Naval Research Program Research Topic Portal: Initial Research Estimate Form (IREF) Submission

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Naval Research Program (NRP) is funded by the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) and supports research projects for the Navy and Marine Corps. The organization of the NPS NRP is based upon an annual research topic solicitation process that merges Department of Navy research, analysis, and studies requirements with NPS faculty and students who have unique expertise and experience.

The NRP Research Topic Portal (https://my.nps.edu/nrp/topic-portal) facilitates a collaborative workflow environment for NPS Students, NPS Faculty and Fleet Sponsors to review, submit, discuss, and sponsor NPS NRP topics for potential funding and thesis consideration.

The Initial Research Estimate Form (IREF) is used to submit a preliminary proposed research Statement of Work (SOW) for NRP Research Topics. During and following the Naval Research Working Group (NRWG), researchers work with Topic Sponsors to scope proposed projects, and then submit an IREF for topics they wish to research. Discussions with the Topic Sponsor POC is strongly encouraged. IREFs are submitted via the Naval Research Program's Topic Portal by NPS faculty. Initial IREF submission and approval generally occurs in April/May.

IREF Submission - If you are a faculty member interested in working on a specific NRP research project you will need to submit an IREF for review/approval. Both your immediate supervisor at NPS and a Topic Sponsor POC (usually, the same person identified as the POC on the topic) must approve the IREF for it to be considered in the Navy Topics Research Board (TRB) or Marine Executive Research Board (ERB) for potential funding. Once approved, the information contained in the IREF will be used by the TRB or ERB to select and fund research requirements.

SUBMIT AN IREF

2. Select NPS Login and enter your NPS UserID and Password.
3. Select the Topic List tab.
4. Search for the desired topic.
5. Select Submit IREF.
6. Complete the displayed IREF fields. THIS IS AN UNCLASSIFIED FORM. DO NOT ENTER CLASSIFIED INFORMATION HERE.

- This IREF also addresses TID(s): If this IREF addresses more than one topic, list all additional topic IDs separating each with a comma. You must still submit an IREF for each topic that you are interested in researching.
- Title (limited to 200 characters): This is the header entry and the first impression of your IREF to the approval chain.

When copying from a word processor, the form will cut off all text beyond the designated character limit. The IREF must be filled out completely before submitting. You cannot save or submit partial information and return to complete the form later. An IREF must be created by the primary intended Principal Investigator (PI) researcher; assistants will be unable to submit an IREF on behalf of the faculty member.

The following three elaboration fields (Research Objectives/Questions, Research Methodology/Plan, and Research Deliverables) are very important but will NOT display on your IREF. Inputs will be used, as needed, for BA6-RDT&E funding applicability review.

- Research Objectives/Questions (limited to 1500 characters): Describe, in lay terms, what you expect to achieve in the proposed research. The aim of the work, i.e. the overall purpose of the study, should be clearly and concisely defined.
- Research Methodology/Plan (limited to 1500 characters): Describe the specific procedures or techniques that will be used to identify, select, and analyze information applied to understanding the research problem. How will the research data be collected or generated? How will it be analyzed?
- Research Deliverables (limited to 1500 characters): Based on the objectives or questions that the research intends to address list all research deliverables, including their form (software, report. PowerPoint brief, etc.), and proposed content.

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https://my.nps.edu/nrp/|NPS_NRP_POC@nps.edu
Quick Reference Guide: Submit a New Initial Research Estimate Form (IREF) in the NRP Research Topic Portal v4.5 – APR 2018

- **Estimated Budget**: Round budget value to the nearest whole dollar. Numbers only. Provide a well-reasoned estimate for the effort. Estimated budget should be realistic in order to support the PI’s spending at a consistent pace throughout the life of the project. ★ The NRP is exempt from all indirect costs. Budget estimates should include labor, travel, equipment, and contracts.

- **Research Start Date & Completion Date**: Provide the period of performance. Start and end dates are required and must be within the parameters listed. ★ NRP research projects are generally completed in 12-16 months. Projects requiring additional research time and funding beyond 12 months may be funded at the discretion of the Topic Sponsor organization or may recompete for NRP funding.

- **Anticipated Number of Contributing Students**: Enter the number/anticipated number of contributing students.

- **List of Known Contributing Students Names**: Enter the names of all contributing students. If unknown type “TBD.”

- **List of Known Contributing Students Curricula**: Enter curricula of contributing students. If unknown type “TBD.”

- **Researcher Title**: Enter the salutation or rank of the primary researcher. Example: Dr., Prof, etc.

- **Researcher Name**: This field is automatically populated by data derived from the researcher’s NPS login information.

- **Researcher Department/Center/Institute**: Enter the name of your Department/Center/Institute.

- **Researcher Phone**: This field is automatically populated by data derived from the researcher’s NPS login information. ★ If your phone number is incorrect you may modify the number displayed.

- **Researcher Email**: This field is automatically populated by data derived from the researcher’s NPS login information.

- **Faculty Supervisor/Chair/Dean Name & Email**: These fields should be populated with the person who signs off on research proposals in your school. ★ You must use the individual’s official NPS email address. You cannot enter your own name/email address.

7. Review your entries for completeness and accuracy and then - Click Submit.

**IREF Approval Workflow:**

1. When an IREF is submitted successfully:
   - The researcher will:
     - be presented with a read only display of the IREF.
     - receive an immediate “IREF Submitted Successfully” confirmation displayed on the Topic Portal Page.
     - receive an IREF received email confirmation from NPS_NRP_POC@nps.edu.
   - ★ If you did not receive the confirmation email, then the submission was not successful.
   - The NRP Topic Portal Administrator will receive an email notification that a new IREF has been submitted. The NRP team will do an editorial review of the “draft” submission and may contact you if any clarification is required.

2. When the NRP Topic Portal Administrator has approved the IREF, the researcher’s self-designated Supervisor/Chair/Dean will receive an email with a link to approve or deny the IREF.

3. When the researcher’s self-designated Supervisor/Chair/Dean has approved the IREF, the Topic Sponsor will receive an email with a link to approve or deny the IREF created for their topic. The Topic Sponsor follows the link (CAC required) to review the IREF. The Topic Sponsor then approves or denies the IREF.

4. When the IREF is approved/denied by the Topic Sponsor, the researcher will receive an email notification.

**IREF Status**: View your current and previous IREFs at any time by logging into the Topic Portal and selecting the “MyIREFS” tab.

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**Topic Funding Approval** - The TRB/ERB selects those IREFs deemed to be requirements and allocates funds under the fiscal year budget. If your proposed IREF is selected, you will then be asked to prepare a detailed research proposal and budget package. The final research proposal is the culmination of iterative discussions with the Topic Sponsor. It provides a definitive agreement of the proposed work between the Topic Sponsor and the research PI. Once a researcher has developed the formal research and budget proposal package, an immediate supervisor at NPS and the Topic Sponsor POC must approve and sign the research proposal before funds are released by the NRP to begin work.