NSF 25-502: Cultural Anthropology Program Senior Research Awards (CA-SR)

Program Solicitation

Document Information

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U.S. National Science Foundation
Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences
Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences

Full Proposal Target Date(s):

January 15, 2025

January 15, Annually Thereafter

August 15, 2025

August 15, Annually Thereafter

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Important Information And Revision Notes

This solicitation provides instructions for preparation of all proposals submitted to the Cultural Anthropology Program other than proposals for Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants (DDRIG). Researchers submitting DDRIG proposals should consult the CA-DDRIG solicitation.

If a researcher is unsure whether the Cultural Anthropology Program is appropriate for a proposal topic, they are encouraged to email a one-page summary of their project to the program officer(s) prior to proposal submission. That summary should address the core research question or objective, relevant theoretical background, the methodological and analytical design and the broader impacts of the project.

This revision also provides additional guidance on types of proposals the program typically considers. It includes a description of and budgetary guidance for TREES (Trans-disciplinary REsearch in Environmental Social Science) proposals.

This revision also includes minor changes to the budgetary guidance for EAGER proposals.

This revision eliminates the requirement that if the proposal is a resubmission, the first paragraph of the project description must summarize how the proposal has responded to previous reviewer concerns.

This revision also includes minor changes to the guidance for Data Management and Sharing Plans.

Any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation should be submitted in accordance with the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) that is in effect for the relevant due date to which the proposal is being submitted. The NSF PAPPG is regularly revised and it is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that the proposal meets the requirements specified in this solicitation and the applicable version of the PAPPG. Submitting a proposal prior to a specified deadline does not negate this requirement.

Summary Of Program Requirements

General Information

Program Title:

Cultural Anthropology Program Senior Research Awards (CA-SR)

Synopsis of Program:

The primary objective of the Cultural Anthropology Program is to support fundamental, systematic anthropological research and training to increase understanding of the causes, consequences and complexities of human social and cultural variability. The Cultural Anthropology Program welcomes proposals from researchers in all sub-fields of cultural anthropology and research at any temporal or spatial scale. Methodologies and approaches employed may include ethnographic field research, surveys, remote sensing, the collection of bio-markers, experimental research inside or outside of laboratory settings, archival research, the analysis of materials collections and extant data bases, mathematical and computational modeling and other research tools as appropriate for the proposed research. The overarching research goals should be to produce empirically grounded findings that will be generalizable beyond particular case studies and contribute to building a more robust anthropological science of human society and culture.

The U.S. National Science Foundation's mandate is to support basic scientific research. Basic research in cultural anthropology means theory-generating and theory-testing research that creates new knowledge about human culture and society. Therefore, the Cultural Anthropology Program cannot support research that takes as its primary objective improved clinical practice, applied policy or other immediate application. Research that seeks to advance scientific cultural anthropological theories in a way that advances use-inspired objectives may be supported, but the theory-advancing objectives must be clearly at the center of the proposal. A proposal to use anthropological methods and approaches only to find solutions to social, medical or other problems without specifically proposing to make a theory-testing or theory-expanding contribution to anthropological science will be returned without review.

Broadening Participation In STEM

NSF recognizes the unique lived experiences of individuals from communities that are underrepresented and/or under-served in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and the barriers to inclusion and access to STEM education and careers. NSF highly encourages the leadership, partnership, and contributions in all NSF opportunities of individuals who are members of such communities supported by NSF. This includes leading and designing STEM research and education proposals for funding; serving as peer reviewers, advisory committee members, and/or committee of visitor members; and serving as NSF leadership, program, and/or administrative staff. NSF also highly encourages demographically diverse institutions of higher education (IHEs) to lead, partner, and contribute to NSF opportunities on behalf of their research and education communities. NSF expects that all individuals, including those who are members of groups that are underrepresented and/or under-served in STEM, are treated equitably and inclusively in the Foundation's proposal and award process.

NSF encourages IHEs that enroll, educate, graduate, and employ individuals who are members of groups underrepresented and/or under-served in STEM education programs and careers to lead, partner, and contribute to NSF opportunities, including leading and designing STEM research and education proposals for funding. Such IHEs include, but may not be limited to, community colleges and two-year institutions, mission-based institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), women's colleges, and institutions that primarily serve persons with disabilities, as well as institutions defined by enrollment such as Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs), Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).

"Broadening participation in STEM" is the comprehensive phrase used by NSF to refer to the Foundation's goal of increasing the representation and diversity of individuals, organizations, and geographic regions that contribute to STEM teaching, research, and innovation. To broaden participation in STEM, it is necessary to address issues of equity, inclusion, and access in STEM education, training, and careers. Whereas all NSF programs might support broadening participation components, some programs primarily focus on supporting broadening participation research and projects. Examples can be found on the NSF Broadening Participation in STEM website.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

- Jeffrey W. Mantz, telephone: (703) 292-7783, email: jmantz@nsf.gov
- Tarini Bedi, Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-8499, email: tbedi@nsf.gov
- Jeremy Koster, Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-8740, email: jkoster@nsf.gov
- Brittiney Cleveland, Program Specialist, telephone: (703) 292-4634, email: bclevela@nsf.gov

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.075 --- Social Behavioral and Economic Sciences

Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Standard Grant or Continuing Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: 30 to 40

Anticipated number of awards annually is 30-40.

Anticipated Funding Amount: $4,000,000

Anticipated Funding Amount is approximately $4,000,000, for all new and continuing awards combined, not including DDRIG awards, pending availability of funds.

Eligibility Information

Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of sub-awards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.
- Tribal Nations: An American Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges as a federally recognized tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. §§ 5130-5131.

Who May Serve as PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Not required
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not required
- **Full Proposals:**
    - Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.
    - Full Proposals submitted via Grants.gov: *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov* guidelines apply (Note: The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide).

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:**

    Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:**

    Not Applicable

- **Other Budgetary Limitations:**

    Not Applicable

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Target Date(s)**:

    January 15, 2025

    January 15, Annually Thereafter

    August 15, 2025

    August 15, Annually Thereafter

Proposal Review Information Criteria

Merit Review Criteria:

National Science Board approved criteria apply.

Award Administration Information

Award Conditions:

Standard NSF award conditions apply.

