



Naval Research Program (NRP) Research Topic Portal: Initial Research Estimate Form (IREF) Approval Workflow

The **Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Naval Research Program (NRP)** is funded by the Chief of Naval Operations. As Operating Sponsor of the program, the NPS NRP's role is to support each of the 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 Topic Portal** (<https://nps.edu/nrp/topic-portal>) facilitates a collaborative workflow environment for NPS students, NPS faculty and Fleet Topic 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.

Topic Portal Access

To review current sponsored topics, create a topic, or submit an IREF, please login and follow prompts.

Login to:

- Create a Topic
- Review a Topic
- Create an IREF

NPS Login

CAC Login

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At each step an action or status email will be generated from nrp@nps.edu.

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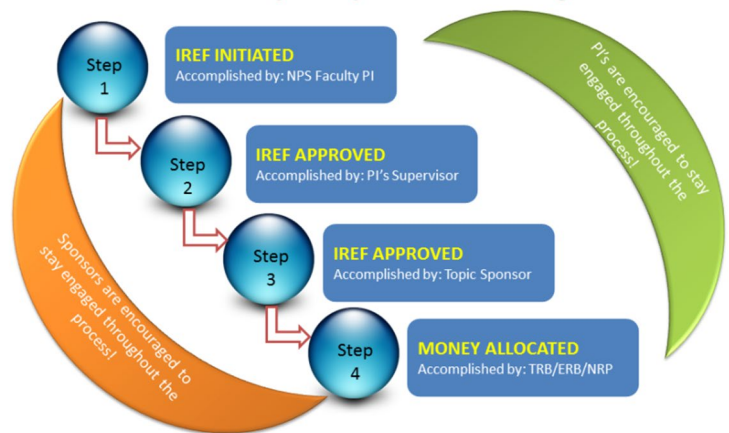
IREF Approval – Upon successful submission of an IREF via the NRP Topic Portal, an *electronic approval workflow* will be generated. To be eligible for funding consideration at the Navy and Marine Corps Topics Research Board (TRB) an IREF must be approved by the faculty researcher's immediate supervisor and the Topic Sponsor POC. Once approved, information contained in the IREF is used by the TRB to select and fund research requirements.

IREF APPROVAL WORKFLOW

1. When an IREF is submitted successfully:
 - The **faculty researcher** will:
 - ✓ be presented with a read only display of the IREF.
 - ✓ receive an immediate on-screen confirmation: **"IREF Submitted Successfully."**
 - ✓ receive an **"IREF Received"** email confirmation.
 - The **NRP Topic Portal Administrator (TPA)** will:
 - ✓ receive an **email notification** that a new IREF has been submitted.

The NRP TPA will conduct an **editorial review** of the "draft" submission and may contact the faculty researcher if clarification is required prior to approving the IREF.

The Initial Research Estimate Form (IREF) Process Map



2. **NPS SUPERVISOR APPROVAL:** When the NRP TPA has approved the IREF, the faculty researcher’s self-designated **Chair/Research Chair** will receive an email from nrp@nps.edu with a link to **approve or deny the IREF**.
 - **To approve the IREF (NPS SUPERVISOR):**
 - ✓ Click the **link text** shown in the email for the individual IREF or copy/paste the link into your **browser**.
 - ✓ If prompted, **authenticate** using your **NPS Login**.
 - ✓ All “undecided” IREFs pending supervisory approval will be displayed.
 - ★ You can modify the default search parameters to display previously approved/denied IREFs.
 - ✓ **Chair/Research Chair Approved for Consideration:** Review the IREF and select **Yes or No**.
 - ✓ Click **Submit**. ★ If successful, you should receive an immediate on-screen confirmation: **“IREF Status Updated Successfully.”**
3. **TOPIC SPONSOR APPROVAL:** When the researcher’s self-designated NPS Supervisor/Chair/Dean has approved the IREF, the **Topic Sponsor** will receive an email with a link from nrp@nps.edu to **approve or deny the IREF** created for their Topic.
 - **To approve the IREF (TOPIC SPONSOR):**
 - ✓ **Copy/paste** the **link** shown in the email for the individual IREF into your **browser**, and then click Submit or select Enter on your Keyboard.
 - ✓ When prompted, **authenticate** using your **CAC and PIN**.
 - ✓ You should then be presented with a read-only version of the IREF for your review. ★ If you have successfully logged into the Topic Portal but you **do not** see the IREF, **copy/paste** the **link** shown in the email for the individual IREF into your **browser** again, and click Submit or select Enter on your keyboard.
 - ✓ **Topic Sponsor Approved for Consideration:** Review the IREF and select **Yes or No**.
 - ✓ Update your profile and/or **verify and update your name and email address** as needed.
 - ✓ Click **Submit**. ★ If successful, you should receive an immediate on-screen confirmation: **“IREF Status Updated Successfully.”**
4. When the **IREF is approved/denied** by the Topic Sponsor, the **faculty researcher** will receive an **email notification**.
 - ★ An IREF increment will display on the topic page only once approved by both the Supervisor and the Topic Sponsor.

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You may choose to approve more than one IREF submitted for a particular topic. All IREFs will receive an IREF ID that consists of the unique Topic ID appended with a successive letter of the alphabet, e.g., NPS-23-N500-A.
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TOPIC SUBMISSION AND REVIEW FY CYCLE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

- Mar:** Deadline to submit research topics for upcoming FY Research Consideration
- May:** Deadline for IREF submission and approval
- Aug:** Navy and Marine Corps TRB
- Aug:** Review board research candidate PI selection results notification
- Sep:** Deadline for project PIs to submit detailed research proposal packages
- Oct-Jan:** Projects start based on PI availability
- Detailed Schedule:** <https://nps.edu/nrp/events>

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Topic Funding Approval - The TRB selects those IREFs deemed to be requirements and allocates funds under the fiscal year budget. If a proposed IREF is selected, faculty researchers 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 faculty researcher, aka the Principal Investigator (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 to begin work.
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