

NSF-CBMS Regional Research Conferences in the Mathematical Sciences

PROGRAM SOLICITATION NSF 19-539

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S): NSF 13-550



National Science Foundation

Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences
Division of Mathematical Sciences

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

April 26, 2019

Last Friday in April, Annually Thereafter

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

This revision allows for the possibility that conferences vary from the traditional CBMS regional conference format. The respective roles of NSF and CBMS in the conference series have been clarified. Solicitation-specific review criteria have been added. Proposals will now be reviewed internally by NSF program directors.

Any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation should be submitted in accordance with the revised *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) ([NSF 19-1](#)), which is effective for proposals submitted, or due, on or after January 28, 2019.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Information

Program Title:

NSF-CBMS Regional Research Conferences in the Mathematical Sciences

Synopsis of Program:

The NSF-CBMS Regional Research Conferences in the Mathematical Sciences are a series of five-day conferences that usually feature a distinguished lecturer delivering ten lectures on a topic of important current research in one sharply focused area of the mathematical sciences. CBMS refers to the Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences, which publicizes the conferences and disseminates the resulting conference materials. Support is provided for about 30 participants at each conference. Proposals should address the unique characteristics of the NSF-CBMS conferences, outlined in the Program Description.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

- J. Matthew Douglass, telephone: (703) 292-2467, email: mdouglas@nsf.gov
- Swatee Naik, telephone: (703) 292-4876, email: snaik@nsf.gov

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Standard Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: 1 to 10 awards annually

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$35,000 to \$350,000

total per year, depending on availability of funds and quality of proposals. Each anticipated 1-year award will total approximately \$35,000 including direct and indirect costs. Between 1 and 10 awards each year are anticipated.

Eligibility Information

Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of subawards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research labs, professional societies and similar organizations in the U.S. associated with educational or research activities.

Who May Serve as PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Not required
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not required
- **Full Proposals:**
 - Full Proposals submitted via FastLane: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.
 - Full Proposals submitted via Grants.gov: *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov* guidelines apply (Note: The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide).

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:**

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:**

Not Applicable
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:**

Not Applicable

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):
 - April 26, 2019
 - Last Friday in April, Annually Thereafter

Proposal Review Information Criteria

Merit Review Criteria:

National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

Award Administration Information

Award Conditions:

Standard NSF award conditions apply.

Reporting Requirements:

Additional reporting requirements apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

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I. INTRODUCTION

To stimulate interest and activity in mathematical sciences research, the National Science Foundation anticipates supporting up to ten NSF-CBMS Regional Research Conferences annually. The Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences (CBMS) publicizes conferences and administers the dissemination of related conference materials, fostering greater exposure to cutting edge-topics and increasing the impact of the conferences in the community.

Normally each five-day conference features a distinguished lecturer who delivers ten lectures on a topic of important current research in one sharply focused area of the mathematical sciences. The lecturer subsequently prepares an expository monograph based upon these lectures, which is published as a part of a regional conference series.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Conferences provide opportunities to disseminate scholarly work widely, to reveal and plan new directions for research, and to engage and encourage students and junior scientists early in their careers, all of which help deepen connections among the mathematical

sciences community.

DMS priorities for the support of conferences include:

- Breadth and diversity of participation, in order to help more mathematical scientists stay abreast of developments in the discipline;
- Involvement of students and junior investigators and of individuals from groups under-represented in the mathematical sciences, in order to contribute to the development of the nation's science personnel base;
- Connection to frontiers in the mathematical sciences, in order to advance the mathematical sciences and to strengthen the interchanges between the mathematical sciences and other science and engineering disciplines;

Diversity and breadth of participation should be understood as applying to institutions as well as to individuals. In particular, it includes those institutions and individuals lacking other federal support.