Reporting Requirements:

Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

I. Introduction

The Cultural Anthropology Program supports empirically grounded research that will improve understanding of the general principles and processes that underlie human social and cultural diversity. To that end, research can take place at any scale from the individual to the household, the community, and globally. While the program does not support research whose only goal is improved policy, clinical practice or other immediate application, we recognize that many of the problems that plague the country and the world today are either anthropogenic in origin or are exacerbated by anthropogenic activities. Because anthropologists approach the human species holistically, they are uniquely positioned to contribute to understanding and therefore building the knowledge base to help ameliorate these problems. Consequently, the Cultural Anthropology Program encourages basic, theory-testing and generalizable research that also addresses pathways from theory to application and use.

The NSF Cultural Anthropology Program invites proposals for projects that increase our understanding of all aspects of human social and cultural life, including but not limited to the following:

- Contemporary urbanization and urban life.
- The interaction between critical natural processes such as land cover change, climate patterns and sociocultural systems and behavior.
- Resilience and robustness of sociocultural and socio-ecological systems under stress, including natural and anthropogenic disasters.
- Variability in human sociality, including structures and processes of differentiation, inequality, cooperation, regulation and conflict.
- Human mobility and migration.
- Variability and change in systems of kinship, concepts of relatedness and family norms.
- Culturally grounded and empirically driven theories and models of health and disease transmission at multiple scales.
- Material and consumer cultures, including changing forms of communication and connectivity and human-technology interfaces.
- Language and culture, sociolinguistics, cognition and theories of meaning-making and belief.
- Mathematical and computational models for sociocultural research, including social network analysis, agent-based models, hierarchical models, cultural transmission dynamics and machine learning.
- Convergent research that integrates knowledge and techniques from multiple scientific fields.
- Activities that support research skills enhancement, such as training in research methodologies and analytical techniques at the pre- and post-Ph.D. levels, and activities, such as research planning conferences and the development of data management infrastructures, that enhance and encourage collaboration and data sharing among anthropologists and between anthropologists and other scientists, including supporting the improved maintenance of the anthropological record.

To further these priorities, the NSF Cultural Anthropology Program supports multiple types of proposals, as described in the PAPPG. This solicitation provides additional guidance on the following:

- Senior Research Proposals
- Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program Proposals
- Scholars Proposals
- Mid-Career Advancement (MCA)
- Facilitating Community-Engaged Research Proposals and Supplemental Funding Requests
- TREES - Trans-disciplinary REsearch in Environmental Social Science
- Proposals for conferences and research community development activities

- Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) and Research Experiences for Graduate Students (REG) Supplemental Funding Requests
- Research Experiences for Post-Baccalaureates Supplemental Funding Requests
- Facilitating Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) and Research Opportunity Awards (ROA)
- EArly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) Proposals
- Rapid Response Research (RAPID) Proposals

This list does not exhaust the full range of types of proposals described in the PAPPG. Rather, these are the ones most commonly submitted to the Cultural Anthropology Program. Researchers are always welcome to consult with the program officers about which NSF mechanisms and programs might best support their research, including programs other than Cultural Anthropology.

II. Program Description

The goal of the Cultural Anthropology Program is to support significant and innovative empirical and theoretical research on humans as cultural beings, wherever they may live. While the 21st century can be characterized by unprecedented interconnectedness among people and societies, the world today is still far from homogeneous. Research is needed, therefore, from multiple perspectives and at multiple levels of data collection and analysis to document, understand and explain social and cultural diversities, commonalities and patterns and their impacts on human lifeways and outcomes.

Proposals are welcome in all areas of cultural anthropology. Historically, anthropologists have focused on rich, empirical descriptions and analyses of specific societies and cultures. Increasingly, attention has turned to a range of global processes, such as economic and cultural globalization, new forms of labor migration and responses to socio-environmental change. We particularly encourage proposals that are both ethnographically grounded and attuned to larger significance, including paying heed, theoretically and methodologically, to the meso-scale interface between local and global. Mindful of anthropology's interdisciplinary nature, we welcome convergent research that integrates knowledge and techniques from across multiple scientific fields.

Proposal Categories

Senior Research Proposals

Most proposals will fall into this category. The senior designation includes all researchers who have a Ph.D. or equivalent education and experience, sufficient to allow them to carry out independent basic research. A project can be proposed to be carried out by a single researcher or a research team comprising a principal investigator along with co-principal investigators, other senior/key personnel, post-doctoral researchers and other key/personnel (including specialists from other disciplines and other countries) as needed for the conduct of the research. Projects can be proposed for periods of time up to 36 months.

Budget Guidelines for Senior Research Proposals

Senior Research Awards rarely exceed $120,000 per year of the project. Please see recent award sizes and note that budgets must be commensurate with proposed activities and must directly support the objectives of the research. Budget requests are reviewed carefully at all stages of the evaluation process, and proposals with budgets that are justified and appropriate to the scope of the project are prioritized. Requests for up to 36 months may include salary, travel expenses (including lodging and per diem as required to conduct the research away from one's primary performance site), research assistance, participant incentives, equipment, open-access publication costs and other direct costs of research. Please consult the PAPPG for designations of allowable and unallowable costs.

Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program Proposals

The Cultural Anthropology Program participates in the NSF-wide CAREER Program for junior faculty (untenured but tenure-track or equivalent). CAREER proposals have a maximum duration of five years, and the proposed work should be of sufficient scope, originality and significance to justify that amount of time. In addition to research costs, proposers may

include expenses for specialized training to enhance their research and their future professional trajectory. As explained in the CAREER solicitation, CAREER proposals must have an educational component; the Cultural Anthropology Program suggests that this component may be integrated with the research, either in the field or at the home institution.

Researchers who want to submit CAREER proposals should consult the CAREER-specific solicitation for eligibility information, submission deadlines (which are different from other Cultural Anthropology proposals) and other CAREER Program requirements. After submission, each CAREER proposal is checked to determine that it is compliant with CAREER Program requirements. Compliant proposals are then reviewed along with other senior research proposals submitted to the Cultural Anthropology Program.

