National Science Foundation Major Research Instrumentation Program


REQUIRED PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING NSF MRI PROPOSALS

Please note that the information contained within this announcement is for internal processes only. More detailed information about the program is available here, http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2015/nsf15504/nsf15504.htm

This is a limited submission opportunity in that an institution may submit up to three proposals, one of which *must* be for equipment development. (This limitation includes consortium partnerships where NU is a subcontractor.) Also note that there is a required cost sharing of 30%, mandated within the solicitation.

PROGRAM SYNOPSIS

The Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI) serves to increase access to shared scientific and engineering instruments for research and research training in our Nation's institutions of higher education, museums, science centers, and not-for-profit organizations. This program especially seeks to improve the quality and expand the scope of research and research training in science and engineering, by providing shared instrumentation that fosters the integration of research and education in research-intensive learning environments.

There are two types of applications: equipment acquisition (Track 1) and equipment development (Track 2). Acquisition proposals are for standard commercial instruments that do not require modifications to be effective. Development proposals require significant modification of commercial instruments (hardware and software) or completely novel instruments.

The University is especially interested in receiving equipment development proposals as the NSF highly encourages these applications. Development proposals allow support for graduate students and postdocs. If you are considering a development proposal, please contact the relevant NSF division to discuss your ideas before submitting an internal proposal. The MRI program is for instruments that are too costly and/or not
appropriate for support through other NSF programs. Instruments are expected to be operational for regular research use by the end of the award period. The MRI program does not support the acquisition or development of a suite of instruments to outfit research facilities or to conduct independent research activities simultaneously.

The following is a link to other frequently asked questions, http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2015/nsf15012/nsf15012.jsp

**SUBMISSION OF INTERNAL PROPOSALS**

Faculty interested in submitting an Internal Proposal should refer to instructions below for generating an internal proposal. Please send the proposal by email to the Executive Director of Research Facilities no later than 5:00 PM, CST on **November 9, 2015**. A copy of the proposal should also be emailed to the Director of the Office for Research Development (ORD) yehiely@northwestern.edu.

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Internal Proposals that meet NSF requirements will be reviewed by an Internal Review Committee. Proposals should contain each of the three sections outlined below and abide by NSF guidelines (one-inch margins and typed in NSF-appropriate typefaces and sizes). Once completed, all sections should be combined into a single file and sent to the Director of Core Facilities and Director of ORD. **Internal Proposal files should be named "LastName_FirstInitial_NSF_MRI.pdf," replacing "LastName" with the nominee's last name and "FirstInitial" with the nominee's first initial.**

1. **A lay summary/narrative** which includes the following elements (four pages max):
   a. **Title.** The title must include the words “Equipment Acquisition: Your Project Title” or “Equipment Development: Your Project Title.”
   b. **A description of the equipment and justification of need.**
   c. A list of faculty who will be involved in the submission and the estimated number of researchers who will benefit from the use of the equipment
   d. **A description of project and management plans,** including plans
for the maintenance, operation, and technical support of instrumentation; a plan for attracting new users; any other requirements as outlined in the NSF guidelines for the MRI Program (e.g., how the instrument will impact interdisciplinary science, research in the private sector and/or other academic institutions, risk factors involved and how they will be addressed).

e. **A summary of your proposal as outlined in the program solicitation** -

   The summary MUST address the "Intellectual Merit" and "Broader Impact" of the proposal.

2. **NSF-formatted biographical sketch of all key personnel** (two pages max each)

3. **A summary budget, inclusive of the required 30% cost sharing.** If the total budget is greater than $1 Million, documentation of departmental chair(s) and school dean(s) commitments will be required (copies of email threads are acceptable).

**IMPORTANT DATES**

- **Internal Proposals:** November 9, 2015, by 5:00 PM, CST
- **Review by Internal Committee:** November 20, 2015
- **Notification of Internal Candidates:** November 23, 2015
- **Sponsor Due Date:** January 13, 2016

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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