The continuing success and strength of the CBMS conference series owes to certain distinguishing features which differentiate these conferences from typical research conferences. These are

1. **Focus on a single important and timely area of research by a leading practitioner.** Each conference lecturer is a major contributor to the subject area of the conference and has a broad perspective on that area. The lectures pull together the major ideas and recent results and chart the possible future directions for the field. The purpose of this format is to ensure that the participants, especially the new or recent entrants to the field, gain a deeper understanding of the major outstanding problems and current directions of research in the field than they would get from the typical conference format, where many people present talks on their own results.
2. **Published conference materials for a wider audience.** Conference materials based on the lectures present, to a much wider audience than the conference alone provides, a carefully prepared synthesis of and perspective on an active field of research by one of its leading contributors.
3. **Continued effect and local stimulation through regional emphasis.** The purpose of the regional emphasis, with a focus on participants drawn from areas geographically proximate to the host institution, is to provide a strong stimulus for increased local research activity. Participants include not only established researchers but also newcomers to the field, such as graduate students, postdocs, and others wishing to learn a new area.

The competence of the conference organizer (principal investigator) and the thematic and organizational appropriateness of the host institution (including arrangements for housing, meals, etc.) are essential to the conference's success.

CBMS will help publicize the funded conferences to the community and will handle pre- and post-conference dissemination of conference materials. The organizer (principal investigator) will be responsible for all other aspects of the conference, including inviting and reimbursing participants, making arrangements for facilities, and scheduling lectures and other activities.

Because a major goal of these conferences is to attract new researchers into the field of the conference and to stimulate new research activity, institutions that are interested in upgrading or improving their research efforts are especially encouraged to apply.

III. AWARD INFORMATION

Anticipated Type of Award: Standard Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: 1 to 10 per year. Number of awards depends on funding available and quality of proposals.

Anticipated Funding Amount: Between \$35,000 and \$350,000 total per year. Each anticipated 1-year award will total approximately \$35,000 including direct and indirect costs.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of subawards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research labs, professional societies and similar organizations in the U.S. associated with educational or research activities.

Who May Serve as PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Full Proposal Preparation Instructions: Proposers may opt to submit proposals in response to this Program Solicitation via Grants.gov or via the NSF FastLane system.

- Full proposals submitted via FastLane: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg. Paper copies of the PAPPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from nspubs@nsf.gov. Proposers are reminded to identify this program solicitation number in the program solicitation block on the NSF Cover Sheet For Proposal to the National Science Foundation. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.
- Full proposals submitted via Grants.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation via Grants.gov should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov*. The complete text of the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: (https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide). To obtain copies of the Application Guide and Application Forms Package, click on the Apply tab on the Grants.gov site, then click on the Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions link and enter the funding opportunity number, (the program solicitation number without the NSF prefix) and press the Download Package button. Paper copies of the Grants.gov Application Guide also may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from nspubs@nsf.gov.

In determining which method to utilize in the electronic preparation and submission of the proposal, please note the following:

Collaborative Proposals. All collaborative proposals submitted as separate submissions from multiple organizations must be submitted via the NSF FastLane system. PAPPG Chapter II.D.3 provides additional information on collaborative proposals.

See PAPPG Chapter II.C.2 for guidance on the required sections of a full research proposal submitted to NSF. Please note that the proposal preparation instructions provided in this program solicitation may deviate from the PAPPG instructions.

This solicitation contains information that supplements the standard Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide or NSF Grants.gov Application Guide proposal preparation guidelines. Proposals that do not provide the necessary information may not be accepted or may be returned without review.

Conferences should be scheduled when most colleges and universities are out of session, normally in the summer (May-August) of the year following submission; however, they may instead be scheduled during December of the year of submission or early January of the next.

The conference organizer at the host institution is responsible for carrying out all local planning, arrangements, advertising, and management of the conference. In addition to the items already discussed this includes arranging for appropriate lecture halls and informal meeting places, accommodations and meals for the participants, headquarters for email and information, secretarial services and duplicating facilities for schedules and announcements, reproduction of interim lecture notes, and any special equipment that may be needed.

