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| Text  Description automatically generated | **Guidance for Developing NSF Safe and Inclusive Work Environment Plans For Off-Campus or Off-Site Research**  **published 20 May 2023** |

The National Science Foundation’s (NSF) [policy](https://beta.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2E9) for Safe and Inclusive Working Environments for Off-Campus or Off-Site Research aims to foster safe and harassment-free environments whenever science is conducted. This policy also recognizes that a community effort is essential to eliminate sexual and other forms of harassment in science and to build inclusive scientific climates where people can learn, grow, and thrive. **Accordingly, for each UWM proposal that proposes to conduct research off-campus\* or off site\*, NSF requires UWM to certify that it has a plan in place for that proposal that describes how the following types of behavior will be addressed:**

* The abuse of any person, including but not limited to harassment, stalking, bullying, or hazing or any kind, whether the behavior is carried out verbally, physically, electronically, or in written form; and
* Conduct that is unwelcome, offensive, indecent, obscene, or disorderly.

\*Off-campus or off-site research is defined as data/information/samples being collected off-campus or off-site, such as fieldwork and research activities on vessels and aircraft.

**1. PROPOSAL PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS**

For any research project that will be conducted off-campus or off-site, NSF requires a Safe and Inclusive Work Environment (SAI) plan to be in place at the time of proposal submission. This requirement applies across all programs in all NSF directorates and divisions. In most cases, SAI plans are not required to be included in either the Project Description or provided as a Supplementary Document in Research.gov. **Therefore, in order for the UWM Office of Sponsored Programs to certify that an SAI plan is in place for the off-campus research project, the PI must upload their completed plan to the project’s WISPER record prior to proposal submission.**

Because SAI plans will not be submitted directly to NSF, they do not need to conform to any page length or formatting requirements. **However, there is one exception:** the NSF Directorates for Biological Sciences (BIO) and Geosciences (GEO) are currently piloting a requirement for SAI plans to be provided as a Supplementary Document (not to exceed two pages) with proposals submitted to the following programs:

* BIO core solicitations:
  + Division of Environmental Biology (NSF 23-549)
  + Division of Integrative Organismal Systems (NSF 23-547)
  + Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (NSF 23-548)
* Biodiversity on a Changing Planet (BoCP, NSF 23-542)
* Pathways into the Geosciences (GEOPAths, NSF 23-540)
* Cultural Transformation in the Geosciences Community (CTGC, NSF 23-539)

For solicitations with a due date(i.e., BoCP, GEOPaths, CTGC), the Supplementary Document is required upon submission.For solicitations without a due date (i.e., the BIO core solicitations), a date after which proposals must include the supplementary document is included in the solicitation. Prior to that date, any proposal with off-campus or off-site research must include a certification from the UWM Office of Sponsored Programs.

***For Proposals Submitted to the Directorates for Biological Sciences and Geosciences***

Prepare your two-page SAI plan per the requirements outlined in Section 2 below; see NSF’s [additional guidance](https://new.nsf.gov/events/safe-inclusive-working-environments-requirements/2023-02-07?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and [FAQs](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23071/nsf23071.jsp?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Use the university-level information provided in this document as needed. **Upload your completed SAI plan to both the project WISPER record and as a Supplementary Document into Research.gov.**

***For Proposals Submitted to All Other Directorates***

Use the guidance provided in this document and the university-level information to prepare your SAI plan as needed. There are no page limits or format restrictions. **Upload your completed SAI plan to the project WISPER record prior to the proposal submission date. Do not upload the plan into Research.gov.**

**2. SAI PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

***All SAI Plans must include the following four sections:***

1. A brief description of the field setting and unique challenges for the team.
2. The steps the proposing organization will take to nurture an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment, including processes to establish shared team definitions of roles, responsibilities, and culture (e.g., codes of conduct, trainings, mentor/mentee mechanisms and field support that might include regular check-ins, and/or developmental events).
3. Communication processes within the off-site team and to the organization(s) that minimize singular points within the communication pathway (e.g., there should not be a single person overseeing access to a single satellite phone).
4. The organizational mechanisms that will be used for reporting, responding to, and resolving issues of harassment if they arise.

***Formatting Requirements:***

***Plans that are required*** to be submitted as a Supplementary Document (see previous section) must not exceed two pages and standard NSF [page formatting requirements](https://new.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/23-1/ch-2-proposal-preparation#2C2) apply. ***Plans that are not required*** to be submitted as a Supplementary Document do not have page limits and NSF formatting requirements do not apply.

**3. SAI PLAN SECTION GUIDANCE**

A process template is provided at the end of this document to help you formulate your SAI plan. Note that plans must reflect the work environment for the specific project. Therefore, plans developed for previous off-site or off-campus projects may not be appropriate for the current proposed project and thus need to be revised accordingly.

***Description of Field Setting and Unique Challenges for the Team:*** Describe the location and the type of fieldwork or off-campus research that will take place. Describe any unique challenges, such as the lack of internet access or cell phone coverage, or circumstances that might necessitate special awareness training (e.g., participants are at sea without the ability to make contact with land, local transportation to a safe space is not available, variances in cultural norms).

***Nurturing an Inclusive Off-campus or Off-site Working Environment:*** Describe plans to inform the off-site team of any training, codes of conduct, and incident reporting policies and procedures. How will the team know who, where, and how to access safety plan information and to report incidents? Consider including regular check-ins with team members individually and mentor/mentee support mechanisms. Any special circumstances such as the involvement of multiple organizations or the presence of third parties in the working environment should also be taken into account.

***Communication:*** Singular points of communication should be minimized; plans should never have a single person overseeing access to a single satellite phone. Include local police and medical service numbers as well as U.S. embassy and consulate contact information, if needed.