Budget Guidelines for CAREER Proposals

Unlike senior research proposals, the *minimum* CAREER award in Cultural Anthropology is $400,000 and up to five-years (60 month) duration. Consult the award database for recent award sizes.

Scholars Proposals

The Cultural Anthropology scholars awards support specialized methodological training for post-Ph.D. cultural anthropologists who have active research programs that would be enhanced by such training. The goal of the program is to improve anthropological research skills by affording researchers the opportunity to undertake training not normally available on their home campuses. Support may be requested to learn any methodological skill that will advance the research agenda, as justified in the proposal with reference to results from prior work. Previous awardees have received training in a wide range of methods drawn from such diverse fields as meteorology, ichthyology, hierarchical modeling, demography and speech therapy.

Please note that these are **training awards**, not research awards. The proposal must include a detailed study plan that indicates sponsorship by a senior expert (who should not have been involved with the proposer's Ph.D.), with whom the proposer will study and/or who will supervise the planned program of study. A signed statement affirming sponsorship must be included in the proposal (as a supplementary document). Proposals should show how this additional expertise would improve the proposer's ability to do research by referring to specific ongoing research projects and publications. Requests for support of a general upgrading of quantitative or methodological skills, for coursework routinely available on university campuses, or for language training will not be successful. Scholars proposals should be submitted in accordance with the PAPPG requirements to the Cultural Anthropology target dates. Proposals are reviewed alongside other senior research proposals in the Cultural Anthropology Program.

Budget Guidelines for Scholars Proposals

Scholars awards have a ceiling of $75,000 and a maximum duration of 36 months. They may include requests for summer salary, academic year release time, per diem, travel, equipment, supplies and other training expenses, as well as applicable indirect costs.

Mid-Career Advancement Proposals

The Mid-Career Advancement (MCA) program offers an opportunity for scientists and engineers at the mid-career stage to substantively enhance and advance their research program and career trajectory. MCA support is expected to help lift constraints to reduce workload inequities and enable a more diverse scientific workforce at high academic ranks. Researchers who are interested in submitting an MCA proposal should consult the separate cross-directorate Mid-Career Advancement solicitation.

Facilitating Community-Engaged Research Funding Requests

Funds for developing community-engaged research can be requested as a supplement to an active award or as a proposal for a stand-alone engagement effort prior to the submission of a standard research proposal. These funds support mutually beneficial and respectful interactions that not only produce meaningful research and education or outreach outcomes, but also focus on the concerns of partnering communities, including questions of data sovereignty,

co-authorship or co-review of project outcomes. Such projects should be innovative, potentially novel and unique, and not ordinarily plausible via support from other funding opportunities.

Researchers interested in this opportunity must contact the Cultural Anthropology program officers to discuss proposed activities and budget requirements. The proposal or supplemental funding request must describe the personnel and the activities that will be conducted as part of the engagement process as well as the anticipated duration of research activities. Costs may be for travel, meetings and other activities directly related to establishing and maintaining the engagement process. Community-engagement proposals should be submitted in accordance with the PAPPG requirements to the Cultural Anthropology target dates, while supplemental funding requests can be submitted at any time. Proposals are reviewed alongside other senior research proposals in the Cultural Anthropology Program.

TREES - Trans-disciplinary REsearch in Environmental Social Science

The science of socio-environmental systems involves the integration of social science and environmental science, but TREES projects must specifically result in advances in social and behavioral sciences to understand the complex interactions between people and the environment. TREES projects should pose research questions that will advance theory both in the science of socio-environmental systems and basic anthropological and/or human-environmental and geographical sciences.

For TREES proposals, trans-disciplinary research teams are encouraged to incorporate diverse disciplinary perspectives that are necessary for an integrated science of social and environmental systems. Proposals that include plans for multi-method analysis should demonstrate how findings will be synthesized across different approaches.

The TREES track is open to a broad range of research questions and methodological approaches. Researchers submitting to this track are encouraged to consider innovative research designs that integrate complementary sources of data and analytical approaches, potentially at multiple spatial, temporal, or organizational scales of analysis.

Budgetary Guidance for TREES Proposals:

The duration of funded TREES awards is generally expected to be three or four years. Requested budgets should be commensurate with the proposed activities and will typically not exceed an average range of $200,000 to $250,000 per year across the requested award duration.

TREES proposals will be evaluated by review panels composed of interdisciplinary scholars with diverse expertise in social, behavioral, and environmental sciences.

Conference Proposals

The Cultural Anthropology Program supports thematic conferences designed to bring together active researchers and students to foster new research and new research standards in areas of current interest. The program does not support gatherings whose purpose is primarily to convey the results of completed research. *Conference proposals should generally be submitted a year in advance of the proposed event.* The program also encourages the inclusion of graduate students and members of groups underrepresented in anthropology as active conference participants and the consideration of formats that are most conducive to accessibility and inclusion. While conference proposals may be submitted at any time, we reserve the right to have them reviewed by review panels along with other senior research proposals submitted to the regular target dates. Please consult the "Conference" section of the PAPPG for further instructions, including a list of required elements and budget exclusions. Please follow those instructions while keeping in mind the Cultural Anthropology Program's specific interests and limitations.

Budget Guidelines for Conference Proposals

Cultural Anthropology Program conference support is typically in the range of $20,000 to $40,000, inclusive of indirect costs. We encourage seeking support from multiple agencies and organizations.

Research Community Development Activities Proposals

Over the years, the NSF Cultural Anthropology Program has supported numerous research community development activities for graduate students and faculty. These have included field schools in the U.S. and abroad, summer training programs for both graduate students and faculty, software development, a program for mid-project research team meetings and small awards for preparation of materials for archiving by retiring researchers. Researchers who intend to submit a Research Community Development Activity proposal should consult with a program officer before submitting to ascertain the suitability of the envisioned activity. These proposals are reviewed along with other senior research proposals and should be submitted to one of the target dates for this solicitation. Proposers should follow the guidance in the PAPPG, adapting the project description as needed for the particulars of the project.

