Adapting the Workforce and the Work

Bold Step 3

Remote Work Tiger Team Report

July 2021

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Introduction

As NSF adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic and learned new ways to deliver its mission, work arrangement flexibilities that were considered as part of a potential long-term strategic initiative under Renewing NSF became more relevant. Building on what we have learned over the past year; we have a unique opportunity to accelerate the adoption of a hybrid workforce model. This model will blend different work arrangements which includes employees working onsite, teleworking, or working from a remote duty station. A hybrid workforce environment provides an opportunity to attract and retain a diverse, highly skilled workforce along with better serving NSF's community and enhancing its mission delivery. This report provides proposed policies and recommendations on how to implement a hybrid workforce model and manage the challenges that could emerge with this level of change.

Background

In response to OMB M-17-22, Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government, the National Science Foundation (NSF) created a "Renewing NSF" vision to implement the latest IT framework, streamline programs, expand and deepen public and private partnerships, and optimize the alignment and training of the workforce with future work requirements. In 2018, the "Renewing NSF – Workforce" goal team proposed a strategic vision to Adapt the Workforce and Work to NSF's Evolving Mission. Five bold steps were presented as the initial opportunities to achieve the strategic vision. Bold Step Three focused on **"*Assessing the workforce's desire for and overall feasibility of a geographically dispersed physical presence.*"** Bold Step Three was conceived originally as a stretch opportunity for NSF to increase the attractiveness of NSF as an employer and promote rotator opportunities by eliminating the need to relocate to the Washington, DC area.

In February 2020, the first impacts of what would become the COVID 19 pandemic were being felt stateside. By mid-March 2020, most of the NSF workforce stationed at the Alexandria headquarters facility was placed on maximum telework and access to the headquarters facility was strictly controlled. All onsite panels and other in-person meetings were canceled or transitioned to fully virtual using online collaboration and meeting tools. As the agency adapted operations to the remote work environment, the unique opportunity created by this experience helped accelerate focus on Bold Step Three.

The COVID-19 environment represented one end of the remote work spectrum, that of nearly universal telework. While the COVID-19 environment provides insight into the feasibility of a remote workforce, the analysis and recommendations coming from Bold Step Three are intended to inform agency leadership on potential workforce paths in a post-pandemic world. The data collected and lessons learned during the pandemic have strengthened the applicability of a hybrid workforce environment at NSF.

Findings from Initial Remote Work Assessment

From October 2020 through February 2021, an analysis of the feasibility of a geographically dispersed workforce was conducted to examine employee reactions, agency policy, and infrastructure. Results revealed strong support for implementing a hybrid workforce model, blending work performed both remotely and onsite. This assessment was based on extensive personal and focus group interviews, as well as an agency-wide Remote Work Survey conducted November 30 through December 4, 2020.

Four recommendations emerged from this assessment:

1. NSF should consider implementing a hybrid workforce model. There are significant benefits for recruiting and retaining top talent and improving the diversity of our candidate pool by offering flexible work arrangements. While NSF successfully executed its mission during the pandemic period, a post-pandemic hybrid workforce model presents unique challenges. The entire workforce being remote is simpler in some ways than 30% being remote. This implementation will require methodical planning and execution to ensure success.

2. The hybrid workforce model should include a coordinated effort to maintain the key aspects of the NSF culture that contribute to our success as an agency. An initial acclimation phase would help those new to the federal government and NSF to effectively understand NSF's business and culture. This acclimation phase would include all the mandatory training, job specific training, and in-person introductions with on-site coworkers, management, and staff.

3. For a hybrid workforce model to be successful, NSF will need to expand the availability of the current remote work and telework programs. The current restrictive and reward-based nature of telework is incongruous with a future hybrid workforce and needs to be revised.

4. NSF should implement a Tiger Team to inform the development of draft policies, criteria for how positions would be considered for work arrangement flexibilities, and implementation considerations associated with adopting a remote work policy.

Importantly, this analysis indicated there are no significant policy or infrastructure barriers to prevent NSF from implementing a hybrid workforce.

Remote Work Tiger Team

The NSF Executive Leadership Team considered the findings of the initial assessment of the feasibility of remote work and agreed to proceed with development of a remote work policy. They supported the establishment of a Tiger Team to inform the policy and implementation of remote work at NSF.

HRM coordinated the establishment of a Remote Work Tiger Team to advise on the:

- Development of draft policy proposals to support a hybrid workforce
- Establishment of criteria for assessing positions for eligibility for remote work or other flexibilities
- Recommendations for policy, guidance, logistics, and change management required to support implementing a hybrid workforce model

Members of the Tiger Team represented all levels of the organization from directorate and office management, division management, and employee perspective through the inclusion of the AFGE Local 3403 President. The Tiger Team met weekly from April through June to advise on the many facets of not only a future telework policy, but other policies required to support the future of work at NSF and change management considerations.

The Remote Work Tiger Team also sponsored stakeholder engagement activities to elicit perspectives from staff, management, and those who onboarded during NSF's maximum telework response to the pandemic. The findings of the stakeholders informed the Remote Work Tiger Team's consideration of

policy options. This report represents the collective Remote Work Tiger Team perspective reached through a deliberative process of consensus building.

Stakeholder Engagement

Three Stakeholder Engagement activities were completed from May through June 2021 to capture key input from various groups of NSF employees on the experience of remote work over the course of the last year and staff preference for different work arrangement flexibilities. The activities included an NSF-wide remote work survey, focus groups with employees who onboarded to NSF remotely on or after March 2020 along with employees who worked remotely prior to the pandemic, and directorate and office listening sessions. Major findings from these activities are outlined below.

Remote Work Survey

The first stakeholder engagement activity was an NSF-wide Remote Work Survey, which gathered 1105 responses (70% response rate) from NSF staff from May 17-24. The survey collected data on demographic information (job family, appointment type, directorate/office, division, grade level), number of days telework preferred based on notional policies that could influence a respondent's decision, quality of virtual interaction with supervisors, and how to make collaboration in a virtual environment successful at NSF. Rotators were asked about their intent to relocate to work at the NSF headquarters in Alexandria, VA. Supervisors were asked about the quality of their experience supervising in a virtual environment.

Overall, there was a wide range of telework preferences expressed by respondents. 59% of staff prefer to work at least one day a week onsite with 31% selecting 0-2 days a week of telework and 28% preferring 3-4 days a week of telework. Full-time telework (remote work) was preferred by 41% of respondents.

Supervisors also expressed a wide range of preferences with fewer preferring full-time telework (remote). Specifically, 76% of supervisors intend to work at least one day a week onsite with 43% selecting 0-2 days a week of telework and 26% selecting 3-4 days a week of telework. 24% indicated a preference for full-time telework (remote work).

There were differences in preference for full-time telework (remote work) between the job families. Administrative Professionals had the strongest desire to telework full-time (55%), followed by Business Operations (43%), then STEM (38%), and lastly, Managerial positions (24%). 55% of rotators would be interested in the option to not have to relocate to work in the NSF headquarters. Below is a table that breaks out job family preference for remote work by directorate and office.

