**Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring**



***Recognizing and Rewarding Excellence in STEM Mentoring Since 1995***

**2021–2022 Application Packet**

# Competition Opens: September 1, 2021

# Nomination Deadline: January 1, 2022

**Application Deadline: February 1, 2022**

All application materials must be submitted online at [www.paesmem.net](http://www.paesmem.net)

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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**Presidential Awards for Excellence**

**in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring**

Each year, the President of the United States recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) mentoring across the Nation and bestows upon them the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM). PAESMEM was created in 1995 to identify and recognize those who have contributed outstanding efforts in mentoring and have enhanced the participation of individuals across a wide demographic array, especially those who might not otherwise have considered or had access to opportunities in STEM disciplines and professions. The PAESMEM program is administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

Over 315 individuals and organizations have received this distinguished Presidential recognition, serving as exemplars to their colleagues and leaders in the national effort to develop the nation’s human resources in STEM fields. The PAESMEM alumni community’s mentoring accomplishments help reinforce OSTP’s mission to maximize the impact of science and technology to advance health, prosperity, security, environmental quality, and justice for all Americans. To succeed, our nation must ensure every American — regardless of gender, race, resources or region — can participate fully in science and technology. PAESMEM is one of two awards that the Excellence Awards in Science and Engineering (EASE) Program at NSF manages on behalf of OSTP. The other award is the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching ([www.paemst.org](http://www.paemst.org)).

**2021–2022 Program Information**

#### Nomination and Application

There are two PAESMEM award categories: Individual and Organizational.

By completing a nomination form on the PAESMEM website ([www.paesmem.net](http://www.paesmem.net)), anyone—colleagues, mentees, or other members of the public—may nominate exceptional individuals and/or organizations that mentor underrepresented populations in STEM.

To submit a nomination, complete the nomination form available on the PAESMEM website. This form requires the mentor’s name, employer, and email address. A nominator may nominate one or more individuals or organizations. Nominations must be submitted through the PAESMEM website by midnight, Eastern time on January 1, 2022. Individual and organizational mentors that have been nominated will receive an invitation to begin the application process. **The invitation will include a username and password for accessing the online application system.**

Individual and organizational mentors may also initiate the application process themselves at [www.paesmem.net.](http://www.paesmem.net/) More than one individual, program, or center may apply from the same organization or institution; however, the same person may not submit applications for both the individual and organization award categories.

**Nomination Deadline: January 1, 2022**

Mentors should be nominated as soon as possible to give them ample time to prepare an application.

**Application Deadline: February 1, 2022**

The application deadline is **11:59 p.m. (Eastern Time) on 2/1/22**.

#### Eligibility

Individuals and organizations in all public and private sectors are eligible for PAESMEM, including business, academia, primary or secondary education, military, government, non-profit organizations, and foundations. Exceptional STEM or STEM-related mentoring in both formal and informal settings which enhances the participation of individuals across a wide demographic array, especially for those who might not otherwise have considered or had access to opportunities in STEM, are eligible for PAESMEM. Applications are encouraged from all geographical regions in the U.S. including the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Department of Defense Education Activity schools, and the U.S. jurisdictions including American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Applications are strongly encouraged from jurisdictions designated by Congress under NSF's [Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR)](https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/epscor/EPSCoR_2017Brochure.pdf).

Essential to the health and vitality of STEM, NSF's PAESMEM program seeks to broaden opportunities and expand participation of persons who are members of racial and ethnic groups (African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders), all genders, persons with disabilities, veterans, mentors serving persons residing in disadvantaged socioeconomic regions, institutions, and persons who may reside in any geographic region that is underrepresented in STEM disciplines.