Budget Guidelines for Research Community Development Activities Proposals

Please see recent award sizes and note that budgets must be commensurate with proposed activities and must directly support the objectives of the research. Budget requests are reviewed carefully at all stages of the evaluation process, and proposals with budgets that are justified and appropriate to the scope of the project are prioritized. Requests for up to 36 months may include salary, travel expenses (including lodging and per diem as required to conduct the research away from one's primary performance site), research assistance, participant incentives, equipment, open-access publication costs and other direct costs of research. Please consult the PAPPG for designations of allowable and unallowable costs.

Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) and Research Experiences for Graduate (REG) Students Supplemental Funding Requests

For the Cultural Anthropology Program REU and REG supplements, proposers are advised that the PI should be a senior (that is, post-Ph.D.) anthropologist who holds existing NSF award(s) either from the Cultural Anthropology Program or from another NSF program. These requests are submitted as supplements to the PI's existing award. If the existing award is not with the Cultural Anthropology Program, please advise the Cultural Anthropology Program when the request is submitted so that the supplemental funding request proposal can be transferred. This opportunity is not limited to students at the PI's institution. Special consideration will be given to opportunities for students at institutions that lack doctoral programs in anthropology-related disciplines and at institutions that receive NSF funding relatively infrequently. Investigators are especially encouraged to support research and mentorship opportunities for students at Minority Serving Institutions.

The student's research must be their own. These supplements are not intended to support clerical or research assistance to the PI. They also are not intended to support language training except in the context of the research project. The purpose of the REG and REU supplements is to provide promising cultural anthropology students opportunities for independent research while also encouraging PIs to mentor students in collaborative activities. The expectation is that an REU student is planning to go to graduate school in cultural anthropology and that the REG student intends to continue graduate school through the Ph.D. Requests for support of master's students will be considered. Requests for REG and REU supplements should optimally be submitted by March 1, annually, but requests may also be accepted at other times of the year by contacting a program officer in advance.

The supplemental funding request should include a two to three-page description of the project to be undertaken, written by the student; a 1-2 page endorsement of the student by the PI mentor, identifying the grounds for the student's selection as well as the PI's plans for mentoring the student; a 2-page biographical sketch for the student; and a budget with budget justification. See the Dear Colleague Letter: Cultural Anthropology Research Experience for Graduates (REG) and Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Supplements for more details.

Budget Guidelines for REG and REU Supplement Requests

This supplemental funding provides up to $6000 for an REG or REU student to support the cost of the student's independent research activity. NSF expects that participant costs are included under the participant support costs category (Line F) in the budget. A modest amount for materials and supplies can be requested and should be included on line G1 in the budget. All costs should be clearly explained in the budget justification. Indirect costs should be calculated only on the amount listed on line G1.

Research Experiences for Post-Baccalaureates

PIs of existing NSF awards may submit supplemental funding requests for one post-baccalaureate individual to obtain anthropological research experiences that will augment their preparation for graduate school admission or other STEM career opportunities. A post-baccalaureate student is defined as an individual who has a bachelor's degree but is not currently enrolled in another degree program. The Cultural Anthropology Program is particularly interested in increasing the participation of post-baccalaureate individuals from underrepresented groups in anthropology and STEM who desire to engage in research or who want to pursue a career in STEM but who did not have the opportunity to begin or complete a research experience as an undergraduate student. Examples of such experiences include, but are not necessarily limited to, training in field research or in a particular specialized laboratory or computational methods, including secondary data analysis. PIs must provide the participant(s) with an independent but guided research project and professional development. Ideally, participants will be involved in the development of their research project. PIs are expected to provide training in ethics and the responsible conduct of research and to inform participants of institutional policies or code of conduct on sexual harassment.

Researchers must contact the Cultural Anthropology program officers prior to submitting a supplemental funding request. A supplemental funding request must include a PI statement of no more than two pages that describes the participant's involvement in the research project, the mentoring plan for the participant including any professional development activities, and information on the recruited participant, including a brief biographical sketch. The statement should also describe how the proposed program would contribute to the participant's long-term career goals and how the supplemental funding will serve to broaden participation. Supplements may be submitted at any time and in accordance with the guidelines found in the PAPPG.

Budget Guidelines for Post-Baccalaureate Supplemental Funding Requests

The Cultural Anthropology Program will consider funding requests up to three months and $8,000 for a post-baccalaureate individual, to support the costs of the individual's training through an NSF-funded research project. Participant support costs can include a stipend (recommended at $650/week for full-time participation) and, as appropriate, fringe benefits and travel. NSF expects that participant costs are included under the participant support costs category (Line F) in the budget. A modest amount for materials and supplies can be requested and should be included on line G1 in the budget. All costs should be clearly explained in the budget justification. Indirect costs should be calculated only on the amount listed on line G1.

Facilitating Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions: Research in Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) and Research Opportunity Awards (ROA)

The Research in Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) and Research Opportunity Awards (ROA) funding opportunities support research by faculty members at predominantly undergraduate institutions (PUIs). RUI proposals support principal investigators at PUIs in research that engages them in their professional field(s), builds capacity for research at their home institution and supports the integration of research and undergraduate education. ROAs similarly support PUI faculty research, but these awards typically allow faculty to work as visiting scientists at research-intensive organizations where they collaborate with other NSF-supported investigators.

Budget Guidelines for RUI Proposals
RUI proposals are reviewed alongside other senior research proposals in the Cultural Anthropology Program. Please refer to the RUI guidelines for additional details on submission requirements. For questions about the ROA supplement opportunity, please contact the Cultural Anthropology program officer(s).

Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) Proposals

The Cultural Anthropology Program supports EAGER proposals for funding research on untested but potentially transformative research ideas and approaches. Researchers must have prior approval from a Cultural Anthropology program officer to submit an EAGER proposal. The EAGER proposal type should not be used for proposals that could be submitted to a regular competition, so the initial inquiry should explain carefully why the anticipated project fits the EAGER criteria. There are no deadlines, the project description is limited to no more than 8 pages, and only internal NSF review is required. Please see the full description of this proposal type in the PAPPG.

Budget Guidelines for EAGER Proposals

The Cultural Anthropology Program rarely supports EAGER budgets over $50,000, which is less than the maximum allowed by the PAPPG. The maximum duration is 24 months.