Staff Preference for Full-Time Telework by Job Family											
Job Family	**BFA**	**BIO**	**CISE**	**EHR**	**ENG**	**GEO**	**IRM**	**MPS**	**NSB**	**OD**	**SBE**	**Other**
Admin Professional[1]	14%	48%	67%	64%	59%	60%	35%	35%	25%	56%	78%	0%
Business Operations[2]	50%	0%	25%	67%	40%	67%	41%	0%	0%	26%	50%	38%
Management[3]	22%	0%	25%	10%	20%	43%	17%	33%	0%	20%	33%	25%
STEM[4] (Career)	50%	21%	40%	45%	30%	44%	0%	25%	50%	21%	46%	0%
STEM (Rotator)	100%	25%	56%	55%	44%	63%	0%	23%	0%	100%	60%	0%

Note that the "Other" column in the table above includes responses that did not indicate what directorate or office they worked in.

Employees strongly agree that they have maintained a high quality of virtual interaction with their supervisors over the past 16 months.

- 81% of employees agree or strongly agree that they can connect with their supervisor as easily as if they were in the office together.

- 89% of employees agree or strongly agree that their supervisor is available when they need them.

- 88% of employees agree or strongly agree that the frequency of interaction with their supervisor is appropriate to meet their needs.

Supervisors agree that they have maintained a high quality of virtual interaction with their staff over the past 16 months.

- 66% of supervisors agree or strongly agree that they can connect with their staff as well as if they were in the office together.

- Supervisors stated the following support and resources would help them supervise a hybrid team: setting boundaries/expectations around availability, additional training on virtual performance management and technology, lunch and learn sessions or tips on various

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[1] Positions with the primary responsibility for the administrative support of the NSF core science, education, and engineering mission. This family consists of positions such as Administrative Managers, Operations Specialists, Program Assistants, Program Specialists, Science Assistants, Executive Assistants, and other similar positions.

[2] Positions with primary responsibility for providing technical and functional support to the persons who deliver the NSF core mission. This family consists of positions such as IT Specialists, Facilities Operations Specialists, Budget Analysts, HR Specialists, Auditors, Attorneys, Grants and Agreement Specialists, and similar positions.

[3] Positions with the primary responsibility for the management of the NSF workforce. This family consists of positions such as Assistant Directors, Deputy Assistant Directors, Division Directors, Deputy Division Directors, Office Heads, Executive Officers, Program Support Managers, Operations Managers, Branch Chiefs, Section Heads, and similar positions.

[4] Positions directly responsible for the delivery of the NSF core mission. This family consists of positions such as Program Directors, Assistant/Associate Program Directors, Senior Advisors, Engineers, Scientists, Educators, Mathematicians, Statisticians, and similar positions.

managerial topics, and establishing communication and connection norms (e.g., camera on for meetings).

The top five items survey respondents said they needed to work more effectively in a hybrid environment were: 1) tips to avoid Zoom fatigue; 2) software systems training for Zoom and Microsoft Teams; 3) tips on facilitating virtual meetings and virtual meeting etiquette; 4) tips on facilitating hybrid meetings; and 5) Strategies to promote a healthy work-life balance. Consistent with much of the literature, these items are related to the adaptation of how we work remotely to increase usage of asynchronous collaboration and reducing reliance on meetings.

Employees need the following technology and resources to stay connected in a hybrid environment: 1) workstation equipment (i.e., dual monitors, webcams, laptops, cellular devices, external audio equipment); 2) virtual communication software (i.e., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, email); and 3) technology and resources (i.e., high-speed internet connection, Virtual Private Network-VPN).

Remote Work Focus Groups

The second Stakeholder Engagement activity was a set of seven focus groups that provided qualitative data about the experience of employees who were hired and onboarded remotely (March 2020 or later) or were classified as "fully remote" prior to the COVID-19 pandemic ("pre-pandemic remote workers"). The focus group questions were separated into three categories: culture and experience, onboarding and role, and communication and connection. A slightly different set of questions were provided to pre-pandemic remote workers to better align with their experience as an NSF remote worker before and after remote work became a foundation-wide norm. The groups were divided as follows: two groups of IPAs, two groups of Supervisors, two groups from the general workforce, and one group of pre-pandemic remote workers (N=52).

The first major theme area was culture and experience. All groups of participants strongly agreed working from home during the pandemic was extremely successful. Some participants who were previously opposed to or uncertain about their attitude toward remote work found NSF effectively implemented remote work practices that should remain in place in the future. Participants from the focus groups also strongly believe that Supervisors/Managers should be eligible to work offsite. All groups suggested that not allowing this option to Supervisors/Managers would be detrimental to the organization and would significantly limit growth opportunities. Lastly, employees shared that NSF has a "people-focused" culture but noted certain aspects of the cultural practices and procedures can vary across directorates and offices. NSF was also described as supportive, diverse, trusting, and social.

The next major theme area was onboarding and role. In general, employees expressed mixed feelings about role clarity. For example, those who had prior NSF/Federal government experience felt they adjusted more quickly. Previous connections or relationships with NSF employees also helped them onboard effectively. Participants who onboarded remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic frequently stated, "I don't know what I don't know." That is, employees felt they may be missing some context to their roles because they onboarded remotely. Thus, there is unanimous desire for clearly documented role-specific standard operating procedures within and across directorates to fully understand the nature of their job. Finally, figuring out the communication and technology preferences of others can be burdensome on remote workers. Employees believe leveraging training and technology effectively will help decrease this burden through establishing norms.

The final theme was communication and connection. Meaningful connections are very important to employees across all groups. Employees find virtual connections are less casual than onsite interactions and require more clear, intentional, proactive communication and effort to build relationships. Virtual social meetings (e.g., "coffee breaks") are helpful to facilitate personal connections but can contribute to Zoom fatigue. Time zones are tricky to navigate. Pre-pandemic remote workers indicated they have had to adjust to an East Coast time zone, regardless of their location. This has created some additional challenges for connection and coordination.

It is also important to point out some additional themes specific to the discussion amongst pre-pandemic remote workers. They found the pandemic-driven shift to a mostly remote workforce "leveled the playing field" in terms of accommodating the needs of remote workers (e.g., normalizing video calls for meetings), resulting in a significant improvement in their experience. Prior to March 2020, technological constraints and different communication preferences created recurring challenges for virtual collaboration and connection. They also stated work-life balance can be difficult to maintain, as there was pressure to be "always on." Since many viewed remote work as a "special benefit" prior to the pandemic, pre-pandemic remote workers felt a need to work harder or "prove" themselves to justify having a remote work status. Finally, this group agreed their growth was inhibited, citing they were overlooked for promotion opportunities because of their offsite status.

Directorate Listening Sessions

The third Stakeholder Engagement activity was a set of Listening Sessions with each NSF directorate and office. These sessions included leaders from each directorate/office to discuss their organization's expectations and needs for any policy that is adopted and to discuss the criteria for assessing positions for remote eligibility. There were four overarching themes that emerged during the directorate listening sessions: hybrid collaboration and technology, hybrid supervision and employee fairness, increasing NSF diversity, and the future of panels.

The first theme that emerged was around hybrid collaboration and technology. Here, four needs were identified. The first was a "seamless" integration between onsite, teleworking, and remote workers. The second was that meeting rooms must be refitted with technology for equal participation. Third, fostering an "in-person" experience regardless of physical workplace will be critical to support hybrid efforts. Fourth, a hoteling policy should ensure coworkers within Directorates can work near one another.

Second, there was a theme around hybrid supervision and employee fairness. Regarding fairness, leaders want to eliminate any potential for disparate treatment between those who are onsite and offsite, avoiding the notion of "out of sight out of mind" for offsite workers. Participants predicted challenges in managing offsite workers and believe hybrid supervision requires increased intentionality, meetings, and check-ins.

