National Science Foundation
A New Approach to Award Payments

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PRESENTED TO THE
FEDERAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
SEPTEMBER 15, 2011

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NSF made the decision in late FY 2010 to develop a new approach to award payments and associated post award processes.

- Increased focus is being placed on transparency and accountability in the stewardship of Federal funds.
- Congress, OMB and other stakeholders are demanding up-to-date information on how tax dollars are being spent.
- OMB is developing standardized reporting requirements that NSF must comply with. The new payment system is being developed to enable NSF to comply with these standards.

The New Approach

- The Award Cash Management $ystem (ACM$) will be based on awardees providing award level detail at the time of the payment request.
  - This will enhance access to award financial data in real time or near-real time for both awardee and program staff, and
  - Eliminate the need for the quarterly Federal Financial Report.

Comparison

FastLane	ACM$
(Pooling Payment Request)	*(Award Level Detail Payment Request)*

FastLane *(Pooling Payment Request)*

- Focus on institution level records
- Payment request which totals all grant fund needs
- Reconciliation on a quarterly basis
- Distribution of payment received may not match records that produced the payment request

ACM$ *(Award Level Detail Payment Request)*

- Focus on financial records on an award level basis
- Payment request with detail that matches awardee records
- Reconciliation in real-time
- Payment file detail can be used to eliminate distribution discrepancies

- **Retaining "Current" System Benefits**
  - Easy to use
  - Ability to request payments for a future date
  - Ability to request adjustments
    - For Open Awards
    - For Closed Awards
  - Pre-population of NSF data
  - Ability to enter a grantee identification number for each award
  - Ability to cancel a payment request within a certain time period
  - Ability to designate a preparer and certifier of requests
  - Ability to search for a specific award

- Benefits of ACM$
  - Improved access to real-time data for each grant such as:
    - Total Award Amount
    - Total Award Disbursements/Expenditures
    - Total Award Cash Available
  - No quarterly Federal Financial Report (FFR)
  - Timely financial data for improved grant management
  - New reports for historic payment/expenditure information
  - Reducing dollar threshold of adjustments to closed awards
  - Improved ability to make corrections/changes timely
  - Ability to save a request for completion at a later time

Our Vision

- Availability of multiple input options:
  - Manual Web Entry
    appropriate for smaller organizations

  - Excel Spreadsheet Download/Upload Entry
    appropriate for medium and large sized organizations

  - Bulk XML Data File Upload
    appropriate for those large organizations who desire further automation

- System pilot with 20-30 volunteer institutions

- Thorough reconciliation between NSF and grantee records will be completed

Institution Award Analysis

Number of Grants	Institution Count	Percent
1	680	37.44%
2-3	430	23.68%
4-5	157	8.65%
6-15	229	12.61%
16-30	92	5.07%
31-50	52	2.86%
51-100	53	2.92%
101-200	44	2.42%
201-300	26	1.43%
301-500	29	1.60%
501+	24	1.32%
Grand Total	1816	100.00%

Transition Model

- NSF is currently in the planning stages of the transition and is developing the timeline, but expects to transition January 2, 2013.

- We have been working with the grantee community to develop a timeline that will not interfere with grantee fiscal year end tasks.

- NSF will continue to provide updates to stakeholders as the timeline is developed.

- Goals of the Reconciliation Process:
  - Insure all awardee balances match NSF award balances
    - Balances include award amount, expenditures and revenue
  - Bring grantee FFR Cash on Hand (COH) balances to zero ($0)