***Organizational Mechanisms for Reporting, Responding, and Resolving Issues of Harassment:*** UWM has a robust policy system designed to enforce the expectations for a safe and inclusive work environment. You may copy and paste the following links and content from sections a.−d. into your SAI Plan:

***a. Applicable UWM policies and Resources***

[UWM Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Polic](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP%205-2.%20Sexual%20Violence%20and%20Sexual%20Harassment%20Policy.pdf)y

[UWM Discriminatory Conduct and Consensual Relationships Policy](https://d31hzlhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20230418/2c/86/84/a3/c311f8015f750d5aea6cbcc0/sgp63ct)

[UW Board of Regents Consensual Relationships Policy](https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/policies/consensual-relationships/)

[UW Board of Regents Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy](https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/policies/discrimination-harassment-and-retaliation/)

[UWM Faculty/Staff Code of Conduct](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP%207-3.%20UWM%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf)

[Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures (Ch UWS 17)](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17)

[International Travel Policy (SAAP 10-11)](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP%2010-11.%20International%20Travel%20Policy.pdf)

[UWM Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures for Employees](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP5-3.Reasonable_Accommodation_Policy_and_Procedures.pdf)

[Accommodation of Religious Beliefs](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP%201-2.%20Accommodation%20of%20Religious%20Beliefs.pdf)

[UWM Academic Staff Grievance Policy](https://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2021/03/112.pdf)

[UWM University Staff Grievance Procedure](https://uwm.edu/hr/policies/university-staff-grievance-procedure/)

[UWM Policy on Research Misconduct (SAAP 7-14)](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP%207-14.%20Research%20Misconduct%20Policy.pdf)

***b. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment***

As a baseline, all UWM faculty, staff and student employees are required by UW System policy to complete an [online sexual violence and sexual harassment prevention training program](https://uwm.edu/titleix/education-and-training/online-training/). The program must be completed by all new employees within 30 days of their official start date, and all employees are required to complete the program again every three years. **[*Note: The PI should confirm with their*** [***HR representative***](https://uwm.edu/hr/hrbp-ubr-directory/) ***that faculty, staff, and student employees participating in their research have completed this training requirement****.****]***

The [UWM Office of Equity/Diversity Services](https://uwm.edu/equity-diversity-services/) (EDS) provides confidential sexual misconduct [reporting](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinMilwaukee&layout_id=13) and [Title XI resources](https://uwm.edu/titleix/get-help/) to all UWM faculty, staff, and students. [Survivor support and victim advocacy](https://uwm.edu/wellness/health-services/survivor-support/) is provided through the UWM Student Health and Wellness Center

***c. Reporting Sexual and Related Misconduct***

UWM strongly encourages individuals who have experienced, have knowledge of, or have witnessed gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating and domestic violence, or other forms of sexual and related misconduct to report the incident immediately to the University. Reports can be made by **(1)** Contacting the University’s Title IX Coordinator during regular office hours by phone at 414-229-7012, email at [titleix@UWM.edu](mailto:titleix@UWM.edu), or by mail or in-person at the Office of Equity/Diversity Services, Mitchell Hall Rm. 359, 3203 N. Downer Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211. **(2)** [Submitting an incident report online](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinMilwaukee&layout_id=13). **(3)** Contacting the UWM Police Department at 414-229-9911 for emergency assistance.

Employees who are [designated as “responsible employees](https://uwm.edu/titleix/wp-content/uploads/sites/95/2022/02/Title_IX_Reporting_Sexual_Misconduct.pdf)” under UWM’s Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy must report certain information to the Title IX Coordinator. These reporting requirements are covered in UWM’s [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Polic](https://apps.uwm.edu/secu-policies/storage/other/SAAP%205-2.%20Sexual%20Violence%20and%20Sexual%20Harassment%20Policy.pdf)y.

***d. Additional Reporting Options***

All individuals have the right to make a report to the University and to be protected from retaliation for reporting an incident. UWM has multiple avenues for reporting concerns:

* The [online Report It system](https://uwm.edu/deanofstudents/report-it/) can be used to report various concerns, including bias, sexual misconduct, student non-academic misconduct, and requests for student support.
* Allegations of discrimination and discriminatory harassment (including sexual violence and sexual harassment, stalking, sexual misconduct, bullying, hazing, and other unwelcome offensive, indecent, obscene or disorderly conduct) can be made directly to [UWM’s Office of Equity/Diversity Services](https://uwm.edu/equity-diversity-services/).
* The [UW System Reporting Hotline](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/58858/index.html) can be used to confidentially or anonymously report concerns regarding ethics, integrity, or compliance.
* For emergencies, including safety concerns, call the UWM Police Department at 414-229-9911.

**4. SAI PLAN DISTRIBUTION**

**If the proposal is funded, the PI is responsible for authoring and distributing a copy of their SAI Plan to each participant in the off- campus or off-site research prior to those individuals leaving campus to participate in the off-campus or off-site activities.**

**5. QUESTIONS?**

For questions regarding the submission of your SAI Plan in Research.gov or for inclusion in WISPER records, please contact the [Pre-Award Specialist](https://uwm.edu/officeofresearch/contact/#pre-award) assigned to your unit.

For questions regarding specific UWM policies and procedures outlined in this guidance document, please contact the UWM Office of Equity/Diversity Services at 414-229-5923 or [diverse@uwm.edu](mailto:diverse@uwm.edu).

For general review and editing of your SAI Plan, please contact Michelle Schoenecker ([schoene7@uwm.edu](mailto:schoene7@uwm.edu)) or Anne Kissack ([kissacka@uwm.edu](mailto:kissacka@uwm.edu)) in the Office of Research Development Services.