Third, a consistent statement from directorate management was the increase in the diversity of rotators willing to consider working at NSF if they were able to work remotely. Managers consistently express this as one of the first questions that candidates for rotator positions ask. In discussions with the IPA Steering Committee, this was reinforced. The committee is working on an enterprise risk management mitigation plan for the IPA Mobility Program that includes increasing the diversity of NSF's IPA cadre. While the data on IPAs does not yet indicate a significant change in IPA demographics, this qualitative experience is promising.

Finally, there was a discussion about the future of panels. The discussion acknowledged that even though NSF has been very successful hosting virtual panels, there is still a desire for in-person networking and connection opportunities. The idea of hosting in person panels, but in other locations, (e.g., West Coast) was exciting to many as a way to increase recruitment of diverse and qualified panelists who may have previously not been able to travel to NSF. The participants also agreed that hybrid panels are a possible way to meet several expectations for the panelist experience.

Cross-Cutting Themes

There were five recurring themes across all segments of data collected on the perspectives of stakeholders:

- **Interaction and Connection** – Promoting NSF-wide connections, emphasizing intentional employee interactions, and facilitating communication in a geographically dispersed workforce to bolster role integration and foundation-wide connections.

- **Technology** – Improving the effectiveness of collaboration within and across directorates through training, skill development, and implementing a seamless integration of software across platforms.

- **Recruitment and Retention** – Expanding the diversity of talent in the workforce while fostering growth and development for all NSF employees to support the mission of the organization.

- **Culture** – Maintaining the "people-focused" culture of NSF by providing flexible working options that support a successful hybrid workforce with fairness and equity regardless of work location.

- **Innovation** – Focusing on the continuous improvement of the organization with a strategic human-centered approach, including the development of compatible physical and virtual environments that create a shared space for hybrid workers.

These themes will serve as a guide for the NSF-wide change management plan to ensure the organization has a clear plan to address these key elements of organizational functioning throughout the implementation process. In addition, these themes will aid in individual Directorate and Office planning, such that each Directorate/Office will be able to evaluate their staff needs and leverage attention to the area(s) they see most appropriate.

Proposed Telework Policy Overview

Guiding Principles

Consistent with OMB, OPM, and GSA M21-25, [Integrating Planning for A Safe Increased Return of Federal Employees and Contractors to Physical Workplaces with Post-Reentry Personnel Policies and Work Environment](), NSF will establish personnel policies that are equitable and grounded in values that empower, respect, and galvanize the Federal workforce, while reflecting and emphasizing trust and accountability for the American people they serve. The policy recommendations below are based on broader workforce and workplace trends and the need for the Federal Government to be competitive for top talent as employers in the broader labor market. NSF will leverage telework, remote work, and flexible work schedules as part of our broader strategies for talent recruitment and retention, and for advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the Federal workforce. These values-informed planning activities will help:

- Support NSF mission, business continuity, and operations resiliency.
- Boost NSF hiring competitiveness, enabling NSF to attract and retain highly skilled employees from a diverse talent pool.
- Build a collaborative and flexible workplace environment that embraces the well-being of its employees.
- Promote cost containment and funding stewardship.
- Preserve health and safety in the context of a pandemic and other emergency situations.
- Minimize impact on the environment and reduce carbon emissions.

Case For Policy Change

After considering the findings of the stakeholder reengagement, and discussing and debating many policy options, the Remote Work Tiger Team feels there is a case to change our current telework policy by expanding the work arrangement flexibilities NSF offers. The case for change stems from the following:

- The Administration seeks agencies to use post-pandemic personnel policies to establish the Federal government as a leader in talent strategy.

- Adopting remote work was on NSF's change agenda for "Adapting the Workforce and the Work" since 2018. While other actions may have taken precedence, NSF now has a unique opportunity to implement a key element of its long-term workforce vision.

- NSF has demonstrated the ability to change how it works. When transitioning to an all-virtual work posture, NSF had to undertake significant change in how people collaborate, perform, and manage. We were successful and kept the mission on track. This learning opportunity will serve us well as we consider adopting policies that provide a wider range of work arrangements. We also have some indication of the areas of focus required to adopt the new proposed policies; specifically, attending to maintaining a culture that promotes innovation and collaboration. This point is central to the change plan described later in this document.

- Delinking the NSF mission from the NSF headquarters building offers a more expansive set of opportunities to broaden engagement with the science community. Given partnerships as a core element of the NSF vision, STEM positions distributed geographically around the U.S. could bring more engagement where scientists work and are less reliant on bringing them to NSF. Additionally, there opportunities to reconsider where and how panels are facilitated and managed.

- Our ability to compete for talent would be significantly enhanced. NSF is recognized as a "Best Place to Work" within the Federal government and a leader in the science community. A major factor in our ability to compete is our mission, but alongside that is NSF's reputation for valuing its people. We know that other Federal employers are beginning to expand the range of telework options they are offering, including remote work. Many of our positions, critical to supporting the NSF mission (such as contracting, human resources, information technology, and data science), are mobile within the Federal talent domain. We also are hearing from candidates from the science community that remote work is increasingly important to them.

- Related to our ability to compete for talent is the opportunity to increase the diversity of our workforce through offering a wider range of work arrangement options. Directorates and offices

describe more diverse candidate pools for rotator positions based on the potential for remote work. Having a wider range of work arrangements also offers employees more options to support their personal and family needs; increasing the diversity of life experiences that can elect NSF as an employer of choice.

High Level Description of Proposed Policy Changes

The proposed policy changes described below offer the following features:

- Offer remote work to a wider segment of the workforce. This would be based on introducing a position-based method for determining eligibility for full-time, remote telework to replace the current policy based on individual circumstances. Details on how eligibility would be determined is described in the next section of this report.

- Establish core hours to align business hours for employees distributed across multiple time zones. Core hours will not be extensive but will offer common hours in the workday during which each staff member would be expected to be working or in a leave status.

- Maxi-flex would be available to all employees. We have been in a pseudo-Maxi-flex arrangement since the beginning of the pandemic. Employees and supervisors have effectively managed hours of work with few issues. Maxi-flex enables employees to accommodate personal and family needs while still staying engaged and contributing to the NSF mission.

Within the proposed policy, every position will be assessed for eligibility for each of three different work arrangement categories. The table below describes the three categories.

Position Category	Geographic Specific	Reporting Frequency	Telework Eligibility
Onsite Flexible Positions with job functions that must be executed at NSF HQ on a regular basis (at least 2x a pay period). Official duty station is Alexandria, VA.	Within the U.S.	Daily or at least 2x per pay period	• Situational Telework • Routine Telework
Onsite Intermittent Positions with job functions that must only be executed at NSF HQ on an ad hoc or infrequent basis. Official duty station is an appropriate alternate worksite, generally the employee's residence.	Must be located in the geographic locality area with the capability to report to NSF HQ within 2 hours.	Intermittent	• Routine Telework • Full-time Telework
Remote Positions with job functions that can be executed without reporting to NSF HQ on a regular basis or on short notice. Official duty station is an appropriate alternate worksite, generally the employee's residence.	Within the U.S.	Occasionally (as needed)	• Full-time Telework

Summary of Proposed Policy Changes

Below is a high-level chart of the proposed policy changes. See Appendix A for the complete draft policy.