Rapid Response Research (RAPID) Proposals

RAPID awards support urgent research. The urgency must arise in two ways: first, that unanticipated research data would be lost if the researchers had to wait for the completion of a normal review cycle; and second, that the loss of data would prevent theory-advancing or testing insights that would otherwise be possible. Conditions that justify the need for RAPID support typically involve unanticipated access to rarely available specialized equipment, research sites or specialized informants. RAPID support is often requested for quick-response research on natural or anthropogenic disasters and other unanticipated events. Unfortunately, anthropologists encounter disasters and urgent situations all too often. To be successful for RAPID support, investigators must convincingly argue that the particular situation to be investigated will produce data that are unlikely to be found in any other situation and that are essential for addressing clearly identified and potentially transformative research questions. RAPID support is not intended for simple post-disaster appraisals and documentation. If the research is routine, failure to plan ahead is not sufficient rationale for RAPID support.

Researchers must contact a program officer in advance of submitting RAPID proposals. In this initial email, proposers should briefly explain the data to be collected, why these data are scientifically important, an estimate of the needed budget and a timeline for the research. RAPID proposals are limited to 5 pages and only internal NSF review is required, so funding can be made available relatively quickly. More details can be found in the PAPPG.

Budget Guidelines for RAPID Proposals

Please note that the Cultural Anthropology Program rarely supports RAPID budgets over $30,000, which is less than the maximum allowed by the PAPPG. The maximum duration is 12 months.

III. Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Continuing Grant or Standard Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: Anticipated number of awards annually is 30-40.

Anticipated Funding Amount: Anticipated Funding Amount is approximately $4,000,000, for all new and continuing awards combined, not including DDRIG awards.

Estimated program budget, number of awards and average award size/duration are subject to the availability of funds.

IV. Eligibility Information

Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of sub-awards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.

- Tribal Nations: An American Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges as a federally recognized tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. §§ 5130-5131.

Who May Serve as PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI:

There are no restrictions or limits.

V. Proposal Preparation And Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Full Proposal Preparation Instructions: Proposers may opt to submit proposals in response to this Program Solicitation via Research.gov or Grants.gov.

- Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg. Paper copies of the PAPPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov. The Prepare New Proposal setup will prompt you for the program solicitation number.

- Full proposals submitted via Grants.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation via Grants.gov should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov*. The complete text of the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: (https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide). To obtain copies of the Application Guide and Application Forms Package, click on the Apply tab on the Grants.gov site, then click on the Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions link and enter the funding opportunity number, (the program solicitation number without the NSF prefix) and press the Download Package button. Paper copies of the Grants.gov Application Guide also may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

In determining which method to utilize in the electronic preparation and submission of the proposal, please note the following:

Collaborative Proposals. All collaborative proposals submitted as separate submissions from multiple organizations must be submitted via Research.gov. PAPPG Chapter II.E.3 provides additional information on collaborative proposals.

See PAPPG Chapter II.D.2 for guidance on the required sections of a full research proposal submitted to NSF. Please note that the proposal preparation instructions provided in this program solicitation may deviate from the PAPPG instructions.

Please note that proposers must follow the requirements of the PAPPG, except as modified by this solicitation. The advice here is meant to supplement the PAPPG.

Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations as part of the proposal process must contact the NSF Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) at least 30 days prior to the proposal deadline.

Proposal Set-Up

Select "Prepare New Full Proposal" in Research.gov. Search for and select this solicitation title in Step 1 of the Full Proposal wizard. The information in Step 2, Where to Apply, will be pre-populated by the system.

You may select additional programs if you would like those programs to consider co-review of your proposal. After the proposal is created click on the "Manage Where to Apply" link on the proposal main page. This will open the "Manage Where to Apply" page where additional programs can be selected.

Note that a request for co-review should be made only when the PIs believe the proposed work makes a strong case for advancing theory and basic knowledge in multiple communities served by multiple programs and when the project description engages literature from those communities. The inclusion of methods that are relevant to other programs is not sufficient to merit co-review; the contribution must be theoretical and scientific. The project title should be descriptive and emphasize the generalizable science that the research will address. It is often useful to frame the title as the primary research question to be investigated.

Cover Sheet

Mark human subjects as pending, approved or exempted.

Project Description

Proposers may order their proposal as they wish. However, the Cultural Anthropology Program requires that the project description include the following (with appropriate adaptations for different kinds of projects). EAGER, RAPID, Conference, training and other special proposals should be tailored to the specific requirements of those types of proposals as described in the PAPPG.

- A section addressing intellectual merit (we recommend you clearly label it in a way that highlights the basic scientific value of the project, e.g., "intellectual merit," "scientific generalizability" or "scientific merit"). This section must include a description of the project's potential contribution to advancing anthropological theory beyond the site of investigation, a focused review of what is thought to be known already, and a clear statement of what the project's contribution will be and why that contribution would be scientifically significant. Proposals that list areas of scholarship without reference to the specific means by which underlying theory will be tested, queried or advanced are not sufficient.

- A section labeled "Broader Impacts of the Proposed Work," that discusses the broader impacts of the proposed activities and the pathways by which those broader impacts will be realized. Broader impacts are significant effects beyond basic science. They might include communicating results to policy makers, contributing to the knowledge base to solve an important social problem, engaging students of any age in the research enterprise, doing outreach to the public, producing databases that contribute to scientific infrastructure, strengthening international research collaborations, broadening the scientific participation of underrepresented communities or strengthening research capacity in developing nations. Partisan activities explicitly related to advocacy or activism should not be included.

- The project description must contain, as a labeled separate section within the narrative, a brief account of the "Results from Prior NSF Support" for all PIs and co-PIs who have received NSF support (not including DDRIG support for either themselves or their student) with an end date in the past 5 years. If the researcher has received more than one award, only one award needs to be reported on. See the PAPPG for more details. We recommend that this section focus on the intellectual merit and broader impacts resulting from prior work rather than lengthy descriptions of the specific objectives attached to the prior work. GRFP awards and DDRIG awards where the PI served as the faculty advisor (and not as the researcher/student Co-PI) do not require reporting in this section.

- The project description must contain a section titled "Ethical Considerations" that describes the ethical principles that guide the research design and any ethical implications of implementing the research.

In addition, we recommend that the project description include:

- A clear, early statement of the research problem including its specific aims, expectations, research questions or hypotheses.

