NSF/MPS Grant Opportunities

Kathleen McCloud
Division of Physics
(PHY)

Hans Krimm
Division of Astronomy
(AST)

Guebre Tessema
Division of Materials
Research
(DMR)

http://www.nsf.gov/

NSF headquarters in Alexandria, VA

AAPT New Faculty Workshop
October 28, 2018
NSF has moved!
... from Arlington, VA to Alexandria, VA

Before:

25 mins to/from DCA
4201 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22230

Now:

10 mins to/from DCA
2415 Eisenhower Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22314
NSF Vision and Goals

- **Vision**: A nation that creates and exploits new concepts in science and engineering and provides global leadership in research and education

- **Mission**: To promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense …

- **Strategic Goals:**
  - Transform the frontiers of science and engineering
  - Stimulate innovation and address societal needs through research & education
  - Excel as a Federal science agency
NSF Organization Chart

Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

National Science Board (NSB)

Director
Deputy Director

$7.472 B NSF total
$6.006 B research (FY 2017)

NSB Office

Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA)
Office of Information & Resource Management (OIRM)

Office of Diversity & Inclusion (ODI)
Office of the General Counsel (OGC)

Office of Integrative Activities (OIA)
Office of International Science & Engineering (OISE)
Office of Legislative & Public Affairs (OLPA)

Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS)

Biological Sciences (BIO)

Computer & Information Science & Engineering (CISE)

Engineering (ENG)

Geosciences (GEO)

Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS)

Education & Human Resources (EHR)

Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences (SBE)

Office of Legislative & Public Affairs (OLPA)
Directorate for Mathematical and Physics Sciences (MPS)

Division of Astronomical Sciences (AST)
Division of Chemistry (CHE)
Division of Materials Research (DMR)
Division of Mathematical Sciences (DMS)
Division of Physics (PHY)
Office of Multidisciplinary Activities (OMA)

Numbers are FY 2017 Actuals
$1.356B
Median Annualized Award Size and Duration

Funding rate varies by division and program, but averages 20-25%

Award duration 1-5 years
(longer allowed, but rare)
How to Apply for Funding

In general, you submit a proposal via fastlane.nsf.gov or research.gov to a particular Solicitation within a particular Division, specifying a particular Program.

- Designating secondary programs for co-review is OK if your work is inter-cross/disciplinary.
- If your selection is inappropriate, we will try to find the correct intellectual home for your proposal and transfer it internally.
How to find the right Solicitation and/or Program?

• Investigate Program websites
• Search the Award Database (at nsf.gov) using relevant keywords to see what has already been funded in various programs.
• Talk to your colleagues in similar disciplines (but beware that programs, requirements, etc. change).
• Read the relevant Solicitation.
• Contact the relevant Program Director!
  – One or two paragraphs describing the project
  – Possible phone call to discuss project

Not to get a scientific evaluation, but to discuss appropriateness for that Program.
Division that made the award.

Program Director currently managing the award.

Funds allocated to date*. See ‘expired’ awards for standard level of investment per award. [* may not reflect total award]

Program(s) that funded this award.

Abstract for this award – reviewing abstracts provides information on research scope of the program – does your research fit?
Now you want to begin writing.

- What are the rules?
- Is there guidance as to what is expected?

In general, your proposal must comply with two sets of rules/expectations:

- Those listed in the PAPPG* (NSF-wide expectations and requirements)
- Those listed in the Solicitation (specific to program):
  - Goal of Program
  - Eligibility
  - Deadlines/ Submission windows
  - Pre/Full proposal

In case of a conflict between the PAPPG and the Solicitation, the Solicitation overrides the PAPPG.

* NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide – updated annually – make sure you read the current version!
Parts of an NSF Proposal

- **Project Summary and Project Description** --- each must explicitly and separately address **Intellectual Merit** and **Broader Impact**
- **Project Description** -- also include Results from Prior NSF support
- **References** -- All Authors (except very large collaborations), Titles of Articles
- **Biographical Sketch**
- **Budget** -- your declaration about what you need to complete the proposed research (including overhead, etc.) --- consult with your SRO
- **Current and Pending Support declaration**
- **Post Doc Mentoring Plan** – if needed, one page in Supplementary Docs
- **Data Maintenance Plan** – two pages in Supplementary Docs
- **Collaborator & Affiliations List** – Single-Copy Document; special format – this is needed to identify conflicts of interest with potential reviewers
- Others as needed… see PAPPG and Solicitation

**Non-conforming proposals may be returned without review!!!**
Things to consider while writing

• **Why this research project?**
• Why you and not someone else?
  • Uniqueness of research, educational opportunities, available facilities...
• **What are your strengths?**
  • Capture the reviewers’ attention in the Summary and Introduction. Make them want to read more.
• **YOU** must convince the reviewer you are worthy of funding
• **Express yourself clearly**
  • It’s not the reviewer’s job to figure out what you are trying to accomplish and why. Good expository writing is key!

"A poor idea well written is more likely to be accepted than a good idea poorly written”
-- Isaac Asimov, scientist and writer (1920-1992)
Before Your Submit Your Proposal

• Start well in advance of the deadline

• Get someone else (with experience) to read the proposal, and leave your ego behind!

• Don’t wait until the deadline to submit (and ask your SRO how much time they will need in advance). Deadlines are absolute: may be extended for natural or man-made disasters (such as a government shutdown), but not for issues at your end.

• Upload, then download and Print the PDF file after finishing and double-check the font size, diagrams, etc.
**Merit Review Criteria**

NSF-funded Projects are expected to be of the highest intellectual quality with the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.

Projects are also expected to contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals, either through the research itself or through activities related or complementary to the research.

Two Merit Review criteria are considered when evaluating ALL NSF proposals:

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

NSF Broader Impacts are (intentionally) broadly defined.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Education: improved STEM education and educator development at any level
- Outreach: increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology
- Broadening participation: development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce
- Partnerships: increased cooperation between academia, industry, and others

- ALL NSF proposals must include Broader Impacts!
- Impact must be outside your field of study.
How Proposals become Grants

• Proposals are evaluated by combination of
  – **Panel appraisal:** Small group of scientists working in similar fields convened to evaluate and compare a slate of proposals. Panelists provide individual reviews and a panel summary.
  – **External (“ad-hoc”) reviews:** Written review of an individual proposal by an expert in the proposer’s field.

• Program Director recommends some proposals for funding based on panel evaluation, funding constraints and programmatic balance.

• Division Director concurs, providing final scientific approval.

• Division of Grants and Agreements makes the actual award to the PI’s institution.

Congratulations!
Each Division has its own programs to which you can submit a proposal.

However, there are several important Solicitations which cut across NSF….
CAREER

Faculty Early Career Development Program
NSF 17-537

- NSF’s most prestigious awards in support of junior faculty exemplifying the role of teacher-scholar
- Enhances and emphasizes the importance of balanced academic careers
- Career development plan to integrate research and education

Important points to bear in mind...

- Not a research excellence prize!
- Not intended as a default proposal mechanism for new Assistant Professors.
- Has a specialized purpose which may not be suitable for all PI’s.
• **Additional Requirements**
  – Must be in a tenure track position, as defined by your institution
  – Associate professors cannot apply
  – Requires letter from Department Chair or Equivalent
  – Read the solicitation for complete eligibility rules.