Topic	Old Policy Guidance	New Policy Guidance
Position Categorization	N/A	Onsite Flexible; Onsite Intermittent; Remote The immediate supervisor must categorize a position into one of the above three (3) position categories at the time the position description is classified. Supervisors may change the position category when a position description is re-classified or through attrition.
Permanent Ineligibility	An employee who has been disciplined for the following reasons may not telework in accordance with the Telework Enhancement Act: A. The employee has been officially disciplined for being absent without permission for more than five (5) days in any calendar year. B. The employee has been officially disciplined for viewing, downloading, or exchanging pornography, on a Federal Government computer, or while performing official Federal Government duties.	No changes (regulatory requirement).

Topic	Old Policy Guidance	New Policy Guidance
Situational Telework	There are many different scenarios in which an employee can request supervisory approval for situational telework. Examples include, but are not limited to: A. An employee has a short-term need for uninterrupted time to complete work on a complex project or report. B. An employee is recovering from an illness or injury and is temporarily unable to report onsite to NSF HQ. C. An employee notifies her/his supervisor that s/he would like to use the option for unscheduled telework following an OPM announcement that the status of Federal Government operations in the Washington, D.C. area is "Open with Option for Unscheduled Leave or Unscheduled Telework" due to inclement weather.	No changes.
Temporary 90-Day Full-Time Telework	The immediate supervisor may approve temporary requests for up to five days of situational telework per week, not to exceed 90 days.	No changes.
Core Telework Requests	• Immediate supervisor approves 1 – 2 days. • Second-level supervisor approves 3 days. • AD or OH approves 4 – 5 days.	• Immediate supervisor approves 1 – 7 days per pay period. • Second-level supervisor approves 8 – 10 days per pay period.
Office Space	N/A	• If an employee elects to telework 6 or more days per pay period, they will not be assigned permanent office space at NSF HQ. Assigned office space will be reassessed on an annual basis by the Division of Administrative Services. A result of the assessment may result in a higher threshold for maintaining assigned office space.

Topic	Old Policy Guidance	New Policy Guidance
Requests for Remote Work	Employees who identify an inability to work onsite at NSF HQ due to family or other unanticipated circumstances may request supervisory approval for a remote work arrangement. Criteria for approving such requests are as follows: 1. The work can permanently be performed offsite without impact to customers and internal and external stakeholders. 2. The work requires possession of unique expertise or skills that are critical to organizational effectiveness of the business unit. 3. The employee has received a summary performance rating of "Very Good" or higher for the previous two (2) years. If the employee has not received two (2) ratings at NSF, the most recent rating may be used if it is comparable to a "Very Good."	Remove from new policy. The position will be assessed during the initial position categorization and there will no longer be a need to determine if the employee has portable work.
Waiting Period After Remote Work Approval	N/A	In the event a remote worker wishes to terminate an approved remote work arrangement, they will need to wait for a full 6-month period after initial approval before they are eligible to request to return as an onsite NSF HQ employee with a designated office or cubicle space. Accommodations can be made sooner if space is available.

Topic	Old Policy Guidance	New Policy Guidance
Call-Backs to the Office	A supervisor may call back an employee to the office for unexpected duties that cannot be accomplished while teleworking, such as training, meetings that uniquely require in-person attendance, panels, retreats, and other team building exercises. In such instances, supervisors should try to provide as much advanced notice as possible.	If an employee is Onsite Flexible, a supervisor may call back an employee to NSF HQ for duties that cannot be accomplished offsite, such as training, meetings that uniquely require in-person attendance, panels, retreats, and other team building exercises. In such instances, supervisors should provide as much advanced notice as possible, but no less than one (1) business day. If an employee is Remote, the supervisor must make every attempt to provide no less than a fourteen (14) day notice. This guidance does not pertain to requests for official travel for duties required of the position.
Collaboration Tools	Employees must use technology tools provided by NSF, as assigned by the supervisor, to make and receive phone calls and emails and to collaborate during the workday. Remote workers and teleworkers must be responsive, available, and accessible like employees who are working onsite in the NSF HQ Building. Supervisors must not use collaboration tools to track employee productivity and location.	No changes.
Use of Webcams During Meetings	N/A	Supervisors can require employees to use webcams during meetings to cultivate a meaningful employee-supervisor relationship and to build trust. Supervisors should be understanding that there will be circumstances where having webcams on are not conducive to a productive meeting (e.g., meetings where there are large groups or phone calls using a collaborative tool).
Core Hours	10:00 a.m. ET to 2:00 p.m. ET	11:00 a.m. ET to 1:00 p.m. ET
Work Schedules	• Gliding • 5-4/9 • 4/10 • Maxi-flex (SES only)	Maxi-flex for all employees.

Assessing Positions for Work Arrangement Eligibility

HRM will conduct an agency-wide position data call to assess position categories. During this procedure, supervisors will assess each individual position of their direct reports including vacant positions. Below are key considerations for the data call:

- Categorization decisions should be made consistently across all job series within a Directorate or Office. HRM will conduct and agency-wide review to ensure consistency.

- The categorization process is not intended to address each individual's circumstances around telework. Employee categories are intended to be based on position, not individual situations.

- Individuals telework and/or remote work eligibility will still be dependent upon a valid telework agreement established between the employee and the supervisor.

- Categorization decisions are not binding and will be continuously reevaluated to match agency needs and job series effectiveness.

The position categories will be documented on a master spreadsheet that will be maintained by HRM. During the data call, Prior to submitting their response to the data call, each directorate and office will conduct a review at the Front Office level to ensure consistency in applying the criteria for assessing positions. if an employee disagrees with the position categorization, they may request a second-level review by HRM. The HRM Division Director, in consultation with the directorate or office, will then make the final determination.

When the payroll system is updated with the three categories established, HRM will then update each employee with their assessed position category. This will enable NSF to report on the data in the future. Additionally, each new position description that is created will include a space for the supervisor responsible for the position to identify the position category upfront.

Criteria for Assessing Positions

The default categorization for all positions is remote until the position categorization process is completed by the supervisor. During the position categorization process, supervisors will be instructed to identify functions of the position that do not support the position being categorized as remote while also considering the frequency of those functions. We are taking this approach because a lot of the feedback received during the Directorate and Office Listening Sessions were that supervisors feel it is going to be difficult explaining to employees that they can no longer be remote since NSF has been successfully working remotely for the past 16 months.

It is important to distinguish the category of a position is independent from the telework status of an employee. Each employee must request and have a telework agreement approved consistent with the eligibility of their position for different work arrangements. Other factors must be taken into consideration before a telework agreement can be approved, such as cost analysis.

Criteria for assessing the positions include the following activities along with the frequency with which these activities are required:

- Participating in and supporting onsite panels.
- Performing classified duties.

- Managing onsite contractors.
- Managing physical property or infrastructure.
- Configuring workstations and space management.
- Supporting onsite meetings and/or events.
- Paper records management.
- Employee relations, wellness, or workplace safety.
- Meetings where in-person attendance is required.
- Meeting customer expectations.
- Retreats and collaboration.

Using these criteria, Tiger Team members considered several common positions across the agency for general categorization. Specific job duties or requirements will need to be considered for each position when the supervisor responds to the initial data call. The following positions were generally considered eligible for remote work: Program Director, Program Specialist, Program Manager, Operations Specialist, Program Assistant, Management Analyst, Program Analyst, and Science Assistant. Note, there are many other positions at NSF, but these represent some of the common positions that cross multiple Directorates/Offices.

