

NSF 00-79

Enhancing Infrastructure for the Social and Behavioral Sciences

Program Announcement

NSF 00-79

DIRECTORATE FOR SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES

DEADLINE: August 4, 2000



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



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SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Program Title: Enhancing Infrastructure for the Social and Behavioral Sciences

Synopsis of Program:

This competition aims to create or extend innovative large-scale infrastructure projects that promise widely spread support to social and behavioral scientists. Challenging questions abound in the social and behavioral sciences that require new infrastructure for their study. The capabilities of the World Wide Web offer new power to bring data, researchers, and experimental facilities together electronically.

Infrastructure projects may be designed to collect new data and organize them into accessible databases; to create Web-based data archiving systems; to create Web-based laboratories; to establish Center programs; or some combination of these.

Cognizant Program Officer:

- Paul G. Chapin, Senior Program Director for Scientific Initiatives, Suite 995, telephone: 703-306-1760, e-mail:pchapin@nsf.gov.

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:

- 47.075 --- Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- **Organization Limit:** None
- **PI Eligibility Limit:** None
- **Limit on Number of Proposals:** A PI may submit only one proposal, and may collaborate in one other proposal as Co-PI.

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard grant, Continuing grant, or Cooperative agreement
- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 4-8
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$3 million

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Guidelines

- **Proposal Preparation Instructions:** Standard Preparation Guidelines

- Standard GPG Guidelines apply.

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Statutory Cost Sharing (1%) is required
- **Indirect (F&A) limitations:** Not Applicable.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Not Applicable.

C. Deadline/Target Dates

- **Letter of Intent Deadline:** None
- **Preproposal Deadline:**None
- **Full Proposal Deadline:** Aug 4 2000

D. FastLane Requirements

- **FastLane Submission:** Full Proposal Required
- **Fast Lane Contact:**
 - H. Richard Fales, Senior Program Assistant, Division of Behavioral & Cognitive Sciences, Suite 995, telephone: 703-306-1758, e-mail:bcsl@nsf.gov.
 - Gail D. Williams, Staff Associate, OAD/SBE, e-mail:sesfl@nsf.gov.
 - FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 703-306-1142, e-mail:fastlane@nsf.gov.

PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

- **Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

- **Award Conditions:** Standard NSF award conditions apply.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF Reporting Requirements apply.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) announces a competition to increase and improve infrastructure to support the social and behavioral sciences. The NSF has supported critical large-scale infrastructure for the SBE sciences since the 1960s. Major parts of the behavioral and especially the social sciences owe their substantial development to the widespread use of these resources. The societal benefits have accumulated apace, including fundamental understanding of poverty, income disparities, social stratification, voting patterns, family dissolution, public attitudes, and parents' investments in their children.

Challenging scientific questions and societal dilemmas still abound. These require new infrastructure, even new kinds of infrastructure, for their elucidation. Simultaneously, the expanding capabilities of the World Wide Web to create, consolidate, and share infrastructure resources have only begun to touch the social and behavioral sciences. The demonstrated value of existing infrastructure, the unanswered scientific questions requiring new infrastructure, and the new power to bring data, researchers, and experimental facilities together electronically, jointly point to an important new opportunity. The competition aims to realize this opportunity by expanding the number and variety of infrastructure projects that are large, innovative, and long-running.

This is the second of two competitions. An earlier SBE Infrastructure competition, held in FY1999, resulted in the funding of six new infrastructure projects in the SBE sciences. The strong and enthusiastic response from the SBE research communities to the previous competition was an additional strong indicator of its value.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This competition aims to create or extend innovative large-scale infrastructure projects that promise widely spread support to social and behavioral scientists. Proposed projects may fall entirely within one of the following four areas or a combination of them.

- Collect data from surveys, experiments, or administrative records; case or historical records; or objects of investigation (archaeological items, for example); that will support broad-based investigations into the most important scientific questions facing social and behavioral science in the next decade.
- Create Web-based data archiving systems that enable world-wide access to linked databases, and that incorporate innovative capabilities for metadata, file searching, and data confidentiality protection.
- Create Web-based collaboratories to enable real-time controlled experimentation, to share the use of expensive experimental equipment, and/or to share widely the process and results of research in progress.
- Establish Centers in research areas where concentrated, sustained, and coordinated effort by multiple researchers is required to (1) develop a fledgling field; (2) reinvigorate a stagnant field; or (3) jump-start an area that is ripe for major breakthroughs. Investigators

need to identify the potential benefits of such activity to the larger community of scholars. Centers may be organized either geographically and/or virtually.