• **SIZE**
  – Lower Limit $400K (total)

• **DURATION**
  – 5 Years

• **PECASE**
  – HONORARY ONLY (Unlike DOE)

• **DEADLINES:**
  – July 17, 2019 BIO, CISE, EHR
  – July 18, 2019 ENG
  – July 19, 2019 GEO, MPS, SBE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOME OTHER RELEVANT PROGRAMS</th>
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**Major Instrumentation Program (MRI)**  
*NSF – 18-513*

- Up to $4M for development or acquisition proposals
- Submission limits per institution
- Cost sharing required for most institutions
- Submission window Jan. 1 – 22, 2019

**Facilitating Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (RUI)**  
*NSF – 14-579*

- Available to PIs at eligible institutions
- Submit as RUI to regular NSF program; meet program deadline
- Additional RUI Impact Statement required as part of proposal

**Broadening participation in graduate study (AGEP)**  
*NSF – 16-552*

- Available to PIs at specified institutions
- Support for graduate student tuition, benefits, stipend
Division of Physics (PHY)
The Physics Division –
A Broad, Rich and Diverse Research Portfolio

**Hot** – Active Galactic Nuclei Produce High Energy Cosmic Rays in Pierre Auger Observatory

**Cold** – Ultracold Molecules at JILA

**Large** – Nucleosynthesis in Accreting White Dwarfs at JINA

**Small** – Inspirals Produce Space-Time Distortion Less than Diameter of Proton in LIGO

**Living** – Brain Wave Images with Diffusion MRI

**Non-Living** – Proton-Proton Collisions at CERN

**Old** – Big-Bang Soup Recreated in Quark-Gluon Plasma at RHIC

**New** – Quantum Network at CalTech
Division of Physics

Facilities
- Large Hadron Collider
- IceCube
- LIGO
- NSCL

Experiment
- Atomic, Molecular, Optical
- Elementary Particle Physics
- Particle Astrophysics
- Gravitational Physics
- Nuclear Physics
- Physics of Living Systems
- Accelerator Science
- Plasma Physics
- LIGO Research Support

Theory
- Atomic, Molecular, and Optical
- Elementary Particle Physics
- Astrophysics and Cosmology
- Gravitational Physics
- Nuclear Physics
- Physics of Living Systems
- Accelerator Science
- Plasma Physics

Cross-cutting
- Physics Frontier Centers
- Integrative Activities in Physics
- Computational Physics
- Quantum Information Science

Note: Condensed-Matter Physics is within DMR, not PHY!
World Class Major Facilities
Keeping Researchers at the Frontier
Program Solicitation:
Investigator-Initiated Research Projects (17-561)

Be aware:

• New requirements for some PI’s!
• Does not override existing solicitations such as RUI, CAREER, REU sites, etc.
• Deadlines instead of target dates!
• Separate deadlines for different Physics programs
Full Proposal Deadlines  
(due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

**November 28, 2018:**
- Atomic, Molecular & Optical Physics - Experiment & Theory;
- Elementary Particle Physics - Experiment;
- Gravitational Physics - Experiment & Theory;
- Integrative Activities in Physics;
- LIGO Research Support;
- Particle Astrophysics - Experiment;
- Physics of Living Systems

**December 04, 2018:**
- Nuclear Physics - Experiment and Theory
- Elementary Particle Physics - Experiment

**December 11, 2018:**
- Elementary Particle Physics - Theory;
- Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology - Theory;
- Quantum Information Science
- Physics of Living Systems
Division of Physics

Changes to note:

• (for all Divisions:) Collaborators and Other Affiliations is now a Single-Copy Document (not sent to reviewers, seen by NSF only)
• There are restrictions on the allowed content in Letters of Collaboration or Membership in large collaborations

PI’s with concurrent sources of support:
• Explain how the proposed work is distinct from other funded activities.
• Discuss commitments (such as deliverables, specific projects, percentage of total research effort, etc.) associated with other support
• Put in the Current/Pending Support section… item for peer review.