The Tiger Team considered remote eligibility for supervisors and executives. There is general support from the Tiger Team for allowing supervisor and executive positions to be eligible for remote work. Some supervisor and executive positions may not support remote work, but those should be considered on a case-by-case basis given the requirements of the position. The following factors are important when considering this matter:

- Remote workers who are interested in management positions may not consider such a position if it is not eligible for remote work. The Tiger Team recognized that with negligible pay difference between positions such as Program Director and Deputy Division Director, this would present another disincentive to potential leaders limiting the pipeline of talent ready and willing to compete for leadership positions.

- We must be intentional around the unintentional signals that employees may receive if executives are not permitted to be fully remote.

- Allowing executives to be remote provides us the opportunity to signal to employees that we aim to give them flexibility and options.

- While many executive job duties may be possible to complete remotely, there are other job responsibilities and requirements (e.g., meetings with stakeholders) that may require them to be onsite on a periodic basis. It is expected that remote executives would travel with some frequency.

- There may be safety situations with staff that may require a supervisor to be onsite, but this could be rotated among managers to allow for maximum telework.

- The supervisor's role will change with these new policies. They will need to serve as advocates for both remote and onsite employees integrating and being inclusive as the team carries out their work.

There are concerns about a supervisor working remotely being able to successfully manage and meet the engagement, interaction, and accessibility expectations of onsite employees. This is unknown territory at NSF, so it will need to be monitored closely through our evaluation plan.

Roles and Responsibilities for Position Data Call

Supervisors	Assistant Director/Office Head	HRM
• Categorize each position into one of the three categories. • Provide business reason for requiring onsite presence. • Return completed spreadsheet to AD/OH for review and consolidation.	• Collect and organize responses from supervisors. • Review categorization decisions for consistency and resolve any discrepancies between categorization decisions. • Return completed spreadsheet to HRM. • Address any disputes that may arise between employees and their supervisors regarding position categorization.	• Review categorization decisions for agency-wide consistency and resolve any discrepancies between categorization decisions.

Implementation Considerations

In addition to the personnel policies and how they will be applied to positions to determine eligibility for work arrangement flexibilities, the Tiger Team also considered several policy and implementation elements critical to the successful adoption of the policies.

Transition to Post Re-Entry Personnel Policies

There are several considerations associated with establishing the timeline for implementing NSF's personnel policies supporting a hybrid workforce.

- There are many unknowns related to the pandemic, Federal policies, and hybrid employee experience.
- Employees still experience uncertainty around safety, managing dependent care, and returning to the office.
- Using a transition period provides a learning opportunity we can use to tune our final "normal" state.

The transition timeline described below provides incremental steps to move from our current posture to a set of policies that will define flexibilities and work conditions based on what we have learned through responding to the pandemic. While we have experienced the change from a work environment with significant use of telework arrangements by employees to an environment in which all staff are working remote, there will be new dynamics with blending employees working onsite, teleworking, or working remotely on any given day. The transition timeline below will:

- Include an evaluation process to ensure that NSF is performing as an organization and provide the opportunity to adjust our policies based on what we learn through the transition timeline. This will mitigate much of the uncertainty while remaining on course for our strategic vision for the future of work at NSF.

- Account for many different employee situations. Employees who want to start working onsite more often will have that opportunity, while others who want to try remote work can request that arrangement. Right now, any expression of employee preference is notional as the future hybrid work environment has not been experienced by employees in a way that requires the blending of multiple work arrangements. As employees move through the transition timeline, they can assess their preference and adjust in coordination with their supervisor.

- Incorporate change management across the full transition timeline to support the organization adopting new ways of working, using the voice of staff to inform the process, and ensure transparency and consistency throughout the organization.

Below is a graphic providing a summary of the transition timeline followed by a detailed description of each step in the timeline.
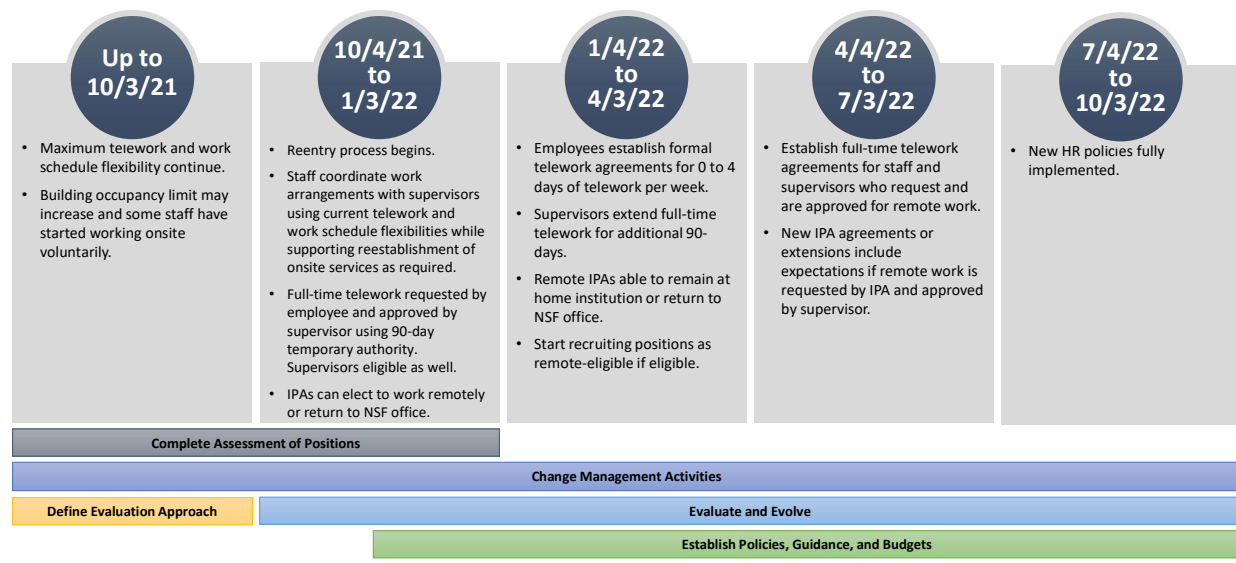

Figure 1: Summary of transition timeline from current state to full implementation of post re-entry personnel policies supporting flexible work arrangements.

Now: Current State to 3 October 2021

- In response to COVID-19, NSF moved to a maximum telework posture, limited building occupancy, and reduced walk-up services provided at the NSF headquarters building.
- A small number of employees are coming to work onsite voluntarily.
- Employees can coordinate with their supervisors to work flexible hours seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- Employees can use weather/safety leave up to 20 hours a pay period to support dependent care needs if their care providers or schools are closed.
- IPA agreements are established assuming remote work with the option of coming onsite when NSF begins the re-entry process.

- HRM will facilitate NSF supervisors conducting an assessment of all positions for remote work eligibility.
- HRM will facilitate a workgroup to develop an evaluation approach to assess and adapt the implementation of new policies.
- HRM will begin a change management process to build a change agent network, communicate with staff, and provide learning opportunities for staff and supervisors.