*Individual Applicants*

An Individual applicant must:

* work in business, academia, primary or secondary education, military, government, non-profit organizations, or foundations (Nominees may be federal government employees except for those identified in the [U.S. Code Title 5](https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/USCODE-2011-title5/context))
* have at least five years of sustained, exceptional mentoring with demonstrated impact on individuals historically underrepresented in STEM
* be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
* not be a current Organizational applicant
* not have received the PAESMEM award as an Individual applicant in any prior competition

*Organizational Applicants*

An Organizational applicant must:

* be affiliated with a company, U.S. educational institution or agency, military, government, non-profit organization, or foundation
* have at least five years of sustained, exceptional mentoring with demonstrated impact on individuals historically underrepresented in STEM
* be a mentoring program or activity within an organization
* not be a current Individual applicant
* not have received the PAESMEM award as an Organizational applicant in the past 10 years

Mentees from the groups above can be undergraduate or graduate students, teachers, or early career scientists, mathematicians, engineers, and/or other STEM or STEM-related professionals. Early career STEM or STEM-related professionals include those from all public and private sectors who are: post-associate, post-baccalaureate, post-masters, post-doctoral, new STEM faculty, new STEM K–12 teachers (both pre- and in-service), as well as new hires in a company, foundation, non-profit organization, military, or government agency*.*

### Review Criteria

Mentorship has varying meanings depending on context. For the PAESMEM program mentorship is defined as follows:

Mentorship is a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together over time to support the personal and professional growth, development, and success of the relational partners through the provision of career and social support.

After eligibility is confirmed and technical specifications are met, applications will be evaluated based on this definition of mentoring and the following *Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring* (more detailed descriptions of the mentoring dimensions is provided later in the application packet). These dimensions apply for both **Individual** and **Organizational** applications.

Dimension 1: Mentoring Philosophy and Strategies

Dimension 2: Assessment and Outcomes

Dimension 3: Reflective Practice

Dimension 4: Leadership and Sustainability

#### The dimensions were drawn from contemporary research and practice (Garringer, M., Kupersmidt, J., Rhodes, J., Stelter, R., & Tai, T, 2015; Kupersmidt, J., Stelter, R., Garringer, M., & Bourgoin, J., 2018; National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, 2019; AAAS, 2019).

#### Review Process

Selection committees will include outstanding scientists, mathematicians, engineers, STEM education researchers, STEM educators, and other STEM or STEM-related professionals. These committees will review applications and make recommendations to NSF. NSF will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate the recommendations for both Individual and Organizational awardees. After review and consideration of appropriate factors, NSF will provide its recommendations to the Director of the White House OSTP for final selection. All awardees will be subject to a Federal Bureau of Investigation background check.

Applicants who do not win the award are encouraged to reapply. Applicants are encouraged to examine feedback from the review process and update their application accordingly. Eligibility will need to be confirmed each year, and Letters of Recommendation will be valid for 2 years. The PAESMEM applicant portal includes a “Previous Application” tab which enables applicants to copy different application components from a previous year into the current cycle. Applicants must review the updated application packet to ensure that any changes to the application, particularly the narrative section, are addressed in their responses.

#### Recognition

Each Presidential Awardee receives a certificate signed by the President of the United States, a

$10,000 award from NSF, and travel costs that are in accordance with federal travel policy to attend an award ceremony in Washington, D.C. Alternatively, if COVID-19 travel restrictions are a concern a virtual announcement may be held. The purpose of the virtual announcement is for a timely celebration of awardees; it is not intended to replace the live award ceremony. The award ceremony may include professional development opportunities and discussions with policy-makers about how to improve STEM mentoring. In addition, awardees join a national cohort of award-winning mentors, providing opportunities to impact mentoring on a national scale. The award announcement and scheduling of the recognition ceremony is determined by the White House OSTP.

## Application Components

#### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

**Submission of the *Demographic Information Form* is voluntary and is not a precondition to receiving an award**. We encourage nominees to provide the demographic information to assist in program analysis. The information is not disclosed to review committee members and is used internally for analysis of applicant characteristics and geographic distribution.

