Preface: this template is designed to aid preparation of 2-page plans to satisfy requirements that will take effect for the following NSF BIO directorate programs after the following dates:

Division of Environmental Biology (DEB) core programs, NSF [23-549](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23549/nsf23549.htm), April 18, 2023

Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS) core programs, NSF [23-547](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23547/nsf23547.htm), April 18, 2023

Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB) core programs, NSF [23-548](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23548/nsf23548.htm), April 18, 2023

Plant Genome Research Program (PGRP), NSF [23-559](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23559/nsf23559.htm), May 15, 2023

Other forthcoming solicitations (in the BIO and GEO directorates) will likely include the same requirement. See also the [FAQ](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23071/nsf23071.jsp) from the NSF. If you are unsure whether some part of your proposed project qualifies as “fieldwork”, ask ORSP: they (and not the NSF) make the final subjective determination on whether borderline cases require a safety plan.

Multi-institution proposals require a single unified plan. We assume that Rutgers is the lead institution and that at least one other institution is involved — the text may be simplified if all personnel will be affiliated with Rutgers. We recommend writing a project-specific safety manual and a communication plan (once the specific participants have been identified), and refer to these in the text.

Template version: 2023-05-10

Plan for Safe and Inclusive Working Environments

1. Field setting and challenges. (Left to the document preparer. Key considerations include whether the work includes an international component and/or relatively inexperienced participants such as community members.)

2. Steps to be taken.

**a. Training:** The PI and graduate students/crew leaders will complete online harassment prevention and Title IX training (Percipio Skillsoft) before field work commences. Graduate student/crew leader and one undergraduate crew member will participate in first aid training with CPR/AED certification. The PI will also lead discussion of a set of case study scenarios to help the group anticipate possible communication difficulties and how they might be resolved.

**b. Defining responsibilities:** At the beginning of each field season, participants will provided with two documents updated by the PI and one departmental document:

1. a field safety manual listing specific hazards, checklists of needed items, and procedures for before, during, and after fieldwork.
2. a communication plan including general expectations (including work hours), lines of communication, phone numbers and email addresses of project participants and related support staff.
3. the E&E code of conduct, available at <https://ecoevo.rutgers.edu/pdfs/Rutgers-Ecology-and-Evolution-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>. That document emphasizes mutual respect, attention to power dynamics, and integrity.

Participants will read and discuss these documents, then confirm via email to the PI that they understand and agree to the terms.

Third parties not affiliated with Rutgers present during the off-campus activities will be fully included in all steps laid out in this document. Their roles will be clearly defined in the communication plan.

**c. Field support:** The project communication plan will spell out the means and frequency of check-ins (daily, in most cases). Undergraduate participants will check-in daily over the phone or in-person with the graduate student or crew leader. Graduate students/crew leaders will check in weekly via phone or in-person with the PI. The PI will check in with undergraduate participants biweekly via email, phone or in-person.

3. Communication processes.

(Document preparers: add project-specific details for a project-specific communication plan document.)

The project DOES/DOES NOT involve remote research in which internet and/or cellular service will be limited. The communication plan will list at least two contact people who can grant access to any specialized communication tools (such as a satellite phone).

Per the E&E Code of Conduct, major disagreements can be brought to the graduate program coordinator, program coordinator, chair of the program Student Life and Grievances Committee, department chair, and/or the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Support and Graduate Student Services.

4. Mechanisms for addressing possible harassment.

Rutgers policies 60.1.12 and 60.1.33 prohibit discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. Policy 100.2.10 specifies that ethics and compliance concerns can be reported via the Rutgers Compliance Hotline, reports to managers, and/or to Human Resources via the formal discrimination and harassment complaint form.

Non-Rutgers staff on this project will read and discuss the Rutgers policies with the PI as part of affirming the project communication plan and E&E code of conduct. Contacts at their organization to whom disagreements can be brought (similar to the list in Section 3 above) will be identified and listed in the communication plan.