Step 1: 4 October 2021 to 3 January 2022

- This step begins on the date indicated on notification to employees of the beginning of the re-entry process.
- Building occupancy limits are lifted and some walk-up onsite services are available.
- Employees come to work onsite at will.
- Employees desiring to work remotely during this step, can do so in coordination with their supervisor using the existing 90-day authority for full-time telework.
- Employees can coordinate with their supervisors to work flexible hours seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- IPA agreements are established assuming remote work with the option of coming onsite when NSF begins the re-entry process.
- Early in this step, an assessment of all NSF positions is completed, and results are communicated to employee by supervisor.
- Evaluation process begins and continues through the end of the transition timeline.
- Change management continues with adaptation based on evaluation process results.
- Begin development of additional policies to support the hybrid work environment and guidance.
- Begin assessment of budget needed to support hybrid work environment.

Step 2: 4 January 2022 to 3 April 2022

- No building occupancy limits, and expansion of additional walk-up on-site services made available.
- By the end of this step, all employees interested in a telework agreement that is not full-time will request and establish formal agreements under the new telework policy.
- If an employee wants to work remotely, the request can be approved by their supervisor through the existing 90-day authority to grant temporary full-time telework. Supervisors will be encouraged to remain flexible.
- Maxi-flex work schedule offered to all employees under the revised work schedule policy.
- IPA agreements are established with the option of coming onsite or working remotely under 90-day authority for supervisors to grant approval for temporary full-time telework until formal remote work policy is implemented.
- Evaluation process continues through the end of the transition timeline.
- Change management continues with adaptation based on evaluation process results.
- Continue development of additional policies to support the hybrid work environment and guidance.
- Continue assessment of budget needed to support hybrid work environment.

Step 3: 4 April 2022 to 3 July 2022

- No building occupancy limits, and expansion of additional walk-up onsite services made available.
- By the end of this period, all employees will have a telework or remote work agreement established if they desire one.
- IPA agreements are established with the option of coming onsite or working remotely with formal agreements in place for telework or remote work.
- Evaluation process continues through the end of the transition timeline.
- Change management continues with adaptation based on evaluation process results.
- Continue development of additional policies to support the hybrid work environment and guidance.
- Continue assessment of budget needed to support hybrid work environment.

Step 4: 4 July 2022 to 3 October 2022

- Implement policy changes.
- All employees required to establish formal telework/remote work agreements.

Budget Considerations

The NSF Budget Division identified the need to incorporate planning for a potential hybrid workforce in Fiscal Year 2022. While many of the specifics are uncertain, basic assumptions around increased travel expenses for remote workers to travel back to the NSF headquarters and computer equipment were included for the upcoming fiscal year.

When an employee requests a remote work arrangement, a cost analysis will be required that specifies the change in locality pay, estimates for costs and frequency of travel back to the NSF headquarters, and equipment costs to support work from an approved remote location. The process for approving a remote work agreement will include confirming budget is available to support the request and that these costs are accounted for in the directorates overall budget plan. The Budget Division will also need to be made aware of changes in personnel costs associated with locality pay.

The specific process, roles, and responsibilities will be defined prior to the point in the transition timeline at which employees are able to request remote wok agreements beyond the 90-day temporary authorization by their supervisor.

IPA Mobility Program

When considering remote work for IPAs, the separation of NSF business from the work of their home institution came up as needing to be addressed. The IPA Steering Committee was consulted and agreed that clear delineation of where work is performed and how NSF processes are firewalled needs to be addressed. It was proposed that IPAs should not be allowed to work from their faculty offices due to the risk of incidental exposure of NSF data and processes. It is also recommended that we require IPAs to perform NSF business outside of their faculty office and home institution campus to avoid overhead charges that the home institution may expect to be paid.

Change Management

For many established organizations, change can be difficult as the organization must navigate through how this impacts their people, culture, performance, and mission, and address common barriers including unskilled leaders, lack of clear vision, inadequate communication, lack of alignment, and low engagement (research notes these are the five reasons why change fails). Thus, it is essential to develop a thorough change management and implementation plan to address these challenges upfront, as well as identify communication and resource needs at a high level.

NSF's Change Management Plan follows a human-centered design approach (Figure 2). The following sections cover where we have been ("Inspire"), where we are ("Ideate"), and where we are going ("Implement"). While keeping the employee experience at the center, this plan will require multiple levels of planning and involvement to address the change effectively.

- **Inspire –** Leaders at NSF have engaged staff through different mediums (surveys, focus groups, etc.) about the desire to move to a hybrid workforce and explored implications that come with the transition. By understanding staff needs across all levels and job families, NSF has developed a human-centered vision for an agency-wide change management plan that recognizes the differing needs of Directorates and individuals and empowers them.

- **Ideate** - Leaders are currently collaborating and researching how the change will take place at NSF, when communication will be disseminated, and who the critical stakeholders are during the transition. Directorates will also collaborate using resources from the Academy to create Directorate-level change management plans that will work best for their employees. Each will appoint a Change Management Champion to liaise with the Academy and Employee Engagement teams.

- **Implement** - For the final step in the approach, employees will begin operating under the new hybrid work environment and leaders will evaluate to inform future operations. This step allows NSF to examine the feedback from employees and measure the success of the change while highlighting the potential areas for improvement.
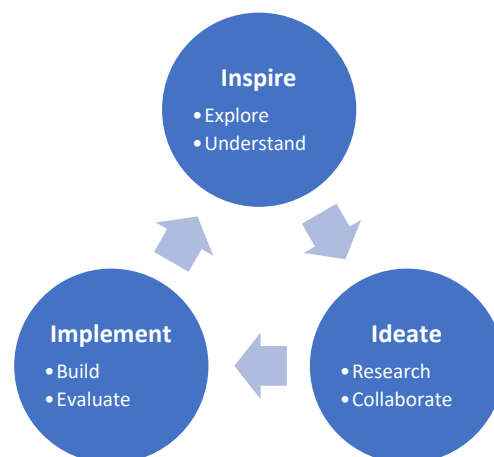

Figure 2: Human-center design approach.

Strong communication is one of the core principles of human-centered design that will support the organization throughout each phase of the change process. In alignment with decisions/milestones, NSF will establish routine communication channels and regular consultations (with feedback loops) to get buy-in, establish a shared vision/understanding/definition of hybrid work, understand and address resistance, find co-creators, show progress, and inform training, policy, and implementation.

In the future, while still maintaining a physical headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, NSF's presence will expand further beyond. The vision is a highly engaged, highly inclusive hybrid workforce that successfully collaborates to move the agency's mission and priorities forward. This presents a need for a values-informed approach to planning the hybrid workforce strategy.

Examples of a thriving hybrid workforce include:

- NSF employees are empowered to contribute to the mission of NSF, regardless of duty station.
- Supervisors and employees effectively utilize technology on their teams for seamless collaboration, regardless of location; and
- Supervisors and employees are intentional about collaborating and connecting with each other as evident in how they leverage technology and office workspace.