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT

The Administrative Component includes a Mentor Information Form, an Organizational Representative Confirmation Form (for Organizational applicants only), Letters of Recommendation, and Résumé. All these forms are completed within the online application portal at [www.paesmem.net](http://www.paesmem.net).

### Mentor Information Form

Applicants provide information about themselves, their employer, and their mentoring work in the *Mentor Information Form*. For Organizational applicants, the information will be entered by the individual who is completing the application on behalf of the Organization. On this form, applicants:

* Provide the disciplines/subjects they mentor
* Provide the organization in which they work
* Provide the stage of education, primary setting, and disciplinary background(s) of mentees
* Provide supervisor information (if applicable)
* Provide name of the head of the applicant’s organization (if applicable)

#### Organizational Representative Confirmation Form

*For Organizational applicants only*, enter the name and contact information for the head of the organization, and the name of the organizational representative who would represent the organization at an awards ceremony. An email will be sent to the head of the organization with instructions for completing the form. By completing the form*,* the head of the organization will confirm that the representative listed is the correct person to represent the organization at an awards ceremony if the organization is selected as an awardee. If someone other than the applicant will represent the organization at the award ceremony, their name must be provided, and their résumé must be one of the up to three résumés included in the application.

#### Letters of Recommendation

Three letters of recommendation are required and can be provided by mentees, colleagues, or anyone else familiar with the individual's or organization's mentoring work. Applicants provide contact information for each recommender, who then each receive a system-generated email with instructions about how to submit the recommendation. This automated email will also advise the recommender to address how the applicants meet the *Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring* within the letter.

There is no required format for letters of recommendation or support. The applicant should review the letter of recommendation before submitting the final application to assure that the relationship of the recommender to the applicant is clear. **All letters of recommendation must be received in the PAESMEM portal by the application deadline or the applicant will not be able to submit their application.**

If changes to the letter of recommendation need to be made, the recommender may use the link they received to reopen the letter of recommendation. The applicant may also reopen the letter of recommendation through the portal to allow the recommender to make edits or to delete the letter of recommendation and replace it with a different one.

#### Résumé

A résumé is required to complete the PAESMEM application. The résumé must outline the applicant’s education, employment history, mentoring history (showing at least five years of mentoring experience), and, if applicable, participation in professional development activities. The applicant may elect to include in their résumé:

* memberships or leadership roles in professional organizations
* memberships or leadership roles in STEM centers, groups, programs, and/or other similar efforts
* references to any articles they may have written for state and jurisdiction or national science/mathematics newsletters or journals
* grants that they may have received
* previous honorific awards received

Organizational applicants should include the résumé for the individual submitting the application on the organization’s behalf. They may also include up to two additional résumés for other representatives of the organization.

There are no specific formatting requirements for the résumé, but the document **must not exceed two pages and must have a legible font size.****Applications with** **a résumé longer than two pages are subject to disqualification.**

### NARRATIVE COMPONENT

The Narrative Component consists of the Written Response that addresses the *Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring*, Supplemental Materials, References Cited, and Publications. The Dimensions are provided under the Review Criteria section and in more detail following the Application Components section.

**Written Response**

The Written Response must include the Application Abstract along with the applicant’s responses to each of the *Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring*.

*Application Abstract*

For both Individual and Organizational applicants, the Application Abstract must include a brief description of the mentor’s current employment and a brief overview of mentoring activity. Organizational applicants should briefly describe the organization. The Abstract must not exceed 3,000 characters, including spaces.

*Response to the Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring*

Individual and Organizational applicants must answer all four dimension prompts by addressing the sub-prompts within each dimension. The Response to the *Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring* is limited to 22,000 characters in total, including spaces. The character count per dimension is broken down as follows:

* Dimension 1 - 7,500 characters
* Dimension 2 - 5,500 characters
* Dimension 3 - 4,500 characters
* Dimension 4 - 4,500 characters

*Technical Specifications for the Written Response*

There are no formatting requirements for the Written Response. It is recommended that applicants save responses outside of the portal to ensure work is not lost. Use of the *Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring* Template, which can be found in the applicant portal, is helpful to capture Dimension responses.

