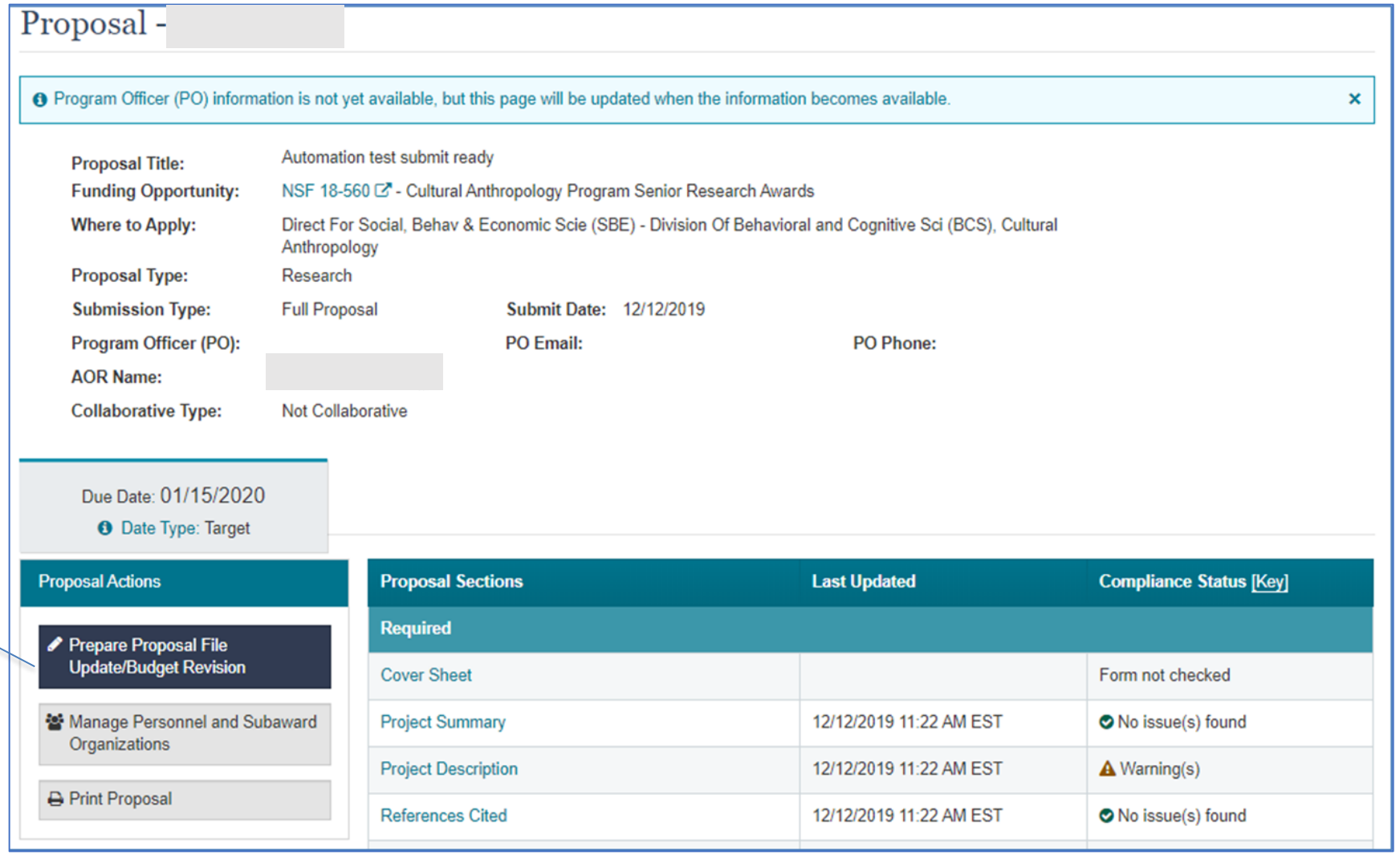
Proposal File Update/Budget Revision



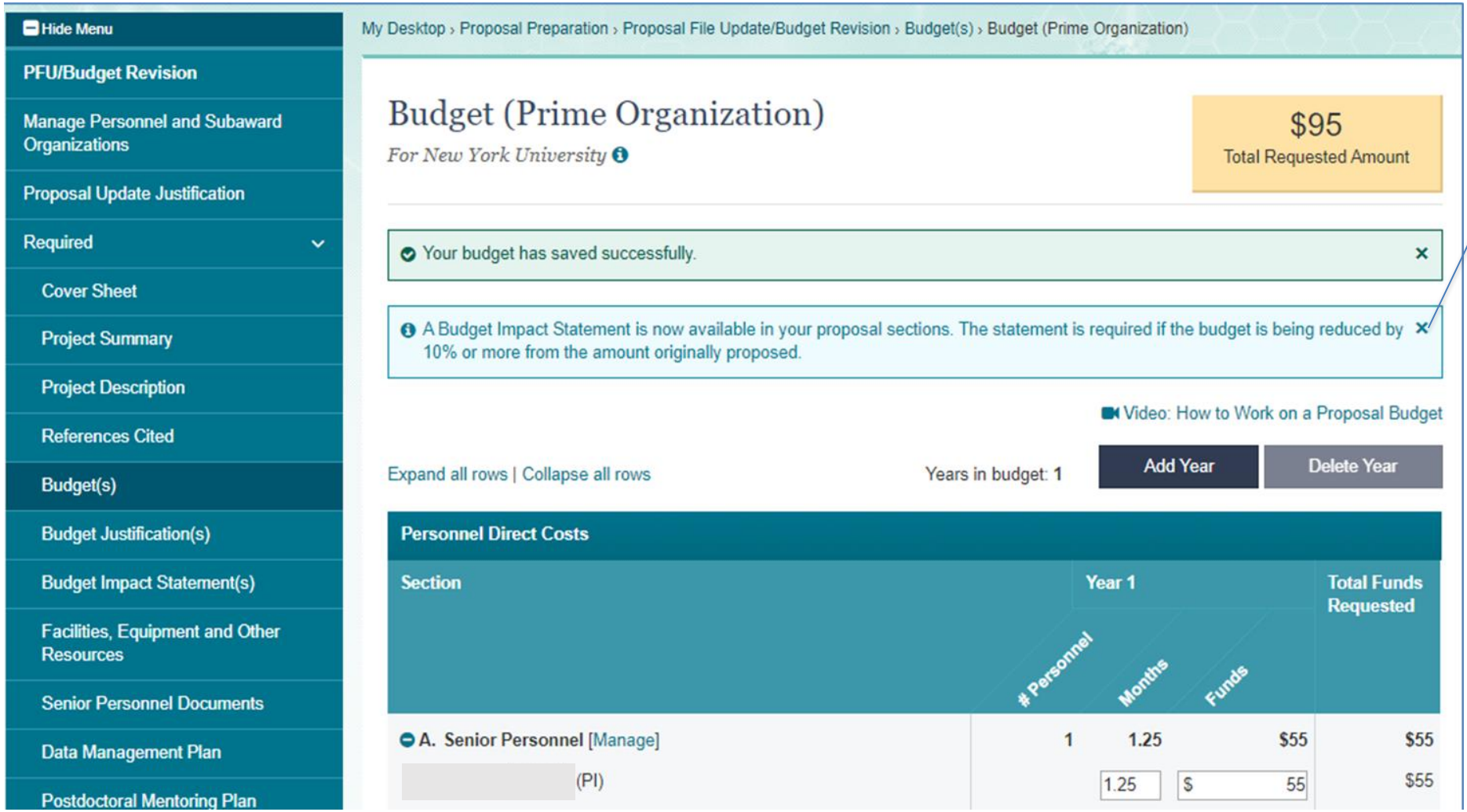
- Assigned for Review

Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

- Prepare Proposal File Update/ Budget Revision



Proposal File Update/Budget Revision



- System will not enforce that the Budget Impact Statement exists if the budget is reduced by 10%