

NSF Critical Dates FAQs

1. How will the new system differ from ACM\$?

There will be no changes to ACM\$ payment request processes for the conversion to NSF's new financial system. Users will see a change to the amendments and splits data on the ACM\$ Award Details page. When NSF converts its financial data to the new financial system, historical data will be summarized at the amendment and split level for all awards. Historical data transaction level detail will be available through your [GCMS Accountant](#).

2. When is the last day I can draw funds through the Award Cash Management Service?

The National Science Foundation (NSF) will be implementing a new financial accounting system during October 2014. The new system will deliver broad improvements. It will improve tracking and reporting of financial information and improve internal control over funds management.

In preparation for conversion to the new system, **the Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$) will be temporarily unavailable beginning September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT through October 13, 2014.** Awardee organizations will NOT have access to the ACM\$ payment process during this transition period. This will allow NSF to finalize payments, reconcile its general ledger accounts, and transfer historical data from the old accounting system to the new system. ACM\$ will be available beginning on October 14, 2014.

NSF will be requesting that awardee institutions submit two separate payment requests for anticipated expenditures to be incurred during the transition period:

- One request covering September 19-30 to cover September expenditures being incurred, and
- One request covering October 1-13 to cover the estimate of funds required for that period

3. How and when will we get instructions for the two separate payment requests for anticipated expenditures to be incurred during the transition period?

The Grantee Cash Management Section Accountants will be sending instructions by email and conducting webinars throughout the summer. Additionally, written instructions will be made available on the [Research.gov ACM\\$ Information Page](#).

4. Will there be a special emergency number where we can talk to a dedicated expert if we encounter problems during the transition period and for 2-3 weeks thereafter?

If an awardee encounters a financial emergency, they should immediately contact their GCMS Accountant listed at <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>. If you are unable to contact your GCMS accountant, please call the NSF Help Desk at 800-673.6188.

5. Is there any penalty for over-estimating the amount of funds we will need from mid-September to mid-October?

There will be no penalty for over-estimating funds requirements for period ACM\$ is off line for the system transition. However, if an awardee discovers they have overestimated and that they will not be expending the funds shortly after ACM\$ becomes available again, then the awardee should return the excess funds to NSF.

6. Will we have to keep additional records or need additional approvals?

Awardees will not be required to seek additional approvals or keep additional records.

7. If estimated payments requested via ACM\$ to cover the transition period need to be amended after September 18, how will this be done?

If the estimated payments requests need to be amended, then awardee will have to wait until ACM\$ is back online to submit adjustments. Adjustments to open awards can be completed on the ACM\$ payments screen. Adjustments to financially closed awards can be entered on the ACM\$ Adjustments screen.

8. Why do I have to register my financial information with SAM.GOV?

All NSF awardees must maintain an active System for Award Management (SAM.GOV) registration because NSF will begin making payments using SAM banking information beginning in October 2014. Additionally, NSF's new accounting system will stop payments to any awardee with an expired or invalid SAM registration.

9. Why is my award listed as cancelling in ACM\$ and why did I get the canceling email from my GCMS Accountant?

NSF appropriations must comply with (§1405(a) of Public Law 101-510) requiring all Federal agencies to close fixed year appropriation accounts and cancel any remaining balances by September 30th of the 5th year after the period of availability. For most NSF appropriations the period of availability is a two-fiscal year period, not necessarily 24 months. For fiscal year 2014 this means that any unspent appropriations from FY 2008 (October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008) will be canceled by September 30, 2014.

Awardees must complete their final cash draws for the canceling awards by September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT as noted in question #1 above.

10. My award has multiple appropriations. Will I be losing everything?

For Fiscal Year 2014, only the part of an award that was funded with the FY 2008 appropriation will be canceled, undrawn funds under this appropriation will be unavailable for expenditures, obligations or payment request after September 18 due to the payment cutoff noted in question #1 above.

For example, a recipient has an award with appropriations in FY 2008, FY 2010, and FY 2013. September 30, 2014, marks the 5th year after the FY 2008 appropriation’s two-fiscal year period of availability, whereupon FY 2008-appropriated funds are canceled. The 2010 and 2013 funds will still be available. The FY 2010 funds will cancel by September 30, 2016, and the FY 2013 will cancel by September 30, 2019. A good way to remember it is that the 5th year after the two-fiscal year period of availability is the same as saying the 6th year after the fiscal year of appropriation.

<u>Date of Appropriation</u>	<u>Year of Appropriation</u>	<u>Period of Availability</u>	<u>Period of Availability</u>
<u>Cancellation of Funds by</u>			
12/01/2007	FY 2008	12/01/2007 – 09/30/2009	09/30/2014
10/01/2009	FY 2010	10/01/2009 – 09/30/2011	09/30/2016
02/01/2013	FY 2013	02/01/2013 – 09/30/2014	09/30/2019

11. Will I still have 90-days to submit final cash draws for awards with canceling appropriations?

NO. Awardees must complete their final cash draws for the canceling awards September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT as noted in question #1 above.

Usually, an institution is allowed ninety (90) days to complete final financial activity prior to the award financial closing. This means that the institution has up to ninety days to correct errors, post charges that were incurred before the end date, and address other close-out requirements, such as, final narrative reports. All payment activity must be completed by September 18, 2014, for awards whose appropriations are canceling. Any remaining funds for the award after that date will be de-obligated and returned to the Department of Treasury.

12. I have an award that was P.I. transferred to our institution only about a year ago. I think it has fiscal year 2008 appropriations. Will this award still be canceled?

Yes. If the original awardee institution had funds appropriated for the award in FY 2008, those funds, even though transferred to your institution, would still be under that year’s appropriation and the funds will still be canceled by September 30, 2014. The payment rules also apply whereby awardees must complete their final cash draws for the canceling awards by September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT as noted in question #1 above.

13. How do I know which awards will have their appropriations canceled this year?

You should look on your ACM\$ payment screen to see which awards have a Red Flag next to the award number. Also, the GCMS accountants will be notifying all institutions that have awards with funds to be canceled each fiscal year.

Below is an example of an award that has a FY 2008 appropriation. You can see the awards on your account by logging onto ACM\$. Awards that are about to cancel will have a red flag next to the award number. The “From” date will show the original appropriation date (MM/YY).

From	To	Total Federal Funds Authorized
09/08	08/14	\$200,000.00

14. Can I make adjustments to my award expenses after it financially closes?

Once an award has been financially closed, any changes to the final expenditure amount must be reported in the *Adjustments* tab of ACM\$. Awardees can enter upward adjustments to closed awards within a maximum of 15 months after the award financial close date and can enter downward adjustments until the appropriations funding the award cancel. All adjustments must be at least +/- \$1.00.