Managing Transitions

At the intersection of human-centered design and change management is the opportunity for the organization to practice empathy with its employees. NSF has taken measures to explore and understand the needs of its employees to learn more about how the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent hybrid work policy impacts the workforce. While keeping these considerations in mind, NSF can plan and introduce change that satisfies employee expectations with the necessary flexibility for continuous improvement throughout the process.
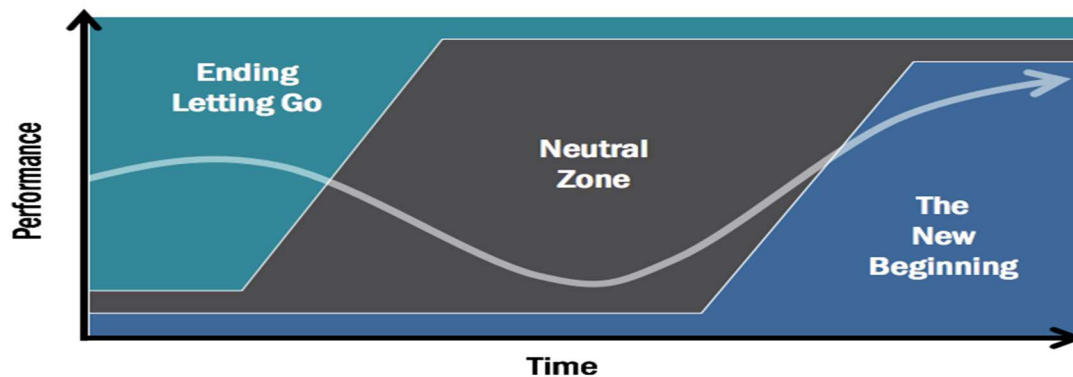
The Bridges Transition Model was created by William Bridges and published in his book, "Managing Transitions" (1991). The model focuses on transitions rather than changes. Change happens to individuals even if they do not agree with the change. Transitions are internal in an individual's mind and happen as they go through a change. The three stages of transition that people go through during a change are: Ending, Letting Go; the Neutral Zone; and The New Beginning. NSF can use this model to manage the transition to the hybrid work environment to better predict employee adaptation over time.

According to the model:

- People enter the initial stage of transition when first presented with change. This stage is often marked with shock and emotional turmoil because individuals are forced to leave something that they are comfortable with. NSF employees and supervisors may express shock and anxiety with the initial execution of the new hybrid work environment. Performance level begins to drop as this stage comes to an end and employees move to the second stage of the model.

- In the second stage of the model, individuals affected by the change might feel confused or frustrated. NSF employees may also experience a higher workload as they adapt to the new way of working. Some employees may still be attached to the old ways of working and some might be confused about the new work environment leading to a drop in performance.

- In the last transition stage of the model, individuals have more energy and increased levels of engagement. This is when NSF employees will begin to embrace the change initiative and focus on building the skills, they need to be successful in the new work environment. In this stage, NSF can expect to see early wins from their efforts leading to an increase in performance.

The following figure displays how performance changes over time with the three stages in mind. The table provides tips for employees on how to handle transitions in relation to the stages of the model.

William Bridges Three-Phase Transition Model™ (Source: Managing Transitions)

Endings	Neutral Zone	Beginnings
• Accept the reality and importance of the loss. • Acknowledge the loss openly. • Expect and accept different reactions. • Seek information. • Define what is over and what is not. • Mark the ending. • Treat the past with respect.	• Step back and take stock. • Look for opportunities to brainstorm new answers to old problems. • Capitalize on the break in normal routines to do things differently. • Seek opportunities to learn and apply new skills. • Create temporary processes and systems. • Set short-range goals to measure progress. • Strengthen intragroup connections.	• Opportunity to leave the chaos of the Neutral Zone and focus energy in a new direction. • Beginnings can reactivate some of the old anxieties that were originally triggered by the ending. • The new way of doing things represents a gamble. • The prospect of a risky new beginning resonates with the past. • Expect ambivalence. • Focus on not only the desired outcome but your role in the process of achieving that outcome.

Navigating Outcomes

Different divisions and directorates will go through these stages at different paces. They may also notice some ups and downs in performance as employees are adapting to changes in their environment and routines. This is an expected part of the change process that allows time for people to unlearn outdated

habits and replace them with new skills to perform successfully in the New Beginning. During each phase, leaders should look for opportunities to collect feedback from their teams, address their challenges, and support their progress. Part of human-centered design is the understanding that the human experience is different for everyone and may require each division and directorate to tailor the change to where they are at.

Refer to the table below to identify the different zones, what leaders should do, and the expected outcomes as guidance for directorates managing the change within their own units.

Zone	What is Happening:	NSF Leaders Need to:	Expected Outcomes
Ending Letting Go	Change is introduced. • The NSF policy on the hybrid work environment is released. • Communication and resources are dispersed to employees.	Highlight opportunities, identify benefits, communicate, and remain aware of employees' thoughts/feelings.	• Acceptance • Information gathering • Conversation and discussion
Neutral Zone	The point of decision is crossed when staff are aware of what is changing and why; know what it means for them personally; and have decided what they will do about it (as opposed to doing nothing). • The hybrid work environment has been launched at NSF and employees are in the early stages of the new work model.	Keep communicating what is changing and why, seek feedback on progress and challenges, stay the course when dealing with unexpected obstacles, support team members in processing and responding to the change, and give feedback to key stakeholders as needed.	• Solutions • Skill-building • Strengthening • Transition
Neutral Zone-Adoption	Change is happening with lots of ups and downs. • NSF continues to operate in the hybrid work environment and begins to solidify the new normal at the Agency.	Focus on what matters (and say no to the rest), communicate progress, celebrate early wins, learn from mistakes, and recommit to keep moving forward.	• Solidify processes and systems • Reimagine anything not working as optimally as it could

Zone	What is Happening:	NSF Leaders Need to:	Expected Outcomes
The New Beginning	Change has occurred and new normal has been established. The results you are getting are better than the results you before the change was introduced. • NSF employees are established in the new work environment, and they are beginning to increase their engagement within the transition.	Celebrate successes, envision performance, seek feedback, commit to what has changed, and build capabilities.	• New patterns • New expectations • Innovation

Roles and Communication for Managing Change

Successful change is driven by people and teams partnering together to achieve a shared vision. This requires organized effort from individuals assigned to key roles (described in the table below) to advance the progress of change. NSF will continue to gather input on what employees want to know and understand, how they would like to feel, and how they expect to function after the change has been implemented. Taking this human-centered approach to envision the future of NSF and establish meaningful roles in the process provides valuable stakeholder insight, inspires ownership, and engages employees in shaping the desired future state of the agency.

Role	Description	NSF Stakeholders
Sponsors	Have the power to legitimize change, the authority to sanction a change.	• Executive Leadership Team
Change Agents	Responsible for making the change happen and executing plans effectively.	• All senior leadership and supervisors • Office of Information and Resource Management (OIRM)
Target Audience	Are those who must change or accommodate the changes to be made.	• All NSF employees
Change Advocates	Can recommend ideas but do not possess the power to sanction them.	• Employees that are identified as adapting well in a pro-hybrid workforce. • Employees that have worked remotely before COVID-19.

Leaders at NSF from all levels will have a critical impact on the transition to a hybrid workforce. To be successful, leaders will need to accept the change, operate within the change, and continue to maintain the elements of NSF culture that drive innovation.

There are several resources, materials, communications, and trainings that will need to be developed and implemented to support NSF's change to a hybrid workforce, including briefing decks, talking points, toolkits, scripts, learning resources, and best practices. A number of these are outlined for development and are included below. As mentioned earlier in the document, each of the individual Directorates and Offices will be expected to develop their own change management plans.

Communications Materials

It is recommended that the following be developed to support implementation and transition:

- Briefing Deck with Talking Points for Leadership and Supervisors
- Briefing Deck for Employees (to be worked into standing meetings)
- Messages from Tiger Team/Change Sponsors
- Sample scripts for one-on-one conversations (Supervisor to Employee)
- Toolkits and Tips for Supervisors
- Toolkits and Tips for Employees
- Change Plan Timeline/Calendar (e.g., Town Halls, Communications, Training)
- Stakeholder Engagement (e.g., skills gap assessment survey, focus groups, user testing)
- Create and update training modules to cover the policy guidelines

These communication materials can be integrated with and connected to change management materials and training developed at the local level (e.g., directorate, office, or division-level), offering guidance and support where needed.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

An outline of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan is shown in the table below to detail the stakeholders, activities, and general timeline of key change management activities. This information will be detailed further in a forthcoming hybrid work policy-informed communications plan to support the change management process.