- A discussion of any preliminary studies already undertaken, the results of those studies and how they inform the project.
- A research design that includes a discussion of the research site(s) and source(s) of data, the methods by which data will be collected, the reasons those methods are the most appropriate, justification of sample design, and how the data will be systematically analyzed to address the research questions, aims or hypotheses.
- A description of ethical considerations and any socio-environmental implications that arise in conjunction with pursuit of the research, including its development, implementation and dissemination of associated findings.
- An account of the project's feasibility, including the researcher's access to research sites, language competence and other skills and availability of time needed to complete the research.
- A research schedule or timeline.

For TREES (Trans-disciplinary REsearch in Environmental Social Science) proposals, a management plan should be included in the Project Description demonstrating how research team members will coordinate activities through the course of a project. Proposals should clarify which team members are responsible for the implementation of specific project activities either in the management plan or elsewhere in the project description. The proposal title should begin with the prefix "TREES:".

Biographical Sketches

Biographical sketches must be submitted for all individuals designated as senior/key personnel. If there are other personnel whose performance is essential to the success of the research, you may upload additional biographical sketches as supplementary documents. The biographical sketches must be formatted as described in the PAPPG.

Budget and Budget Justification

Project budgets should be developed at scales appropriate for the work to be conducted. Project budgets should be developed at scales appropriate for the work to be conducted and in accordance with the budget guidelines contained in Section II above.

The proposer may concurrently submit proposals to other funding organizations external to NSF. Please indicate this in the "Current and Pending (Other) Support" section of the NSF proposal, so that NSF may coordinate funding with the other organizations as needed. The "Current and Pending (Other) Support" section of the NSF proposal should also list the current proposal being submitted. Proposers may submit only one proposal at a time to NSF for a single project. Proposers may submit more than one proposal at a time to Cultural Anthropology or to other NSF programs if they are for different projects. If substantively similar proposals are submitted for review to more than one program, some or all of those proposals will be returned without review. PIs may request that a single proposal be co-reviewed with one or more other NSF programs; however, actual co-review will be at the discretion of the program officers.

The PAPPG provides detailed guidance for budget preparations. Please follow that guidance carefully. The requests should be tailored to the needs of the project and the researchers. This means that if extended fieldwork time away from the institution and the researcher's normal place of residence is needed, salary support beyond the NSF norm of two months may be requested. However, researchers should be aware that the program is often unable to offer funds sufficient to cover both salary requests and support for lodging, meals and incidental expenses during the period of field research, unless both are essential for the researcher to carry out the project. The Cultural Anthropology Program's ultimate concerns are, "How much excellent research are we going to get for how much money?" and "How can the program most equitably augment resources across institutions to enable pursuit of the best science?" The PAPPG allows PIs to include up to five pages of budget justification. These pages are to be used to provide details and explanation for the amounts requested.

Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources

You must submit this section of the proposal. PIs who already have partial funding for their project should list it here, not on the budget (where it can be construed as voluntary committed cost-sharing, which is prohibited). You should also list

other resources, such as a computer, university library and lab space, that will support the conduct of the research. Many universities have standard text for this section.

Supplementary Documentation

Proposers should include (as applicable or where required):

- Up to three pages of **technical illustrations, maps or sample survey questions** may be included as a supplementary document.
- **Biographical sketches** of other key personnel who are not designated as Senior/Key personnel on the proposal. The biographical sketches must be formatted as described in the PAPPG.
- **Letters of collaboration.** Supplementary documents may include letters of collaboration from individuals or organizations that are integral parts of the proposed project but are not listed as PI, co-PI or other senior/key personnel on the main proposal or any sub-award. Such involvement may include subsidiary involvement in some aspect of the project, cooperation on outreach efforts or documentation of permission to access materials or data. Letters of collaboration are not letters of reference or endorsement; they should focus solely on affirming that the individual or organization is willing to collaborate on the project as specified in the project description. Each letter of collaboration must be signed by the designated collaborator.

   We recommend use of the template provided here:

   > To: NSF [Program Title] Program
   > From: _____
   > [Printed name of the individual collaborator or name of the organization and name and position of the official submitting this memo]
   >
   > By signing below (or transmitting electronically), I acknowledge that I am listed as a collaborator on this proposal, entitled "[proposal title]," with [PI name] as the Principal Investigator. I agree to undertake the tasks assigned to me or my organization, as described in the project description of the proposal, and I commit to provide or make available the resources specified therein.
   >
   > Signed: _____
   > Organization: _____
   > Date: _____

- A **Data Management and Sharing Plan** of no more than two pages is required for all proposals. The Cultural Anthropology Program is committed to the establishment, maintenance, validation, description and distribution of high-quality data sets generated by program-funded projects. Proposals should generate data products that are findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR). Projects, particularly those engaged with Indigenous communities, should also attend to CARE (Collective benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility, and Ethics) principles for data governance.

   Plans for the dissemination and sharing of research results will be traceable from the beginning to the end of a project (proposal, review and annual/final annual report). PIs are required to provide updates on the status of meta-data and data archiving in annual and final project reports. See reporting requirements below for additional information.

   If the project is not expected to generate new data, samples or derived data products, the data management and sharing plan should include a statement that no detailed plan is needed, accompanied by a clear justification.

   The Date Management and Sharing Plan should address the following questions and topics:

   - What kinds of data, software, samples and other materials will your research produce?
   - How will you manage them (e.g., standards for meta-data, format organization, etc.)? What analyses will be done?