In addition, the proposal must adhere to the following requirements:

1. **Proposal type.** The "Conference" proposal type should be selected in the proposal preparation module in FastLane or Grants.gov.
2. **Title.** The proposal title should be of the form "**CBMS Conference:**" followed by the name of the conference.
3. **Subject.** The subject of the conference should be a topic of current research interest and activity in the mathematical sciences, able to attract other researchers as participants. The proposal must contain a sufficiently detailed description of the subject area, including a bibliography of important recent work in the field, to allow reviewers to make an assessment of the significance and timeliness of the proposed conference topic.

The case for the importance of the subject of the conference and for the choice of lecturer must be made in the project description and should be written to be intelligible and convincing to a mathematician or statistician who may not be a specialist in the field of the conference. The proposal should also distinguish the planned project from other conferences and activities, particularly from recent or similar conferences.

4. **Principal Lecturer.** Normally each conference will have a single principal lecturer from outside the host institution.

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate that the ten main lectures are presented by more than one principal lecturer. In

such cases, organizers must carefully justify the need for additional principal lecturers and describe how the proposed lecturers will collaborate closely to provide the tightly-focused, coherent presentation that are a hallmark of the CBMS conference series.

Principal lecturers should be both leaders in research in the proposed subject area and good lecturers and expositors. The project description should include a brief description of the principal lecturer's qualifications and should demonstrate the anticipated value to the mathematical or statistical community of the conference materials that will be prepared by the principal lecturer.

5. **Description of Lectures.** The project description must include a description of the topics to be covered in the ten lectures with sufficient detail to give the reader a clear idea of what will be covered.
6. **Recruiting Participants.** The project description should describe in detail the efforts the conference organizer will make to attract and include beginning researchers and underrepresented groups. Participants other than the principal lecturer are not normally named in advance in the proposal. Rather it is expected that after a conference is funded, the host institution will publicize the coming conference and invite applications from qualified participants. It is the host institution's responsibility to select the participants. These would normally be persons already working or beginning to work at the research level in some area of the mathematical sciences whose research activities would profit from the lectures and the other stimuli and interactions that the conference would provide. The proposal must additionally demonstrate the value of the conference to the host institution and to its geographical region and the likelihood of continued interaction among the participants.
7. **Additional speakers.** It is important that the conference provide ample free time for informal discussions among the participants about the principal lectures. Hence, *contributed papers by participants are emphatically discouraged*. Limited additional organized activities, designed to support and enhance the main lectures are encouraged. The value to participants of these additional activities should be clearly described and justified in the project Description. Additional lectures by other leading researchers in the field may enhance the conference's value, but they should be kept to a minimum and should be complementary to the main lectures.
8. **Biographical Sketches.** The proposal must include biographical sketches of the principal lecturer(s) and the conference organizer(s). Note that the product list in the biographical sketches is limited to the five products most relevant to the proposal and up to five additional products. **These should be uploaded as Supplementary Documents.**
9. **Budget.** The proposal should request funds to provide support for about thirty participants, including students and post-doctoral researchers. A reasonable allowance for participants' travel and subsistence should be the major budget item in the proposal. Other typical budget items that may be suitable are the following: travel and lodging for the principal lecturer, a modest amount for the conference organizer's salary (about one half month), administrative-staff salary, printing of advertising materials, telephone, postage, and duplicating. Budgetary items and their costs will vary considerably, depending on the location and character of the host institution, the estimated average distance participants will travel, the availability of low cost lodging in dormitories, and similar factors. Typical awards for these conferences are about \$35,000.

CBMS pays the lecturer a stipend of up to \$5,000 for the delivery of the lectures and supporting conference materials, normally to include a monograph to be published as part of the CBMS Regional Conferences series. The lecturer's stipend is paid directly by CBMS and is *not* to be part of the budget of the host institution's proposal. CBMS has been awarded a grant from NSF to cover this cost.