	Engagement Activity	Implementation Timeframe	Owner
Assistant Directors/ Office Heads	- Develop briefing deck and talking points. - Present at regular meeting. - Solicit input, feedback, and support.	July 2021	Tiger Team/HRM (TBD)

	Engagement Activity	Implementation Timeframe	Owner
Deputy Assistant Directors/Deputy Office Heads (i.e., DAD/DOH meeting)	• Develop briefing deck and talking points, incorporating feedback from AD/Office Head briefing. • Present at DAD/DOH meeting. • Solicit input, feedback, and support.	August 2021	Tiger Team/HRM (TBD)
Directorate-level engagement (e.g., DLG, AMG)	• Building on initial engagement from May 2021, develop communication material (e.g., email, presentation/briefing deck). • Address core points of engagement • Key messages: 　▪ What are the considerations NSF should address in implementing the Hybrid Work policy? 　▪ How can directorates and offices provide input? • Brief Directorate Liaison Group (DLG). • Communicate with Administrative Managers Group (AMG). • Leverage AMG Marketing Email to support further customer engagement.	September 2021	Tiger Team/HRM (TBD)

	Engagement Activity	Implementation Timeframe	Owner
Employee Input	• Building on initial engagement (i.e., survey, focus groups) from May 2021, develop communication to support change management (e.g., training videos, email/Weekly Wire communication, tip sheets, guidance, and preparedness checklists). • Evaluate opportunities for continued data gathering (pulse surveys, focus groups, supervisory resources, gauge capacity for change and implementation). • Address implementation and impact (e.g., What is in it for employees? Supervisors? NSF?) through ongoing and periodic communications or briefings (e.g., standing staff meetings or town halls) • Engage union for input and feedback	October 2021 and beyond	Tiger Team/HRM (TBD)

Learning Needs and Resources

NSF is empowering employees by providing them training and resources to successfully adapt to the change. These resources will be available day-one for new employees and integrated into the new employee experience. They will also be front and center in the change management support provided to supervisors and employees. Furthermore, employees are empowered to build on what they learn and the skills they acquire; to think about the possibilities for the future of the agency. With employee experience at the front and center, a three-pronged approach is recommended:

1. Agency-wide training and development opportunities to provide employees with a general toolbox for navigating change and understanding how to be successful in a hybrid workforce,
2. Providing consultation services to Directorates to support what will work best for the employee experience (below are the best practices and tools we suggest), and
3. Sharing learning and development recommendations for directorates.

In tandem with communications and policy implementation, it is recommended that the following relational skills are addressed through best practices and training opportunities, as well as others identified through this process. Training on topics such as establishing working norms, building trust, establishing effective virtual communication, incorporating social elements into virtual work relationships, technology, and updated HR policies will be necessary. These can be implemented in a variety of formats (e.g., videos, quick tips, resource documents, instructor-led or web-based training). In

addition to the key skills highlighted below, all employees would benefit from a single training to create a shared set of values and norms around the new hybrid workforce.

Skill(s)	Best Practices/Trainings: Supervisors	Best Practices/Trainings: Employees
Manage asynchronous relationships and communication	• Focus on employee outputs and less on the processes used to produce them. • Incorporate team retreat to create new norms, work processes, methods of information communication, decision documentation. • Build on organizational goals and values. • Leverage external trainings focused on navigating a hybrid workforce; reinforce the skills with your team. • Promote virtual team building activities. • Leverage team success partner(s) with responsibilities that include fostering trust and psychological safety and supporting team health. • Leverage Academy resources such as LearnNSF Hybrid/Remote Work Collection. • Assign a New Employee Liaison to all new employees. • Attend Supervisor Retreat/Executive Leadership Retreat. • Utilize group coaching.	• Contribute to team norms. • Take initiative in planning virtual team activities. • Actively participate in external trainings focused on navigating a hybrid workforce as an employee. • Support and participate in virtual team building activities. • Leverage Academy resources such as LearnNSF Hybrid/Remote Work Collection. • Utilize group coaching.

Skill(s)	Best Practices/Trainings: Supervisors	Best Practices/Trainings: Employees
Develop/enhance empathy and support (emotional intelligence)	• Champion Work-Life Programs. • Shift to a coaching management style; seek out trainings to develop your coaching skills. • Commit to regular, reoccurring one-on-ones with employees. • Shift from judgment to curiosity; seek out trainings on empathy, deep listening, and mindfulness. • Promote, engage in coaching programs (e.g., Executive/Leadership Coaching (360 assessment), NSF Federal Coaching Program, Group Coaching). • Leverage Academy resources such as LearnNSF Emotional Intelligence Collection and individual course offerings. • Attend Supervisor Retreat/Executive Leadership Retreat.	• Tap into Work-Life Programs. • Participate in the NSF Federal Coaching Program. • Shift from judgment to curiosity; seek out trainings on empathy, deep listening, and mindfulness. • Leverage Academy resources such as LearnNSF Emotional Intelligence Collection, Coaching Skills Collection, and individual course offerings. • Utilize group coaching.
Develop/enhance technology skills	• Create team expectations around technology use (e.g., meeting fatigue). • Work with IT to develop best practices.	• Learn and leverage new technology platforms. • Share input into team expectations around technology.
Growth Mindset	• Create team development goals, in addition to performance goals; development goals allow teams to take on new challenges, innovate, and grow. • Offer constructive feedback to employees. • Identify and write down goals; leverage Executive Development Plans (EDPs)/Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to capture and make progress on your goals. • Utilize group coaching. • Leverage external trainings focused on navigating change: Champion the Change for Your Team.	• Acknowledge and reflect on your areas of improvement. • Integrate the word "yet" into your vocabulary; this signals that despite any struggles, you can overcome anything. • Identify and write down goals. Leverage Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to capture and make progress on your goals. • Utilize group coaching. • Leverage external trainings focused on navigating change.

The following learning assets are recommended for consideration by directorates and offices as they consider their own localized change plan to support the migration to the new personnel policies.

Skill(s)	Internal Training	External Training
Manage asynchronous relationships and communication.	• Supervisor Retreat/Executive Leadership Retreat • Developing Team Norms Handout/Materials • LearnNSF Hybrid/Remote Work Collection • Group coaching	• Ariel Group (vendor) 1-hour hybrid/remote work webinar • Facilitated team retreats
Develop/enhance empathy and support (emotional intelligence).	• NSF Federal Coaching Program • Executive/Leadership Coaching Program (360 assessment) • Supervisor Retreat/Executive Leadership Retreat • LearnNSF Emotional Intelligence Collection • Academy-run Mindfulness course • Group coaching	
Develop/enhance technology skills.	• LearnNSF Hybrid Workforce Collection	
Growth Mindset	• NSF Federal Coaching Program • Executive/Leadership Coaching Program (360 assessment) • Incorporating managing change into Supervisor Retreat/Executive Leadership Retreat • LearnNSF Change Management Collection • LinkedIn Learning Growth Mindset Courses • Academy-run Growth Mindset/Resilience course • Group coaching	