Additional Information for Midscale Instrumentation:
For proposals to support instrumentation acquisition or development at the level of $4 million and above. This language may also apply to requests for lesser amounts if the cognizant Program Director concludes that the complexity of the instrumentation merits this approach. Investigators should first contact the Program Director for their physics subdiscipline. Proposals should be submitted to the appropriate PHY Program (not a separate solicitation.)
Division of Astronomy (AST)

Hans Krimm
hkrimm@nsf.gov
Individual Investigators (Lead: James Neff)

- AAG: Astronomy and Astrophysics Research Grants
- SPG: Solar and Planetary Research Grants
- CAREER: Early Career Faculty
- AAPF: Postdocs
- ATI: Advanced Technologies and Instrumentation
- MRI: Major Research Instrumentation
- REU: Education and Special Programs

Mid-scale (Lead: Rich Barvainis)

- MSIP: Back into a single program!

Facilities (Lead: Ralph Gaume)

- ALMA
- NRAO
- Gemini
- NOAO
- NSO
- Arecibo
- LSST

nsf.gov/ast

AST Division Programs

nsf.gov/ast
Astronomy and Astrophysics Research Grants (AAG)

Annual AAG deadline: November 15

- Research grants for observational, theoretical, laboratory, and archival data studies in all areas of astrophysics
- Proposals may span multiple disciplines and/or areas of study and may utilize multiple techniques.
- Solar and planetary research proposals should be submitted to AAG this year – with the same Nov. 15 deadline.
- New AAG solicitation 18-575
AAG Funding History, 1990-2018

From 2000 to 2008, AAG funding doubled, but the funding rate went down by 1/3. It’s essentially level ever since.
IIP Update

- *No Proposal Deadline* pilot has concluded for the Planetary/Exoplanetary and Solar portions of AAG (now included in AAG)
- New ATI solicitation released for FY2019 with proposals due Nov. 15, 2018
- MSIP is on every-other-year schedule - no solicitation for FY2019.
- PAARE discontinued.
- MRI solicitation annually - deadline Jan 2019
AAG Overview

• AAG = Astronomy & Astrophysics Res. Grants (due Nov. 15, 2019)
• An award is made to an institution: university, observatory, center (like CfA), NOT directly to another federal agency (like NASA).
• Typical awards are 3 years, ~$400K including institutional indirect
• Usual budget is for salary (grad student, postdoc, faculty summer (<= 2 mos), ”soft money” academic year), travel, publication costs.

AAG program overview:
Observational, theoretical or laboratory
Solar, stellar, planetary, exoplanets, galactic, extragalactic or cosmology

Proposals that are solely or predominantly for the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of space-based data from NASA-supported missions will be returned without review.
Our Facilities

Anyone may propose for observing time on NSF AST-funded facilities
Division of Materials Research (DMR)

G.X. Tessema
gtessema@nsf.gov
NSF Division of Materials Research (DMR)
DMR Budget Distribution

FY15 $307M
FY16 $310M
FY17 $314M
FY18R $283M

Topical Materials Research Programs & DMREF 40%
Science and Technology Centers 2%
National Facilities & Instrumentation 18%
REU sites 2%
MRSEC & PREM 19%
CAREER 8%
12% other

Where Materials Begin & Society Benefits
DMR Solicitations for “Unsolicited” Proposals for TMRP

Biomaterials (BMAT)
Electronic & Photonic Materials (EPM)
Metals and Metallic Nanostructures (MMN)
Polymers (POL)
Condensed Matter Physics (CMP)
Solid State and Materials Chemistry (SSMC)

Division of Materials Research: Topical Materials Research Programs (DMR-TMRP)

PROGRAM SOLICITATION
NSF 17-580

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):
PD 03-1710, PD 03-1773, PD 03-1775, PD 06-7623, PD 09-1771, PD 10-1762

Submission Deadline: Nov 1

Ceramics (CER)

PROGRAM SOLICITATION
NSF 16-597

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):
PD 15-1774

Condensed Matter and Materials Theory (CMMT)

PROGRAM SOLICITATION
NSF 16-596

REPLACES DOCUMENT(S):
PD 09-1765

Open Window – No Deadlines

Where Materials Begin & Society Benefits
DMR Mission Statement

Partner with research community to:

• To make new discoveries about the behavior of matter and materials.
• To create new materials and new knowledge about materials phenomena.
• To address fundamental materials questions that often transcend traditional scientific and engineering disciplines and may lead to new technologies.
• To prepare the next generation of materials researchers.
• To develop and support the instruments and facilities that are crucial to advance the field.
• To share the excitement and significance of materials science with the public at large.
National Facilities & Instrumentation

Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source (Cornell, Ithaca)

Center for High Resolution Neutron Scattering (NIST, MD)

National Nanotechnology Coordinated Infrastructure

http://nnci.net/about-nnci

National High Magnetic Field Facility (Florida)

Where Materials Begin & Society Benefits
Materials Innovation Platforms (MIP)

**MIP Concept:** Combine a **focused research effort** in an interactive feedback loop together with a **mid-scale user facility open to the community** in order to accelerate advancement of a materials research topic of national importance.

**Focus:** 2-dimensional chalcogenide materials for future electronics  
*e.g.*, Can theory model growth kinetics and guide materials synthesis?

**Current Status:**
- Accept user proposals; some samples delivered to users already  
- World’s first 300-atm floating-zone furnace at Paradim-JHU  
- Integrated MBE, CVD, ARPES & STM/AFM later in 2017  
- Access to computational, TEM & other capabilities  
- Webinars and summer schools

**Focus:** interfacial materials, combining oxides & 2D materials, for valleytronics & spintronics  
*e.g.*, Can we design and create new interfacial materials by “breaking” Gibbs’ & Pauling’s rules?
Multidisciplinary User Facilities for Research

MRSECs: Materials Research Facilities

(MRFN)

Yearly Users of MRSEC Facilities

> 1380 Academic
> 530 Industry
> 50 National Labs

743 Publications acknowledged

MRSEC SF
• 75 MRSEC Technical Staff in SEFs
• 31 Other Technicians
• 51 Administrative Staff
• 37 Education Staff

MRFN Statistics
20 centers
1141 instruments
255 experts

Mrfn.org
>1140 Instruments on the network

< All user proposal drive
Instrumentation

- Major Research Instrumentation (MRI)
- Divisional instrumentation programs
- Research grants
Questions?

Ask Early, Ask Often
(starting now!)

PHY: Kathy McCloud, kmccloud@nsf.gov
AST: Hans Krimm, hkrimm@nsf.gov
DMR: G. X. Tessema, gtessema@nsf.gov
Backup Slides
Note: Biology includes Biological Science and Environmental Science. Biology and Psychological Sciences exclude National Institutes of Health funding from the total amount of federal support.

Source: NSF/National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Federal Funds for Research and Development
### MPS Funding

(Dollars in Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPS Funding</th>
<th>FY 2016 Actual</th>
<th>FY 2017 (TBD)</th>
<th>FY 2018 Request</th>
<th>Change Over FY 2016 Actual</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$246.63</td>
<td>$221.15</td>
<td>$221.05</td>
<td>-$25.48</td>
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<td>Astronomical Sciences (AST)</td>
<td>246.52</td>
<td>221.05</td>
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<td>Materials Research (DMR)</td>
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<td>Mathematical Sciences (DMS)</td>
<td>276.91</td>
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<td>253.30</td>
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<td>Physics (PHY)</td>
<td>34.89</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31.28</td>
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<td>Office of Multidisciplinary Activities (OMA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$1,348.78</td>
<td>$1,219.43</td>
<td>-$129.35</td>
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Funding Rates

FY 17

NSF: 23%
Funding Opportunities [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov)
www.nsf.gov — Search Current Awards
www.nsf.gov/awardsearch

‘dark matter’
Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide

(see link within Fastlane under “Proposals, Awards, Status”)

(PAPPG) NSF 18-1

- Contains guidelines for all proposals (except when program Solicitation stipulates otherwise)
- Also provides guidance for Award process, from issuance and administration through closeout
- Also describes NSF organizations and offices most relevant to grantees
- Also provides a list of Statutes and Executive Orders
- Is updated often: make sure you are looking at the most current edition!
Intellectual Merit

For example...