10. **Supplementary Documents.** The proposal must contain a letter of commitment from the principal lecturer stating that, if the conference is funded, the lecturer will deliver ten lectures during the five days of the conference and will submit pre- and post-conference materials to CBMS in accordance with CBMS requirements. In addition, the proposer may optionally upload a complete vita and list of publications of the principal lecturer as a supplemental document.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing:

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

April 26, 2019

Last Friday in April, Annually Thereafter

D. FastLane/Grants.gov Requirements

For Proposals Submitted Via FastLane:

To prepare and submit a proposal via FastLane, see detailed technical instructions available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail fastlane@nsf.gov. The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

For Proposals Submitted Via Grants.gov:

Before using Grants.gov for the first time, each organization must register to create an institutional profile. Once registered, the applicant's organization can then apply for any federal grant on the Grants.gov website.

Comprehensive information about using Grants.gov is available on the Grants.gov Applicant Resources webpage: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>. In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide (see link in Section V.A) provides instructions regarding the technical preparation of proposals via Grants.gov. For Grants.gov user support, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or by email: support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Contact Center answers general technical questions related to the use of Grants.gov. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this solicitation.

Submitting the Proposal: Once all documents have been completed, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit the application to Grants.gov and verify the desired funding opportunity and agency to which the application is submitted. The AOR must then sign and submit the application to Grants.gov. The completed application will be transferred to the NSF FastLane system for further processing.

Proposers that submitted via FastLane are strongly encouraged to use FastLane to verify the status of their submission to NSF. For proposers that submitted via Grants.gov, until an application has been received and validated by NSF, the Authorized Organizational Representative may check the status of an application on Grants.gov. After proposers have received an e-mail notification from NSF, Research.gov should be used to check the status of an application.

VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program for acknowledgement and, if they meet NSF requirements, for review. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF either as *ad hoc* reviewers, panelists, or both, who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal. In addition, Program Officers may obtain comments from site visits before recommending final action on proposals. Senior NSF staff further review recommendations for awards. A flowchart that depicts the entire NSF proposal and award process (and associated timeline) is included in PAPPG Exhibit III-1.

A comprehensive description of the Foundation's merit review process is available on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/.

Proposers should also be aware of core strategies that are essential to the fulfillment of NSF's mission, as articulated in *Building the Future: Investing in Discovery and Innovation - NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2018 – 2022*. These strategies are integrated in the program planning and implementation process, of which proposal review is one part. NSF's mission is particularly well-implemented through the integration of research and education and broadening participation in NSF programs, projects, and activities.

One of the strategic objectives in support of NSF's mission is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions must recruit, train, and prepare a diverse STEM workforce to advance the frontiers of science and participate in the U.S. technology-based economy. NSF's contribution to the national innovation ecosystem is to provide cutting-edge research under the guidance of the Nation's most creative scientists and engineers. NSF also supports development of a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce by investing in building the knowledge that informs improvements in STEM teaching and learning.

NSF's mission calls for the broadening of opportunities and expanding participation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines, which is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria

The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes." NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.

1. Merit Review Principles

These principles are to be given due diligence by PIs and organizations when preparing proposals and managing projects, by reviewers when reading and evaluating proposals, and by NSF program staff when determining whether or not to recommend proposals for funding and while overseeing awards. Given that NSF is the primary federal agency charged with nurturing and supporting excellence in basic research and education, the following three principles apply:

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals. These "Broader Impacts" may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified.

Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects. If the size of the activity is limited, evaluation of that activity in isolation is not likely to be meaningful. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these activities may best be done at a higher, more aggregated, level than the individual project.

With respect to the third principle, even if assessment of Broader Impacts outcomes for particular projects is done at an aggregated level, PIs are expected to be accountable for carrying out the activities described in the funded project. Thus, individual projects should include clearly stated goals, specific descriptions of the activities that the PI intends to do, and a plan in place to document the outputs of those activities.

These three merit review principles provide the basis for the merit review criteria, as well as a context within which the users of the criteria can better understand their intent.

2. Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board approved merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. **Both** criteria are to be given **full consideration** during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria. (PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.d(i). contains additional information for use by proposers in development of the Project Description section of the proposal). Reviewers are strongly encouraged to review the criteria, including PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.d(i), prior to the review of a proposal.

