

ADVANCE

FAQ's for INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS

General Eligibility PI Qualifications Supportable Activities Award Information

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 mechanisms, and negotiation with NSF. The expectation is that institutions receiving these awards will initiate and sustain organizational change. These are likely to be large, complex efforts. 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.

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 a NSF-supported field?**
- A.** Yes, the application can include more than one school of the University; all of the schools included in the application do not need to award degrees in a NSF-supported field. It is important to remember in preparing your application that the goal of ADVANCE is specific to advancing women in academic science and engineering careers, and proposals will be evaluated with that in mind.
- Q. If an application includes more than one school, do they all need to be within the same NSF 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. However, research in bioengineering, with diagnosis or treatment-related goals 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 only professional degrees (MD, DMD) would generally not be eligible; schools awarding PhDs or MS degrees in science and engineering fields supported by NSF in the biomedical sciences would be eligible.

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.

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. Activities that include approaches to supporting graduate or undergraduate students could be proposed provided there is a clear connection to how that can be expected to increase the number of women in the professoriate.

Q. I am working with a group to develop a proposal for the NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Awards. One of the items listed as a potential supportable activity is the establishment of chaired professorships that support the goal of ADVANCE. Can you provide additional details on the guidelines and restrictions regarding the establishment of such chaired professorships? Typically at our institution, chaired professorships are established via an endowment and I was wondering how NSF might award money for such chairs.

A. NSF has no guidelines on precise mechanisms for establishing chaired professorships; that item is listed to encourage institutions to put together partnerships that would, together with the NSF funds, allow for creative and substantive approaches to increasing the number of women in S&E at the senior ranks. NSF, as a government agency, does not have the flexibility that private foundations might to create such positions, and NSF funds have many restrictions on how they can be used. For example, while NSF funds may not be used to create an endowment, they may be used to support the salary of a faculty member in a chaired professorship. It is our hope that at the end of the award period, the chaired position would be fully supported by funds raised by the institution from other sources.

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 September-October 2001 for these proposals.

Cost Sharing

Q. We plan to submit a proposal for institutional transformation with a total budget requested from NSF of \$750,000 annually, as allowed in the guidelines. Do we count the 20% required cost-sharing as part of that amount, or would the 20% be in addition to the NSF funds, for a total annual budget of \$900,000?

A. Cost sharing of 20% of the requested total amount of NSF funds is required for Institutional

Transformation Award proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation. If you are requesting \$750,000 annually from NSF, the institutional cost sharing would be \$150,000 annually, for a total annual project budget of \$900,000.