Transition Model

Task	Timeline
Define Requirements and Develop Technology	
Pilot Group Reconciliation	3 Months
Live Pilot of System	6 Months
Reconciliation (Everyone)	3 Months
System Implemented	
Post Implementation Correction Period *(Reporting Corrections)*	
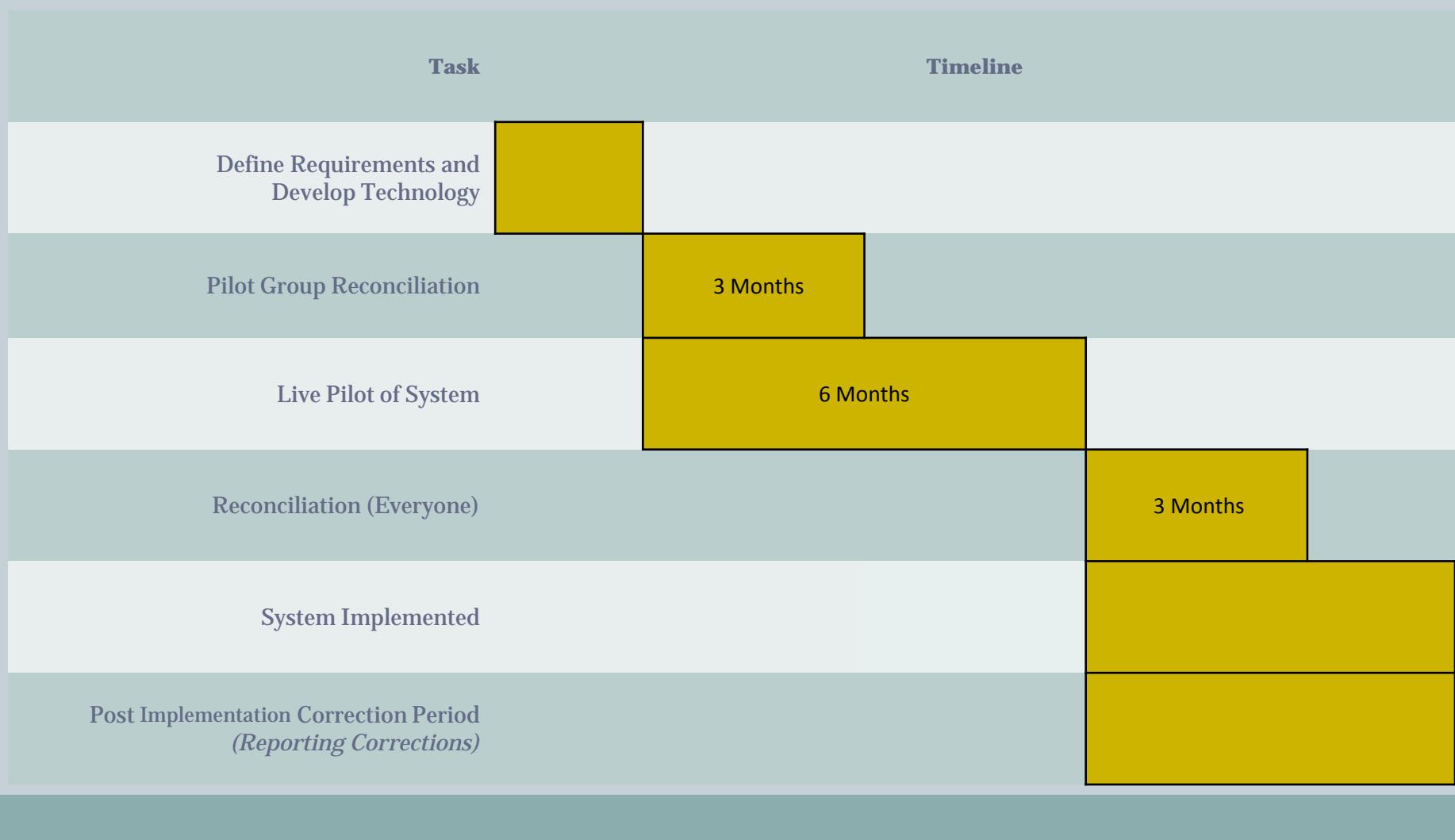
Key Dates

09/30/2012

Standard FFR

- Due 10/30/2012

12/24/2012

Cash Shutdown

12/31/2012

Reconciliation FFR

- Due 01/31/2013

01/02/2013

System Implementation

- Institutions will be given access to the new system when they have:
- Completed filing their 12/31/2012 FFR (due by 01/31/2013)
- A $0 COH from the pooling method