Proposals may be to establish complete infrastructure projects or to prototype particularly new and risky ideas.

Proposals should include specific suggested criteria for evaluation of the project at both intermediate and final stages of the grant.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Proposals may be submitted by individual investigators, by small groups from universities or by inter-university consortia. Proposals of the latter types are not "group proposals" in the sense of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide, and must adhere to the standard proposal length limits. Synergistic collaboration among researchers and collaboration or partnerships with industry or government agencies are encouraged when appropriate. Only one proposal may be submitted by a Principal Investigator and he/she may collaborate in one other proposal as a co-Investigator. Group and collaborative proposals involving more than one institution must be submitted as a single administrative package from one of the institutions involved. Due to the limited availability of funds, prospective applicants are strongly urged to contact the program officer listed at the end of this document for guidance.

IV. AWARD INFORMATION

Under this competition, SBE intends to make at least four to eight awards, depending on the quality of submissions and the availability of funds. Projects to be funded will typically have budgets not less than \$500,000 per year, with initial durations of 3-5 years. Approximately \$3 million will be available in FY 2001. All awards will be made as grants or cooperative agreements, subject to specified reporting procedures. A description of the projects supported during the initial round of competition under this Focus may be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/ses/infra/start.htm#fs>.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Proposals submitted in response to this program announcement should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG) (NSF 00-2). The complete text of the GPG (including electronic forms) is available electronically on the NSF Web Site at: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2000/nsf002/start.htm>. Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone 301.947.2722 or by e-mail from pubs@nsf.gov.

Proposers are reminded to identify the program announcement number (NSF 00-) in the program announcement/solicitation block on the NSF Form 1207, *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.

B. Budgetary Information

In accordance with Congressional requirements (see GPM 330), NSF requires that each awardee share in the cost of research projects resulting from unsolicited proposals. For purposes of NSF, proposals submitted in response to this announcement are considered unsolicited. The awardee may meet the statutory cost sharing requirement by choosing either of two alternatives: (1) by cost sharing a minimum of one percent on the project; or (2) by cost sharing a minimum of one percent on the aggregate costs of all NSF-supported projects requiring cost sharing.

The minimum one percent statutory cost sharing requirement discussed above need NOT be entered on Line M of the NSF Form 1030.

C. Deadline/Target Dates

Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must be submitted by 5:00 PM, local time on the following date(s):

Aug 4 2000

D. FastLane Requirements

Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this Program Announcement through the FastLane system. Detailed instructions for proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>.

Submission of Signed Cover Sheets. The signed copy of the proposal Cover Sheet (NSF Form 1207) must be postmarked (or contain a legible proof of mailing date assigned by the carrier) within five working days following proposal submission and be forwarded to the following address:

National Science Foundation
DIS – FastLane Cover Sheet
4201 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22230

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. NSF Proposal Review Process

Reviews of proposals submitted to NSF are solicited from peers with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed research or education project. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. NSF invites the proposer to suggest at the time of submission, the names of appropriate or inappropriate reviewers. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts with the proposer. Special efforts are made to recruit reviewers from non-academic institutions, minority-serving institutions, or adjacent disciplines to that principally addressed in the proposal.

Proposals will be reviewed against the following general review criteria established by the National Science Board. Following each criterion are potential considerations that the reviewer

may employ in the evaluation. These are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. Each reviewer will be asked to address only those that are relevant to the proposal and for which he/she is qualified to make judgements.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Principal Investigators should address the following elements in their proposal to provide reviewers with the information necessary to respond fully to both of the above-described NSF merit review criteria. NSF staff will give these elements careful consideration in making funding decisions.

Integration of Research and Education

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens - women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities - 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.

Additional Considerations for the SBE Infrastructure competition

In furthering the objectives of the SBE Infrastructure program, reviewers will be asked to give special emphasis to the following considerations. All criteria will apply as appropriate to each proposal.

1. Scientific Importance. Will the infrastructure produced by the project (data, objects of investigation, methodological innovations, and/or collaborations) assist investigators in addressing the most important questions in the social and behavioral sciences? Will the infrastructure lead to important discoveries?
2. Innovation. Does the project break new ground in developing infrastructure in one or more social and behavioral sciences?
3. Breadth. Will the project produce infrastructure, including state-of-the-science capabilities, that serves a broad community of researchers in one or more of the social and behavioral sciences? Is there a role for partners in education, industry or the user community? Will the infrastructure be made available to researchers in an equitable and responsible fashion?
4. Management Structure and Personnel. Will the project be managed efficiently, effectively, and responsibly? Is the mechanism for selection of personnel and/or projects open, inclusive and fair? Does the proposal include criteria for evaluation of the project at interim and final stages?
5. Cost. Is the budget commensurate with the activities and objectives described in the proposal?
6. Continuation. Is there a plan for continuing the project, if appropriate, when NSF support ends?