- How and when will you give other researchers access to your data, while preserving confidentiality, security, intellectual property and other rights and requirements? Describe how the project will provide open and rapid access to samples, data, derived data products (e.g., models and model output) and other information on the project during and after the project's completion. Describe plans to make full data sets, derived data products (e.g., model results, output, and workflows), software, and related information publicly accessible within two years of final collection, barring any extraordinary human subject and other ethical considerations. Some types of data may be considered "final" at different stages of processing in different fields. Thus, PIs should define, in their data management plans, in what state they would consider their data to be final and ready for public access. The data management plan should address the efforts that will be made to enhance the interpretability and usability of the data by other scholars. Any limit on access to data, samples or other information beyond a reasonable moratorium period must be based on compelling justification, documented in the data management plan of the proposal.
      - How and when will you archive data and preserve access in the short and the long term? Data should be made available in a long-term, open-access institutional repository that is designed to curate data indefinitely — plans that propose to make data available through researchers' personal websites are typically inadequate.
- Resources for preparing a Data Management and Sharing Plan:
      - [Additional guidance on data management plans](#) from the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE).
      - PIs are also encouraged to consult the American Anthropological Association's (AAA) [Statement on Professional Ethics ⧉](#), Sections 5, "Make Your Results Accessible," and 6, "Protect and Preserve Your Records".
      - PIs who plan to use a standard archive, such as the Qualitative Data Repository (QDR) at Syracuse University, the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) archive housed at the University of Michigan, or Harvard University's Dataverse, are strongly advised to contact the archive before undertaking the research to ascertain any specific requirements for permissions or meta-data, which would require advance planning. The AAA maintains a [wiki site ⧉](#) where researchers can identify where their data are archived or deposited. We recommend use of this wiki to enhance data sharing.
- Single copy (NSF-use only) documents
      - **List of suggested reviewers or reviewers not to include**. This document is optional, but the Cultural Anthropology Program strongly recommends that PIs do suggest expert reviewers. Please include at least minimal contact information, such as institution and email address. If you list reviewers not to include, you do not need to explain why. These suggestions are visible only to NSF program officers and staff.

Additional Program Considerations

Broader Impact Activities

The program supports a wide range of broader impact activities, and successful projects will include creative, well-integrated, effective, evidence-based broader impacts activities developed within the context of the mission, goals and resources of the organizations and people involved. The expertise of collaborators, the proposal budget and the budget justification should reflect this integration. Example activities include but are not limited to those that create effective methods of science outreach and engagement with local communities or the public at large; translate research to benefit broader societal needs; involve participation from the full spectrum of diverse talent that society has to offer which includes groups that are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); or foster new partnerships, especially if focused on capacity building (e.g., with Minority Serving Institutions, two-year colleges or internationally). Additional guidance for broader impacts may be found in the PAPPG and in the [Dear Colleague Letter: A Broader Impacts Framework for Proposals Submitted to NSF's Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate](#). Please note that broader impacts need not be tied directly to research questions or objectives.

Community Engagement in Research

Community engagement refers to substantive interaction with community partner organizations and anchor institutions such as governments; federal, state and local agencies; schools, libraries, health and social service providers; tribes and Indigenous-serving organizations; nonprofits; cultural organizations; and businesses. Co-production of knowledge includes the integration of different knowledge systems and methodologies to systematically understand the phenomena, systems and processes being studied in a research project. A co-produced approach includes research in which local and Indigenous peoples and organizations fully engage in the complete research process cycle from the development of research questions to the collection, use and stewardship of data and the interpretation, application and dissemination of results.

Not all proposals submitted to the Cultural Anthropology Program are expected to include community engaged elements. However, proposals that include community engagement, partnerships with communities and international collaboration should either (1) have already established and agreed-upon partnerships, documented with the appropriate letters of collaboration and budget allocations or (2) provide a clear plan for community engagement and partnership building as part of the first year of the grant and (3) describe a well-rationalized and evidence-based approach to community engagement and/or co-production. Sufficient funding should be allocated in the budget to support mutually beneficial and respectful interactions that not only produce meaningful research and education or outreach outcomes, but also focus on the concerns of partnering communities, including questions of data sovereignty, co-authorship or co-review of project outcomes.

Human Subjects Research

Projects involving human subjects must indicate this on the cover sheet, including status of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and federal-wide assurance, and will need to provide IRB documentation prior to any award being processed (see the PAPPG). Though IRB approval is not required at the time of proposal submission, the program encourages PIs to briefly address the status of approval or the plan for IRB approval in the project description and provide any additional ethical considerations related to human subjects research in the project description.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing:

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Target Date(s)**:

    January 15, 2025

    January 15, Annually Thereafter

    August 15, 2025

    August 15, Annually Thereafter

D. Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements

For Proposals Submitted Via Research.gov:

    To prepare and submit a proposal via Research.gov, see detailed technical instructions available at: https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=research_node_display&_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationa For Research.gov user support, call the Research.gov Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or e-mail rgov@nsf.gov. The Research.gov Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the Research.gov system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

For Proposals Submitted Via Grants.gov:

Before using Grants.gov for the first time, each organization must register to create an institutional profile. Once registered, the applicant's organization can then apply for any federal grant on the Grants.gov website. Comprehensive information about using Grants.gov is available on the Grants.gov Applicant Resources web page: https://www.grants.gov/applicants. In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide (see link in Section V.A) provides instructions regarding the technical preparation of proposals via Grants.gov. For Grants.gov user support, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or by email: support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Contact Center answers general technical questions related to the use of Grants.gov. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this solicitation.

Submitting the Proposal: Once all documents have been completed, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit the application to Grants.gov and verify the desired funding opportunity and agency to which the application is submitted. The AOR must then sign and submit the application to Grants.gov. The completed application will be transferred to Research.gov for further processing.

The NSF Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov informational page provides submission guidance to applicants and links to helpful resources including the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide, Grants.gov Proposal Processing in Research.gov how-to guide, and Grants.gov Submitted Proposals Frequently Asked Questions. Grants.gov proposals must pass all NSF pre-check and post-check validations in order to be accepted by Research.gov at NSF.

When submitting via Grants.gov, NSF strongly recommends applicants initiate proposal submission at least five business days in advance of a deadline to allow adequate time to address NSF compliance errors and resubmissions by 5:00 p.m. submitting organization's local time on the deadline. Please note that some errors cannot be corrected in Grants.gov. Once a proposal passes pre-checks but fails any post-check, an applicant can only correct and submit the in-progress proposal in Research.gov.

Proposers that submitted via Research.gov may use Research.gov to verify the status of their submission to NSF. For proposers that submitted via Grants.gov, until an application has been received and validated by NSF, the Authorized Organizational Representative may check the status of an application on Grants.gov. After proposers have received an e-mail notification from NSF, Research.gov should be used to check the status of an application.