- How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields?
- How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project?
- To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
- How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity?
- Is there sufficient access to resources?
Broader Impacts

For example...

- How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while **promoting teaching, training, and learning**?
- How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of **underrepresented groups**?
- To what extent will it enhance the **infrastructure** for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships?

  - Will the **results be disseminated** broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding?
  - What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to **society**?
Along with the advice provided by reviewers/Panels, NSF staff give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

**Integration of Research and Education**

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions…

**Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities**

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

ELIGIBILITY: As of Directorate Deadline

• Hold a doctoral degree by the deadline date in a field supported by NSF;
• Be untenured until October 1 following the deadline; and
• Have not previously received a CAREER award (prior or concurrent Federal support for other types of awards or for non-duplicative research does not preclude eligibility);

AND

• By October 1st following the deadline for submission of CAREER proposals: Be employed in a tenure-track (or tenure-track-equivalent) position as an assistant professor (or equivalent title) at an accredited institution located in the U.S., its territories, or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, that awards degrees in a field supported by NSF;

OR

• Be employed in a tenure-track position (or tenure-track-equivalent position) as an assistant professor (or equivalent title) at an organization located in the U.S., its territories or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, that is a non-profit, non-degree-granting organization such as a museum, observatory, or research lab.
CAREER Program

Awardees are selected based on their plan of outstanding research, excellent education, and the integration of research and education within the context of the mission of their organizations, building a firm foundation for a lifetime of leadership.

Increased participation of those traditionally under-represented in science and engineering is encouraged.
Principles Applied to MPS

• Support early career
  • CAREER request relatively stable. Targeted REU reductions if undergraduate students could be supported through national facilities and normal research awards. 8,000 graduate students to be supported through research awards.

• Protect the core; cross disciplinary programs
  • Major research facilities are “core” to MPS.
  • Retained flexibility to fund the best science by rolling some cross-disciplinary programs into core programs.

• Strategic and prioritized reductions within directorates
  • Emphasized funding of highest priority facilities; reductions proposed for some facilities in transition.
  • Reduced mid-scale and instrumentation; support individual investigators.
  • Prioritized low-level investments leading to “Big Ideas”.

National Science Foundation
Major Instrumentation Program (MRI)
NSF – 18-513

Next Deadline: January 01, 2019 - January 22, 2019

Restrictions on organization submission eligibility

Submission limit - Three (3) per organization: Two proposals for less than $1M, one proposal for more than $1M.

Awards - up to $4M for development or acquisition proposals

Cost-sharing at the level of 30% of the total project cost is required for Ph.D.-granting institutions and non-degree-granting organizations. Cost-sharing is not required for non-Ph.D. granting institutions.

Merit Review - At the time of submission, PI’s are asked to identify an NSF division(s) to review proposal. NSF reserves the right to place proposals in the appropriate division(s) for review.
RUI: Facilitating Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions

- RUI proposals from eligible institutions must be submitted in response to existing NSF funding opportunities and must abide by guidelines and deadlines in those documents.

- Current RUI solicitation is NSF 14-579. You submit here and designate which Program should receive your proposal. RUI solicitation has extra requirements beyond the regular Program Solicitations and PAPPG.

There is no single Foundation-wide deadline for RUI proposals – see Division programs.
MPS AGEP GR Supplements

• Available to PIs to support qualifying graduate students at AGEP or AGEP Legacy Institutions only!
  https://www.nsf.gov/mps/broadening_participation/index.jsp

• Graduate Student Eligibility
  – Emphasis placed on under-represented groups
  – Not currently supported by federal government (NSF, DOE, NIH,…)
  – US Citizen, US National, or US Permanent Resident

• Stipend, tuition, benefits, and IDC (~$60k). Renewable up to two times.

See DCL 16-125 for more information