

March 9, 2010

TO: John Berry
Director, Office of Personnel Management
Co-Chair of the National Council on Labor-Management Relations

Jeffrey D. Zients
Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget
Co-Chair of the National Council on Labor-Management Relations

FROM: Arden L. Bement
Director, National Science Foundation

SUBJECT: National Science Foundation Plan to Implement Executive Order
(Order) 13522, "Creating Labor-Management Forums to Improve
Delivery of Government Services"

In accordance with Section 3(b) of the Order, the National Science Foundation submits this written implementation plan to the Council. This plan was developed and prepared in collaboration with Local 3403 of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), which represents the unified bargaining unit at NSF.

1. Describe how the Agency will conduct a baseline assessment of the current state of labor relations within the Agency.

Our baseline assessment seeks to determine NSF's readiness to integrate a new collaborative and pre-decisional labor relations model into ongoing agency operations and service to the public.

Our newly formed Forum will conduct focus groups and surveys to determine the current state of knowledge of labor relations of both our managers and supervisors and our bargaining-unit employees.

We will review our current training courses, policy manuals, internal guidance, and external websites for content relating to labor relations. Following the review, an action plan will be developed that outlines and captures the new labor-management working model in practice and in these materials.

2. Report the extent to which the Agency has established labor-management forums, as set forth in section 3(a)(i) of the Order, or may participate in the pilot projects described in section 4 of the Order.

NSF and Local 3403 have had initial discussions and agreement has been reached on having a single forum of 3 members each. This was the successful model used under our previous Labor Management Partnership whose accomplishments are still important to the functioning of NSF. The management members will be selected to represent the line managers and supervisors of the agency. The Union has been asked to provide a list of managers to be considered for appointment. The Forum will meet as soon as possible and will determine how it will operate. The following suggestions will be made with the final decisions made by consensus:

- Management and labor may each select a co-chair. The Forum will meet on at least a monthly basis to discuss and reach consensus on topics of mutual interest. (The Forum may meet more often upon mutual agreement.) Each co-chair may designate an alternate from among the members who will serve in the absence of the respective co-chair.
- The NSF Labor Management Forum will be established not later than March 31, 2010.
- The NSF Labor Management Forum will develop and adopt a charter that outlines the scope and objectives of the Forum.
- Topics of discussion for the Forum will be introduced and agreed upon by consensus. Recommendations from the Forum will be developed and put forth to top Agency leadership.
- The Forum will also identify obstacles to providing excellent service to the public and to fulfilling the mission of NSF and provide NSF with advice and recommendations.

The Labor Management Forum will augment the monthly meetings that currently take place between the Agency Head and the Local 3403 AFGE President. The purpose of these meetings has been to cultivate stronger working relationships between top Agency leadership and the Union, as well as, identify issues and opportunities and work collaboratively to develop solutions.

It should also be noted that there are already a number of existing forums through which management and labor collaborate on issues of importance to all Agency staff. Some examples include the Hiring Reform SWAT Team, the Employee Health & Wellness SWAT Team, the Human Resource Policy Group, and the H1N1 Communications Team.

3. How will the Agency work with the exclusive representatives of its employees through its labor-management forums to develop agency-specific metrics to monitor improvements in areas such as labor-management satisfaction, productivity gains, cost savings, and other areas as identified by the labor-management forum's participants?

NSF will share with the Forum the data routinely collected to gauge agency effectiveness and adherence to government-wide mandates. The Forum will first determine if these data are sufficient to serve as metrics or if additional ones need to be developed. The plan will include suggested metrics; suggested areas to study improvement; and an action plan for collecting and analyzing data.

4. Explain the Agency's plan for devoting sufficient resources to the implementation of the plan.

The Agency will:

- Provide for official time for labor members of the Forum and the councils in connection with preparation and/or participation in council or Forum meetings;
- Provide labor members of Forum and councils with access to Government computers, copiers, internet, and other resources as appropriate;
- Dedicate staff resources to provide administrative support to the Forum for such matters as: scheduling and announcing meetings of the Forum; maintaining the minutes of the Forum meetings; maintaining a web page on the Agency's web site to include, but not be limited to, agendas and minutes related to Forum meetings

Please contact Anthony Arnolie, on 703-292-8100, or via email at aarnolie@nsf.gov if you have any questions concerning this matter.

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CC: Dr. Cora Marrett, Acting Deputy Director
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