VI. NSF Proposal Processing And Review Procedures

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program for acknowledgment and, if they meet NSF requirements, for review. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF either as *ad hoc* reviewers, panelists, or both, who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal. In addition, Program Officers may obtain comments from site visits before recommending final action on proposals. Senior NSF staff further review recommendations for awards. A flowchart that depicts the entire NSF proposal and award process (and associated timeline) is included in PAPPG Exhibit III-1.

A comprehensive description of the Foundation's merit review process is available on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/.

Proposers should also be aware of core strategies that are essential to the fulfillment of NSF's mission, as articulated in *Leading the World in Discovery and Innovation, STEM Talent Development and the Delivery of Benefits from Research - NSF*

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2026. These strategies are integrated in the program planning and implementation process, of which proposal review is one part. NSF's mission is particularly well-implemented through the integration of research and education and broadening participation in NSF programs, projects, and activities.

One of the strategic objectives in support of NSF's mission is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions must recruit, train, and prepare a diverse STEM workforce to advance the frontiers of science and participate in the U.S. technology-based economy. NSF's contribution to the national innovation ecosystem is to provide cutting-edge research under the guidance of the Nation's most creative scientists and engineers. NSF also supports development of a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce by investing in building the knowledge that informs improvements in STEM teaching and learning.

NSF's mission calls for the broadening of opportunities and expanding participation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines, which 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.

A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria

The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes." NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.

1. Merit Review Principles

These principles are to be given due diligence by PIs and organizations when preparing proposals and managing projects, by reviewers when reading and evaluating proposals, and by NSF program staff when determining whether or not to recommend proposals for funding and while overseeing awards. Given that NSF is the primary federal agency charged with nurturing and supporting excellence in basic research and education, the following three principles apply:

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals. These "Broader Impacts" may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified.
- Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects. If the size of the activity is limited, evaluation of that activity in isolation is not likely to be meaningful. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these activities may best be done at a higher, more aggregated, level than the individual project.

With respect to the third principle, even if assessment of Broader Impacts outcomes for particular projects is done at an aggregated level, PIs are expected to be accountable for carrying out the activities described in the funded project. Thus, individual projects should include clearly stated goals, specific descriptions of the activities that the PI intends to do, and a plan in place to document the outputs of those activities.

These three merit review principles provide the basis for the merit review criteria, as well as a context within which the users of the criteria can better understand their intent.

2. Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board approved merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. **Both** criteria are to be given **full consideration** during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria. (PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.d(i). contains additional information for use by proposers in development of the Project Description section of the proposal). Reviewers are strongly encouraged to review the criteria, including PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.d(i), prior to the review of a proposal.

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to
   a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
   b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Proposers are reminded that reviewers will also be asked to review the Data Management and Sharing Plan and the Mentoring Plan, as appropriate.

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by

Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review, or Internal NSF Review.

Proposal are reviewed in accordance with the Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG): Chapter 3, NSF Proposal Processing and Review.

Reviewers will be asked to evaluate proposals using two National Science Board approved merit review criteria and, if applicable, additional program specific criteria. A summary rating and accompanying narrative will generally be completed and submitted by each reviewer and/or panel. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF strives to be able to tell proposers whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. Large or particularly complex proposals or proposals from new recipients may require additional review and processing time. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director acts upon the Program Officer's recommendation.

After programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements or the Division of Acquisition and Cooperative Support for review of business, financial, and policy implications. After an administrative review has occurred, Grants and Agreements Officers perform 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 their own risk.

Once an award or declination decision has been made, Principal Investigators are provided feedback about their proposals. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers or any reviewer-identifying information, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

VII. Award Administration Information

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program 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.B. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award notice, 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 notice; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1)*; and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award notice. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF. Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the NSF *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Build America, Buy America

As expressed in Executive Order 14005, Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers (86 FR 7475), it is the policy of the executive branch to use terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance awards to maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States.

Consistent with the requirements of the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58, Division G, Title IX, Subtitle A, November 15, 2021), no funding made available through this funding opportunity may be obligated for infrastructure projects under an award unless all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. For additional information, visit NSF's Build America, Buy America web page

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer no later than 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require submission of more frequent project reports). No later than 120 days following expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final annual project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final annual project reports, or the project outcomes report, will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for all identified PIs and co-PIs on a given award. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through Research.gov, for preparation and submission of annual and final annual project reports. Such reports provide information on accomplishments, project participants (individual and organizational), publications, and other specific products and impacts of the project. Submission of the report via Research.gov constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report also must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

VIII. Agency Contacts

Please note that the program contact information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Jeffrey W. Mantz, telephone: (703) 292-7783, email: jmantz@nsf.gov
- Tarini Bedi, Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-8499, email: tbedi@nsf.gov
- Jeremy Koster, Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-8740, email: jkoster@nsf.gov
- Brittiney Cleveland, Program Specialist, telephone: (703) 292-4634, email: bclevela@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of NSF systems contact:

- NSF Help Desk: 1-800-381-1532
- Research.gov Help Desk e-mail: rgov@nsf.gov

For questions relating to Grants.gov contact:

- Grants.gov Contact Center: If the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of application, please contact via telephone: 1-800-518-4726; e-mail: support@grants.gov.

IX. Other Information

The NSF website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, "NSF Update" is an information-delivery system designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF Grants Conferences. Subscribers are informed through e-mail or the user's Web browser each time new publications are issued that match their identified interests. "NSF Update" also is available on NSF's website.

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at https://www.grants.gov.

About The National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 55,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Arctic and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* Chapter II.F.7 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

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) 292-5090 and (800) 281-8749, FIRS at (800) 877-8339.

The National Science Foundation Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov.

- **Location:**   2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314

- **For General Information**   (703) 292-5111
  (NSF Information Center)**:**

- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired):**   (703) 292-5090

- **To Order Publications or Forms:**

      Send an e-mail to: nsfpubs@nsf.gov

      or telephone: (703) 292-8134

- **To Locate NSF Employees:**   (703) 292-5111

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; and project reports submitted by proposers 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 proposer 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 or other entities needing information regarding proposers or nominees as part of a joint application review process, or in order to coordinate programs or policy; 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 System of Record Notices, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records." Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (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 the burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

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