*Recommended Strategy for Completing the Written Response*

Although responses can be entered directly in the portal, it is recommended that applicants save responses outside of the portal to ensure that work is not lost. Responses can then be copied and pasted into the provided text boxes within the portal. Once the Written Response has been entered into the text boxes, the system will automatically create a single document. The finished product will be automatically double-spaced, in the correct font size, and with the correct margins. It will also include the applicant’s Mentor ID number and name in the footer of each page. **Any special characters or formatting such as bolding, formulas, underlining, and indenting will disappear when responses are pasted into the text boxes within the portal**. It is required that, if needed, special characters, formulas, diagrams, or charts be included in the Supplemental Materials section and referenced in your written response.

**Supplemental Materials**

The application may include a supplemental information document, **not exceeding five pages**, that provides supporting evidence for the Written Response. Supplemental Materials may include mentoring assessment items, evaluation studies or reports, mentoring-related publication excerpts, images, screenshots from websites, news articles, evidence of awards and accolades, etc. **Applications with** **supplemental materials longer than five pages are subject to disqualification.**

#### *Technical Specifications for Supplemental Materials*

Supplemental Materials:

* must be submitted as one single file that does not exceed five 8.5 x 11 inch pages
* must not be a continuation of the administrative or written response component. For example, it may not include additional letters of recommendations or additional text responding to the dimensions of mentoring
* should be labeled with applicant name, Mentor ID, and page number on every page
* should be referenced within the written response (such as SM1, SM2, etc.)
* may be submitted to the PAESMEM portal in any of the following formats: Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), or Rich Text Files (.rtf).

**References Cited**

Cited sources within the written responses should be captured in a document **not exceeding one page.** References may include books, articles, and/or multimedia that were used to support the applicant’s narrative. **Applications with** **a cited reference section longer than one page are subject to disqualification.**

While there is no specific format required for the References Cited section, applicants should follow accepted scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials. In general, each reference should include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.

If a website address is readily available, that information should be included in the citation. The references cited should not be used to list out the applicant’s publications unless they relate to mentoring. Publications may be included in the next section.

*Technical Specifications for References Cited*

References:

* must be submitted as one single file not exceeding one page
* must include references or citations to attribute work to the correct sources
* should be labeled with applicant name and Mentor ID
* may be submitted in any common citation style (i.e. APA, MLA, etc.)
* must be submitted in one of the following formats: Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), or Rich Text Files (.rtf)
* may not be a list of works that you have published unless they relate to mentoring
* may not be a list of additional references to contact

**Publications**

The application may include an optional publications document, **not exceeding one page**, that provides publications authored or coauthored by the applicant. The publications provided should be those that are most relevant and supportive of the application. **Applications with** **a publication section longer than one page are subject to disqualification.**

*Technical Specifications for Publications*

Publications:

* must be submitted as one single file not exceeding one page;
* may be submitted in any common citation style (i.e. APA, MLA, etc.) must be submitted in one of the following formats: Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), or Rich Text Files (.rtf)
* may not be a list of additional references to contact

#### Program Officer: Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

Robert Mayes, telephone: (703) 292-7267, email: [rmayes@nsf.gov](mailto:rmayes@nsf.gov)

**The Four Dimensions of Outstanding Mentoring**

**Dimension 1:** **Mentoring Philosophy and Strategies**

1a. Provide the mentoring philosophy used and its impact on mentors and mentees.

1b. Describe the targeted mentee population and the methods by which a supportive community is created to prepare them for future success.

1c. Describe mentoring strategies and activities used to support underrepresented groups in STEM.

**Dimension 2: Assessment and Outcomes**

2a. Provide the mentoring characteristics that are outcomes of the mentoring activity.

2b. Describe methods used to measure mentoring success.

2c. Discuss means of advocating for mentees.