TBD

Completion of Reconciliation Process

- Reconciliation will occur post implementation

- 09/30/2012 FFR will be generated and required from every institution with a 10/30/2012 due date
- 12/31/2012 FFR will be generated and required from every institution with a 01/31/2013 due date
- Current Cash Request functionality will remain available until 12/24/2012
- Reconciliation process will be completed after implementation

- New system will be implemented on 01/02/2013
- Institutions will be given access to the new system when they have:
  - Completed filing their 12/31/2012 FFR (due by 01/31/2013)
  - A $0 COH from the pooling method
    - NSF will initiate payments for institutions with negative COH balances with the submission of the 12/31/2012 FFR
    - Refunds will be required from institutions with positive COH balances with the submission of the 12/31/2012 FFR
  - Shutdown period will be defined by the institutions' completion of these activities

Communication Plans

- Briefings/Presentations at:
  - NSF Regional Conferences
  - NCURA
  - COGR
  - FDP
- One on One Outreach Visits to Institutions
- Town Halls
- WebEx Webinars
- Email Notices

- ## What can you do now to prepare?
  - Be sure you can reconcile the Cash on Hand (COH) balance reported on your quarterly FFR to the COH balance on your financial records
    - Be able to identify any reconciliation items that cause differences between the two numbers such as overages, at-risk spending, and refunds made on canceled appropriations
  - Submit FFR each quarter by the due date
  - Bring operating COH balances as close to zero as possible until the implementation occurs
    - Be current on payment requests to reduce negative COH balances
    - Refund positive COH balances

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FEEDBACK

Tell us what you think

Award Cash Management $ystem (ACM$)

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New Payment Request (Open Awards)

Organization Name: **<Name of the organization>**

Organization ID: **0000000000**

| 1. Payments | 2. Adjustments | 3. Review & Submit | [Save] [Delete] |

Brief instructional text brief instructional text brief instructional text brief instructional text brief instructional text. View online help for this process.

Show [25 ▼] per page.   [Edit Awards List] [Upload/Download]

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Federal Award Number	Recipient Account Number	PI/PD Name	From	To	Total Federal Funds Authorized	Previous Cumulative Cash Disbursement	Net Available Funds	Payment Amount Requested	Expected Close Date	Final Flag
0000000	12345678	Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000		Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000		Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000	12345678	Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000	12345678	Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000		Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000		Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000	12345678	Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐
0000000	12345678	Lastname, FI	mm/yy	mm/yy	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00	$10,000,000.00		mm/dd/yyyy	☐

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Award Cash Management $ystem (ACM$)

< Back to Organization

Review & Submit Request

Organization Name: <Name of the organization>
Organization ID: 0000000000

Export to: -select one- ▼ Go

| Payments | Adjustments | Review & Submit |

Transaction Information

Total # of Awards: 00

Submitted by: Lastname, Firstname

Date Submitted: mm/dd/yyyy 00.00.00

Payment Date Requested: mm/dd/yyyy

Status: <Value of Status>

Payment Information

New Payment Requests (Open Awards) = Subtotal New Payment Requests: **$000,000.00**

Adjustments (Closed Awards) = Subtotal Adjustments: **$0,000.00**

Payment Request Control Total : **$000,000.00**

Preparer Comments

Certification

☐ I, **Firstname Lastname,** certify:

(A) That to the best of my knowledge and belief, this request is true in all respects and that all disbursements have been made or will be made within 3 days of this request for the purposes and conditions (including cost-sharing requirements as stated in the NSF grant policy manual) of the awards

(B) That final closeout disbursements have been reported on all grants that expired prior to the beginning of this reporting quarter except for awards I have identified

(C) Under penalties of perjury a willful false certification is a criminal offense, 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Certify Request   Reject Request

- Beginning with the quarter ending 09/30/2011, the FFR will only be available on Research.gov

- Single-Sign On technology was implemented 06/03/2011 for financial function users
  - Beginning in January 2012, all financial functions will only be accessible through Research.gov. In addition to the quarterly FFR, these functions include:
    - Cash Requests
    - Cash Requests History
    - EFT Update
    - EFT History

    Note: The non-FFR functions will still operate in a FastLane environment accessible via link from Research.gov

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