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to
 - a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
 - b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Proposers are reminded that reviewers will also be asked to review the Data Management Plan and the Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan, as appropriate.

Additional Solicitation Specific Review Criteria

In decisions about proposals submitted for this solicitation, DMS program officers will also consider carefully how well proposals meet the DMS priorities listed in Section II and the requirements listed in Section V-A. This includes in particular

- Breadth and diversity of participation, in order to help more mathematical scientists stay abreast of developments in the discipline;
- Involvement of students and junior investigators and of individuals from groups under-represented in the mathematical sciences, in order to contribute to the development of the nation's science personnel base; and
- Connection to frontiers in the mathematical sciences, in order to advance the mathematical sciences and to strengthen the interchanges between the mathematical sciences and other science and engineering disciplines.

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Internal NSF Review.

Proposals will be reviewed internally by DMS program directors in the Infrastructure Program working in consultation with program directors in the relevant disciplinary programs. In cases requiring additional expertise, panel or ad hoc review may be employed.

Reviewers will be asked to evaluate proposals using two National Science Board approved merit review criteria and, if applicable, additional program specific criteria. A summary rating and accompanying narrative will generally be completed and submitted by each

reviewer and/or panel. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF strives to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. Large or particularly complex proposals or proposals from new awardees may require additional review and processing time. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director acts upon the Program Officer's recommendation.

After programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications. After an administrative review has occurred, Grants and Agreements Officers perform the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

Once an award or declination decision has been made, Principal Investigators are provided feedback about their proposals. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers or any reviewer-identifying information, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award notice, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award notice; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1)*; or Research Terms and Conditions* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award notice. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF. Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the NSF *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer no later than 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require submission of more frequent project reports). No later than 120 days following expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final project reports, or the project outcomes report, will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for all identified PIs and co-PIs on a given award. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through Research.gov, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on accomplishments, project participants (individual and organizational), publications, and other specific products and impacts of the project. Submission of the report via Research.gov constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report also must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards

is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

The final report should include: (1) a description of the participant selection process; (2) a list of persons for whom travel funds were provided; (3) their institutional addresses; (4) the sum awarded; and (5) information on the meeting including number of persons attending and highlights of the program.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Please note that the program contact information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- J. Matthew Douglass, telephone: (703) 292-2467, email: mdouglas@nsf.gov
- Swatee Naik, telephone: (703) 292-4876, email: snaik@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: fastlane@nsf.gov.

For questions relating to Grants.gov contact:

- Grants.gov Contact Center: If the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of application, please contact via telephone: 1-800-518-4726; e-mail: support@grants.gov.

IX. OTHER INFORMATION

The NSF website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, "NSF Update" is an information-delivery system designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF [Grants Conferences](#). Subscribers are informed through e-mail or the user's Web browser each time new publications are issued that match their identified interests. "NSF Update" also is available on [NSF's website](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Related Programs:

Related solicitation: [Conferences and Workshops in the Mathematical Sciences](#).

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The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 55,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Arctic and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* Chapter II.E.6 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090 and (800) 281-8749, FIRS at (800) 877-8339.

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The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at <https://www.nsf.gov>

- **Location:** 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
- **For General Information** (NSF Information Center): (703) 292-5111
- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired):** (703) 292-5090
- **To Order Publications or Forms:**
 - Send an e-mail to: nsfpubs@nsf.gov
 - or telephone: (703) 292-7827
- **To Locate NSF Employees:** (703) 292-5111

PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; and project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to proposer institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies or other entities needing information regarding applicants or nominees as part of a joint application review process, or in order to coordinate programs or policy; and to another Federal agency, court, or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, [NSF-50](#), "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 69 Federal Register 26410 (May 12, 2004), and [NSF-51](#), "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 69 Federal Register 26410 (May 12, 2004). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

Suzanne H. Plimpton
Reports Clearance Officer
Office of the General Counsel
National Science Foundation
Alexandria, VA 22314

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