

ADVANCE

FAQs for INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS

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General

- Q. I am a little unsure of the difference between the Leadership and the Institutional Transformation Awards. Could you give me some clarification?**
- A.** To a certain extent, it's a matter of scale. The Institutional Transformation Awards require cost sharing, evaluation and dissemination mechanisms, and negotiation with NSF. The Leadership awards are probably most appropriate for smaller-scale efforts, or for use by an individual or organization that has developed some "home grown" programs that need funding to scale-up and institutionalize.
- Q. The announcement states, "women scientists and engineers continue to be significantly underrepresented in some science and engineering fields". How does NSF determine the fields in which women are underrepresented? Will preference be given to women in certain fields over others?**
- A.** NSF has responsibility for collecting data about participation in science and engineering and regularly publishes those statistics (see <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/stats.htm>). While there is considerable variation by field in terms of women's participation and advancement to senior positions, NSF recognizes that gains need to be made in all fields. The ADVANCE Program is open to applicants in all fields of science and engineering supported by the Foundation (including the life, social, and behavioral sciences) without any a priori preference for any field over another.
- Q. According to the announcement, the Institutional Transformation Awards "should show an integrated approach to addressing the complex institutional factors...What is meant by "integrated approach"?**
- A.** An "integrated approach" unites several ideas and practices so as to enhance the potential for demonstrable and sustainable change. Proposals should be grounded in the existing literature regarding organizational change and diversity, and include input from a variety of institutional departments and from people at various levels of the administration.

Eligibility

- Q. Can the application include more than one school of the University and, if so, do all the schools included in the application need to award degrees in an NSF-supported field?**

A. A proposal may include more than one school of the University, and may include schools that do not award degrees in an NSF-supported field. It is important to remember in preparing your proposal that the goal of ADVANCE is specific to advancing women in science and engineering and proposals will be evaluated with that in mind. As institutional transformation effects change in other fields as well, so much the better.

Q. If an application includes more than one school, do they all need to be within the same Directorate (e.g. Biological Sciences)?

A. No.

Q. Are schools that award professional degrees, MD, DMD and/or MS degrees, eligible to apply?

A. NSF, in general, does not support work in the biomedical fields. For clarification, check the Grant Proposal Guide (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2001/nsf012/nsf0102_1.html), which specifies that research with disease-related goals, including work on the etiology, diagnosis or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals, is normally not supported. Animal models of such conditions or the development or testing of drugs or other procedures for their treatment also are not eligible for support. Research in bioengineering, with diagnosis or treatment-related goals, however, that applies engineering principles to problems in biology and medicine while advancing engineering knowledge is eligible for support. Bioengineering research to aid persons with disabilities also is eligible.

Given this context, schools that award professional degrees (MD, DMD) would not be eligible. Schools awarding MS degrees in science and engineering fields supported by NSF would be eligible to apply.

PI Qualifications

Q. Should the PI be a research scientist or an administrator (Provost, Director of Research, Dean)?

A. The PI should be the person most likely to effect change. There is no expectation or requirement that the PI is in a senior administrative position. There is an expectation that the institution will support the PI in his/her efforts, and that commitment might well come from a provost or president.

Q. Are there any restrictions regarding the Principal Investigator on proposals for ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Awards? In particular, can the Principal Investigator be a faculty member who also has an administrative appointment, such as Department Chair or Dean?

A. There are no restrictions in terms of rank, type of position, etc. The main issue is whether the PI has the ability to effect change at the institution. Faculty members who do not also hold administrative positions (dean, chair, etc.) are eligible, as are people who hold

dean, chair, and provost positions. Evaluators will look at the "standing" of the PI on this issue and determine how well the PI is equipped to organize and bring about change.

Supportable Activities

Q. Is the ADVANCE Program designed specifically to support women faculty members, or will the Foundation also consider programs aimed at promising young scholars earlier in the pipeline (graduate students or undergraduates)?

A. ADVANCE is targeted at moving women up in the ranks of science and engineering faculty through transformation of institutional culture, practices and policies that inhibit the full participation and advancement of women faculty. Many of the activities that support that goal involve consideration of various aspects of faculty life that affect an individual's productivity and contributions as valued members of departments. Since the focus of this part of the program is on academic faculty, activities that enhance the participation of women students in science and engineering may be included in proposals, but should not be the primary or major focus of proposals.

Q. We'd like to propose a coordinated program involving 4-5 different institutions. Would that be appropriate for the Institutional Transformation competition?

A. Proposals involving partnerships among institutions are welcome. Such proposals should address how the project will be managed to ensure that the partner institutions all participate in making the changes necessary to institutional policies and practices to support sustainable organizational change, and should provide evidence of leadership support at each institution. The value added of using a multi-institutional approach should be clearly articulated.

Award Information

Q. We would like to submit an ADVANCE proposal for both the Leadership and Institutional Transformation grants. What are the likely start dates for these proposals?

A. NSF expects start dates of January-February 2003 for the Institutional Transformation Awards, and August-September 2003 for the Leadership Awards.