**Dimension 3:** **Reflective Practice**

3a. Discuss the more successful and less successful aspects of the mentoring activity.

3b. Discuss how reflective practice has impacted culture-based dynamics in the mentoring activity.

3c. Describe how reflective practice has improved mentoring and enhanced mentees’ experience.

**Dimension 4: Leadership and Sustainability**

4a. Describe mentoring leadership within the mentoring activity or within the institution/organization where the activity is located.

4b. Describe mentoring leadership beyond the mentoring activity, institution or organization.

4c. Discuss sustainability of the mentoring activity.

**Dimension Clarifications**

Possible issues to consider when responding to the four dimensions are provided below. The clarifications may not all relate to your mentoring activity but may provoke thought about how to respond to the dimensions.

**Dimension 1:** **Mentoring Philosophy and Strategies**

**1a.** Discuss any literature, and models that are evidence-based and have been key in the evolution of your mentoring viewpoints, strategies, and tactics.:

* Explain how the philosophy used impacts mentors and mentees alike. What are the elements of integrated training that create a mutually beneficial mentor relationship and stoke a sense of purpose in the mentee for a STEM career?
* What are your expectations for mentees based on the mentoring philosophy? Do mentees avail themselves of the evidence-based tools and strategies introduced?

**1b**. Do your methods synthesize school or workplace norms and behaviors in culturally responsive and empowering ways, and address stereotypes, implicit bias, microaggressions, and intersectionality? Explain your reasoning for a chosen population to mentor? For example:

* What persons from groups historically underrepresented in STEM does the mentoring serve?
* Does the mentoring target undergraduate or graduate students, teachers, early career scientists, mathematicians, engineers, and/or other STEM or STEM-related professionals?

**1c**. Explain the specific STEM-related activities and soft skills mentees develop from the mentoring experience. For example:

* Do mentors share personal STEM experiences and advocate on behalf of their mentees to connect with their respective backgrounds? Do mentees develop a strong sense of self confidence and deeper sense of STEM identity?
* Include a brief description of qualifications as a mentor, including current employment and the number of years spent mentoring.

**Dimension 2: Assessment and Outcomes**

**2a.** Discuss the impact of mentoring with respect to the essential characteristics outlined in Dimension 1. What is being measured to determine mentees’ successful preparation and advancement in their education and/or early career pursuits? For example:

* What is the impact of mentoring on mentees’ STEM identity, self-confidence, sense of belonging, and preparation for potentially marginalizing experiences mentees may face in future careers and/or current environments?
* What measurements are made of STEM academic performance or commitment to STEM education and careers?

**2b.** Discuss systematic review of formal mentorship activities or programs to determine if the evolving needs of mentees are met as they move through an educational or early career context. For example:

* Identify stages of mentoring relationships and how the evolving needs of mentees are met in support of their work and professional development. Does mentoring activity provide a forum to showcase mentees’ work, make connections to STEM professionals, and involve different stakeholder groups?
* Include quantitative information on the number and general demographics of all mentees, including those personally mentored. Provide aggregate quantitative demographic information on mentees instead of actual names. Also provide summary information about mentee performance and outcomes, such as academic achievement, retention, degree attainment, research productivity, career placement, career satisfaction, promotion, attainment of leadership roles, etc.
* How well did the mentoring activity broaden the participation and retention of individuals who might not otherwise have considered or had access to opportunities in STEM?

**2c.** What connections are made with STEM stakeholders to advocate for mentees? For example:

* What metric would indicate success in sustaining mentoring relationships?
* Explain strategies for checking alignment with stated mentoring activity goals and missions, ensuring a culture of accountability.
* Discuss research conducted on mentoring activity that verifies impact of the mentoring.

**Dimension 3:** **Reflective Practice**

**3a.** Reflect on how biases may affect mentees and mentoring relationships, specifically for mentorship of mentees from groups historically underrepresented in STEM.