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and signed by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are mailed to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Director. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard

All proposals are carefully reviewed by at least three other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement will receive two levels of review. Each proposal will initially be assigned, according to its scientific content, to one or more disciplinary Programs, which will review it using their normal procedures, including ad hoc reviews and evaluation by the Program's Advisory Panel. Following Program review, a specially constituted cross-disciplinary Panel will review all of the SBE Infrastructure proposals. This Infrastructure Panel will have access to the reviews and Panel summaries produced during the review by the individual Programs. The SBE Infrastructure Oversight Board will select the proposals to recommend for funding on the basis of the evaluations by the individual Programs and the Infrastructure Panel.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

In most cases, proposers will be contacted by the Program Officer after his or her recommendation to award or decline funding has been approved by the Division Director. This informal notification is not a guarantee of an eventual award.

NSF will be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months for 95 percent of proposals. The time interval begins on the proposal deadline or target date or from the date of receipt, if deadlines or target dates are not used by the program. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

In all cases, 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 and 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 its own risk.

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 Division 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. A, for additional information on the review process).

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, 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 letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (NSF-GC-1)* or Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Terms and Conditions * and (5) any NSF brochure, program guide, announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreement awards also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Terms and Conditions (CA-1). Electronic mail notification is the preferred way to transmit NSF awards to organizations that have electronic mail capabilities and have requested such notification from the Division of Grants and Agreements.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's web site at http://www.nsf.gov/home/grants/grants_gac.htm. Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone 301.947.2722 or by e-mail from pubs@nsf.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions is contained in the NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) Chapter II, (NSF 95-26) available electronically on the NSF web site at

<http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpm>. The GPM is also for sale through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC 20402. The telephone number at GPO for subscription information is 202.512.1800. The GPM may be ordered through the GPO web site at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the PI must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period.

Within 90 days after the expiration of an award, the PI also is required to submit a final project report. Approximately 30 days before expiration, NSF will send a notice to remind the PI of the requirement to file the final project report. Failure to provide final technical reports delays NSF review and processing of pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

NSF has implemented an electronic project reporting system, available through FastLane. This system permits electronic submission and updating of project reports, including information on: project participants (individual and organizational); activities and findings; publications; and other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system.

VIII. CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General inquiries should be made to the Enhancing Infrastructure for the Social and Behavioral Sciences Program: Paul G. Chapin, Senior Program Director for Scientific Initiatives, Suite 995, telephone: 703-306-1760, e-mail: pchapin@nsf.gov.

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact,

- H. Richard Fales, Senior Program Assistant, Division of Behavioral & Cognitive Sciences, Suite 995, telephone: 703-306-1758, e-mail: bcsl@nsf.gov.
- Gail D. Williams, Staff Associate, OAD/SBE, e-mail: sesfl@nsf.gov.
- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 703-306-1142, e-mail: fastlane@nsf.gov.

IX. OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

The NSF Guide to Programs is a compilation of funding for research and education in science, mathematics, and engineering. The NSF Guide to Programs is available electronically at <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gp>. General descriptions of NSF programs, research areas, and eligibility information for proposal submission are provided in each chapter.

Many NSF programs offer announcements or solicitations concerning specific proposal requirements. To obtain additional information about these requirements, contact the appropriate

NSF program offices listed in Appendix A of the GPG. Any changes in NSF's fiscal year programs occurring after press time for the Guide to Programs will be announced in the NSF Bulletin, available monthly (except July and August), and in individual program announcements/solicitations. The Bulletin is available electronically via the NSF web site at **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** Subscribers can also sign up for NSF's Custom News Service (<http://www.nsf.gov/home/cns/start.htm>) to be notified of new funding opportunities that become available.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Awardees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with Federal statutes, regulations and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF (unless otherwise specified in the eligibility requirements for a particular program).

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the program announcement/solicitation or contact the program coordinator at (703) 306-1636.

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) 306-0090, FIRS at 1-800-877-8339.

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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; 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 applicant 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 needing information as part of the review

process or in order to coordinate programs; 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," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

Pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.5(b), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid 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 this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, Information Dissemination Branch, Division of Administrative Services, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230, or to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for National Science Foundation (3145-0058), 725 - 17th Street, N.W. Room 10235, Washington, D.C. 20503.

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