

NSF 03 - 034



Dear Colleague Letter

April 10, 2003

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS
FOR PROPOSALS TO THE ECS DIVISION**

Directorate for Engineering

Division of Electrical and Communications Systems (ECS)

Dear Colleagues:

In order to ensure both the timely handling of proposals and fairness in comparing competing requests for funding, the ECS Division has established (effective July 1, 2003) two Proposal Submissions windows for all unsolicited proposals submitted to the three ECS disciplinary programs. Proposals which do not arrive within these windows, or which violate the NSF-wide policy on describing broader impacts, will be returned without review. The details are as follows:

1. Dates for submission of unsolicited proposals are now DEADLINES, not target dates. Proposals must be submitted within an acceptance window from one month before each deadline to the deadline date (by 5 p.m. proposer's local time on the deadline date). All proposals must be submitted through FastLane. Proposals submitted either before or after the acceptance window will be returned without review. *Funding requests not subject to these deadlines are described below in paragraphs 6-8.*
2. Effective immediately, two deadline dates will be used: October 7 and February 7, or the first federal business day thereafter if the date falls on a weekend or federal holiday. Federal Holidays can be found at <http://www.opm.gov/fedhol/index.htm>. For fiscal year 2003, the deadline dates fall on October 7, 2003, and February 9, 2004.
3. This submission policy for ECS also applies to proposals submitted as requests for research equipment grants (REG) or proposals submitted through GOALI (academic liaison with industry). These are reviewed together with proposals submitted through disciplinary programs. One may do a "funding search" at www.nsf.gov for the key words REG and GOALI, for the most current information on those programs.
4. Proposals must be prepared in compliance with the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). See <http://www.nsf.gov/pubsys/ods/getpub.cfm?gpg>. Failure to follow GPG requirements may result in the return of a proposal without review.
5. Proposals are reviewed both for their Intellectual Merit and their Broader Impacts. Both criteria will be addressed explicitly in the review and in considering funding recommendations. Proposals which do not separately address the Broader Impacts Criterion in the project summary will be sent back without review. PIs are reminded to insert a separate paragraph(s) explicitly entitled "Broader Impacts" in the project summary. Broader impacts should not be interpreted as a kind of political correctness filter; it is not necessary that every proposal have an impact in all areas, but those which have the potential for a **large** impact in any of the areas covered by that criterion will be given higher priority for funding. A major goal here is to encourage more systematic strategic thinking about ways to improve connections between one's area of work and the larger context.

The following types of request are NOT subject to the acceptance window restrictions described above:

6. Following discussion and encouragement from a Program Director in ECS, proposals submitted to request Small Grants for Exploratory Research (SGER) or workshops may be submitted at any time during the year.
7. Principal Investigators who wish to apply for supplements to existing grants to fund Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) or Research Experiences for Teachers (RET) should send requests before March 1 of any year to ensure consideration. Requests for REU or RET

Supplements to existing grants must be made through FastLane.

8. Principal Investigators wishing to make any other requests for supplements should first discuss their request with their ECS Program Director. Guidelines for Supplements are given in the GPG.
9. Questions regarding any type of funding request not covered above should be referred to an ECS Program Director.

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