**3b.** What inclusive approaches have been incorporated to improve cultural responsiveness, moving beyond “colorblindness,” and addressing the imposter syndrome to avoid negatively influencing mentoring relationships?

**3c.** What changes have you made to improve the mentorship activity?

**Dimension 4: Leadership and Sustainability**

**4a.** Discuss influence of the mentoring activity on policies, procedures, and other infrastructure that support mentoring, and provide opportunities for others to engage in mentoring.

**4b.** Discuss supports for engagement in mentoring relationships outside of the mentoring activity or institution/organization. For example:

* Collaborating with professional societies, attending external conferences, and participating in learning communities or online networks.
* Improving outreach on mentoring through publications, presentations, social media, webinars, and/or research?
* Awards that are mentoring-specific?
* Describe any innovative or potentially transformative mentoring activities developed and implemented that could be adopted by others.

**4c.** Discuss any well-defined indicators of or commitments to sustainability. For example:

* Grants supporting the mentoring activity
* Structural changes supporting mentoring at the institution where the mentoring activity is located
* Publications that promote the mentoring activity
* Development of collaborations with local/regional/national networks

**References**

Garringer, M., Kupersmidt, J., Rhodes, J., Stelter, R., & Tai, T. (2015). Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring [TM]: Research-Informed and Practitioner-Approved Best Practices for Creating and Sustaining Impactful Mentoring Relationships and Strong Program Services. *MENTOR: National Mentoring Partnership*.

Kupersmidt, J., Stelter, R., Garringer, M., & Bourgoin, J. (2018). STEM Mentoring. Supplement to the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring: Research-Informed Recommendations for Youth Mentoring Programs with a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics Focus. *MENTOR: National Mentoring Partnership*.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM.* Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25568>.

American Association for the Advancement of Science (2019). *STEM Mentoring: Emerging Strategies for Inclusion.*  AAAS: Washington, D.C. [www.aaas.org/stemmentoring](http://www.aaas.org/stemmentoring)

#### Frequently Asked Questions

1. I mentor individuals who belong to a group historically underrepresented in STEM, that was not listed in the eligibility section, am I eligible for the PAESMEM award?

**A:** Historically underrepresented groups can include but are not limited to racial and ethnic minorities (African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders), all genders, persons with disabilities, veterans, mentors serving persons residing in disadvantaged socioeconomic regions, institutions, and persons who may reside in any geographic region that is underrepresented in STEM disciplines. If you mentor a group that is not listed or you have any questions, please email [info@paesmem.net](mailto:info@paesmem.net).

1. Do you offer informational webinars during the application process?

**A:** Yes. Please check the PAESMEM website at [www.paesmem.net/webinar](http://www.paesmem.net/webinar) for a schedule of webinars offered throughout the year. Once scheduled, invitations to attend are also emailed to nominees and applicants. **Webinars are not recorded**; however, the webinar slides may be found under the *Tools and Resources* tab within the application portal.

1. When are applications due?

**A:** The application deadline is **midnight Eastern Time on February 1st, 2022.**

1. I have elected not to provide my information on the Demographic Information Form. What do I do to make sure that section of the application is labeled as complete in the application portal?

**A:** If you do not wish to provide this information, you may click the checkbox that is labeled “Check here if you do not wish to provide the below information” and then click on **Save.** This section will now be marked as complete.

1. How do you recommend that I condense my 6-page resume down to 2 pages?

**A:** Your resume should highlight your education, employment history, mentoring history and professional development that supports your overall application and demonstrates your experiences within STEM mentoring. The resumes are reviewed to ensure that you have at least 5 years of mentoring to ensure that you are eligible.

1. My Letters of Recommendation are listed as “pending” on the PAESMEM portal, but my writers told me they were uploaded. Are my letters complete?

**A:** If your letters are shown as pending, they are not complete. “Pending” means that your letter writers have not yet successfully completed their letters via the PAESMEM portal. They may have forgotten to sign the letter and/or press the *Submit* button. Recommenders must click on the original link they received to complete the recommendation. If a letter of recommendation request was resent, the recommender must use the most recent link they received.

