



National Science Foundation
Office of Polar Programs
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230



Deadline Date Extended to 15 June 2004

Effective Date: 18 May 2004

Dear Colleague:

The deadline date for receipt of proposals is being extended from 25 May 2004 to 15 June 2004 to accommodate two important international meetings. Everything else in the 25 February 2004 Dear Colleague letter (NSF 04-018) remains unchanged.

25 February 2004

Dear Colleague:

We would like to bring the following information to your attention:

New opportunity to request Vostok accretion ice for international collaborative study

The French-Russian-U.S. collaboration in the collection and study of the Vostok, Antarctica, ice core has contributed significantly to documenting Earth's climate history. The confirmation in 1996 of the existence of a lake under the drilling site has enhanced the importance of this collaborative project and has stimulated much scientific discussion and speculation about the origin, nature, and fate of subglacial lakes and associated ecosystems.

When drilling at the Vostok site was completed in 1998, the borehole had reached a depth of 3,623 m, with an estimated 130 m of ice remaining to the lake surface. The top 3538 m of the core is meteoric glacial ice. The lower 84 m (3,539-3,623 m) is referred to as accretion ice and has distinct physical and chemical characteristics relative to the ice from shallower (meteoric) portions of the core. In December 2001, the bottom 11.74 m of accretion ice was sub-sampled in the field. Half of the core was left at Vostok Station in a snow cave as an archive, and the other half was transported from Antarctica to the Laboratoire de Glaciologie et Géophysique de l'Environnement, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, in Grenoble, France, with the understanding that the distribution of this ice would be decided by a joint meeting of science and agency representatives from the three nations.

Three nations agree to share ice core

A meeting was held 17-18 April 2002 at the U.S. National Science Foundation with scientists, directors, and program managers from the U.S., French, and Russian antarctic programs. The group identified analyses required to address the key scientific questions about the physical and biological aspects of the accretion ice layers and the lake ecosystem. A plan developed at this meeting will maximize the scientific return and ensure an accurate comparison of results and will foster international research collaboration among Russian, American, and French scientists. For more information about Vostok Subglacial Lake research, visit the SCAR Subglacial Antarctic Lake Exploration web site at <http://salegos-scar.montana.edu/>. For the 2002 meeting report, see <http://www.nsf.gov/od/opp/antarct/subglclk.htm>.

International collaborative research opportunity

At the 17-18 April 2002 meeting it was decided to set aside 2 meters of the ice core (segments from 3,613 m (~ 97 cm long) and 3,621 m (~ 96 cm long) for international collaborative studies. The purpose of setting aside samples for this international study was to encourage new scientists to become involved with the study of Vostok accretion ice and to encourage international collaborations on the study of the ice samples. Scientists from all three countries involved in this agreement (i.e., France, Russia, and United States) who want to request sections of this ice should submit a collaborative request following the guidelines below.

How to request new accretion ice core samples for collaborative study

To request pieces of these new accretion ice core samples, one person from each collaborative team should send a request of not more than 5 pages to each of the National Program Contacts (see below). The jointly prepared request should be a complete and concise statement describing the specific problem or objective of the study for which samples are needed, methods and procedures to be used, samples required, source of projected funding (if any), and names and addresses of collaborating investigators. Scientists at institutions from all three countries (France, Russia, United States) must be involved in each request for samples. Requests also should contain a statement that justifies why this ice is of particular significance for their work. All requests must be received by 25 May 2004. Only scientists working at institutions in France, Russia, and the United States may submit requests.

A special Sample Allocation Committee with representatives of each of the three countries will review the requests and decide which ones should be authorized to receive samples. Actual allocation of ice samples will be contingent on confirmation that the investigators have sufficient funding to perform their work. Scientists should contact their National Program Contacts for information about how each country will handle funding requests and for any further information desired regarding the selection process.

In the United States, no special funding source has been established for study of these samples. U.S. investigators can request NSF U.S. Antarctic Program funds as described in the solicitation Antarctic Research ([NSF 03-551](#)); in March 2004 a new edition will announce the next annual proposal deadline, 3 June 2004. Applying by that same deadline, investigators can request accelerated consideration of proposals through the Small Grants for Exploratory Research mechanism. Other NSF funding sources, including crosscutting programs, are summarized in Guide to Programs.

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Please pass this information to any other researchers who may be interested in studies of ice.

Sincerely,

Dr. Karl Erb, Director
Office of Polar Programs, NSF

Dr. Valery Lukin, Director
Russian Antarctic Expedition

Dr. Gérard Jugie, Director
Institut Polaire Français, Paul-Emile Victor

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