1. I noticed an issue with the submitted letter of recommendation. How can I fix it?

**A:** Your letter writers can click the same link that they used to complete the letter of recommendation to access a button to un-submit their letters and make updates to them. If you have changed your mind and no longer want that letter writer to submit a letter on your behalf, you are able to remove it and enter new information for a different letter writer.

1. I am having trouble uploading my file to my online application. What should I do?

**A:** Be sure that your file is in one of the following formats: Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Rich Text Files (.rtf), or Image Files (.gif, .jpeg, .jpg, .png). If you are still unable to upload your files, please contact our technical support staff at [info@paesmem.net](mailto:info@paesmem.net).

1. I do not plan to submit Supplemental Materials, but my *Supplemental Materials* section still says, "not started". How do I indicate that this section is complete?

**A:** Click on the *Supplemental Materials* section. Mark the checkbox at the bottom that says, "I do not intend to include any Supplemental Materials” and then click on *Save.*This section should now be marked as complete.

1. Can I upload five *files* or five *pages* of supplemental materials?

**A: S**upplemental materials must be uploaded as one single file and may not exceed five total pages.

1. Can I include links within my *Supplemental Materials* section?

**A:** Hyperlinks are not to be included in the application and reviewers will be instructed to not click on any hyperlinks.

1. My *References Cited* section still says, "not started". How do I indicate that this section is complete?

**A:** Click on the *References Cited* section. Mark the checkbox at the bottom that says, "I do not intend to include any Reference Page” and then click on *Save.*This section should now be marked as complete.

1. What is the difference between the *References Cited* section and the *Publications* section of the application?

**A:** The References Cited component of the application refers to works and publications that an applicant uses to complete the narrative component of the application. All outside work that is used within your application must be cited. The Publications component of the application refers to works or publications that the applicant has either authored or coauthored that more broadly support their mentoring claims within the application.

1. When will Presidential Awardees be honored in Washington, D.C.? Will there be a virtual award announcement event?

**A:** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy is responsible for setting the dates for recognition activities, which depend on administrative scheduling. Awardees will be notified at the earliest possible date. If COVID-19 is a safety concern, then there may be a virtual awards announcement to announce the newest group of awardees.

1. If my application is not selected for a PAESMEM award, how long do I have to wait before reapplying?

**A:** Application materials can be used to apply the next year but must be updated to address any changes in the Application Packet.

1. I need technical help, whom can I contact?

**A:** Technical assistance is available between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.

* 1. [Email:](mailto:application@paemst.org) [info@paesmem.net](mailto:info@paesmem.net)
  2. Telephone: (855) 723-6780

### About the National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation (NSF or the Foundation) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K–12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations, and other research organizations throughout the U.S. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 55,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives thousands of applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. NSF operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels, and Arctic and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, U.S. participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

## Privacy Act and Public Burden Statements

The information requested on the application materials is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. It will be used in connection with the selection of qualified applicants and may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the review process; to the institution the nominee, applicant or fellow is attending or is planning to attend or is employed by for the purpose of facilitating review or award decisions, or administering fellowships or awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing data regarding applicants or nominees as part of the proposal review process, or in order to coordinate programs; to congressional officials for the purpose of congratulating awardees; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information from this system may be merged with other computer files to carry out statistical studies the results of which do not identify individuals. Notice of the agency's decision may be given to nominators, and disclosure may be made of awardees' names, home institutions, and fields of study for public information purposes. For fellows or awardees receiving stipends directly from the government, information is transmitted to the Department of the Treasury to make payments. See System of Records, NSF-12, "Fellowships and Other Awards," 79 Federal Register 245 (December 22, 2014). Submission of the information is voluntary; however, failure to provide full and complete information may reduce the possibility of your receiving an award.

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