

# International Research Fellowship Program (IRFP)

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## Program Solicitation

NSF 05-599

Replaces Document NSF-02-149



**National Science Foundation**

Office of the Director

Office of International Science and Engineering

## Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

October 11, 2005

Second Tuesday in September annually thereafter

## REVISIONS AND UPDATES

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The revision clarifies application instructions, increases minimum Fellowship duration from three months to nine months, increases maximum stipend to \$5000 per month, and changes deadlines after 2005 to 2nd Tuesday in September. Added Special Award Conditions regarding intellectual property rights and acknowledgment for awards.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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### General Information

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#### Program Title:

International Research Fellowship Program (IRFP)

#### Synopsis of Program:

The objective of the International Research Fellowship Program (IRFP) is to introduce scientists and engineers in the early stages of their careers to research opportunities abroad, thereby furthering NSF's goal of creating a diverse, competitive, and globally-engaged U.S. workforce of scientists, engineers, technologists and well-prepared citizens. These awards are available in any field of science and engineering research and education supported by NSF.

#### Cognizant Program Officer(s):

- Susan L. Parris, Program Manager, Office of the Director, Office of International Science and Engineering, 935 N, telephone: (703) 292-8711, fax: (703) 292-9067, email: [sparris@nsf.gov](mailto:sparris@nsf.gov)

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

- 47.075 --- Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences
- 47.078 --- Office of Polar Programs
- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences
- 47.079 --- International Science and Engineering (OISE)
- 47.050 --- Geosciences
- 47.041 --- Engineering
- 47.076 --- Education and Human Resources
- 47.070 --- Computer and Information Science and Engineering

- 47.074 --- Biological Sciences

## Eligibility Information

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- **Organization Limit:**

Applications are submitted directly by the individual researcher, unlike standard NSF proposals that are submitted through the researcher's U.S. institutional representative. In the IRFP FastLane application process (Section V. D.), the applicant acts as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR).

If a successful applicant wishes to have his/her award administered by his/her U.S. institution, this modification can be done at the time of award. NOTE: No indirect costs are allowed.

- **PI Eligibility Limit:** Applicants must: 1) be U.S. citizens or permanent residents as of the application deadline (Applicants who are permanent residents of the United States may not request a host site in their country of origin.); 2) have been awarded a Ph.D. within three years of the application deadline or expect to receive the doctoral degree by the start of the project. (If an applicant is recommended for an award, the award may be made before the Ph.D. is awarded, but the applicant must provide proof of the degree before any funds are released); and 3) desire to conduct scientific and engineering research at appropriate institutions of higher education, industrial research institutions/laboratories, government research institutes/laboratories/centers, nonprofit research organizations, and foreign centers of excellence located outside of the United States.
- **Limit on Number of Proposals:** Recipients of previous International Research Fellowship Program awards are not eligible. Applicants may submit only one fellowship application per program year.

## Award Information

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- **Anticipated Type of Award:** Fellowship
- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 30 to 35 - Approximately 30-35 fellowships will be offered each year to U.S. investigators for research abroad.
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$3,500,000 Total program support will be approximately \$3.5 million in each fiscal year, contingent upon the quality of applications and availability of funds.

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

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### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** This solicitation contains information that deviates from the standard Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

### B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is not required by NSF.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** No indirect costs are allowed.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

### C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Deadline Date(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):  
October 11, 2005  
Second Tuesday in September annually thereafter

## Proposal Review Information

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

## Award Administration Information

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- **Award Conditions:** Additional award conditions apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The objective of the International Research Fellowship Program (IRFP) is to introduce scientists and engineers in the early stages of their careers to research opportunities abroad, thereby furthering NSF's goal of creating a diverse, competitive, and globally-engaged U.S. workforce of scientists, engineers, technologists, and well-prepared citizens.

## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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Support of international activities is an integral part of the NSF mission to sustain and strengthen the nation's science, mathematics, and engineering capabilities, and to promote the use of those capabilities in service to society. In particular, NSF recognizes the importance of enabling U.S. researchers and educators to advance their work through international collaborations, and of helping ensure that future generations of U.S. scientists and engineers gain professional experience beyond this nation's borders early in their careers.

The IRFP contributes to NSF's mission by supporting highly meritorious research and education activities that present unique opportunities and offer potentially high benefits because of the vital and integral nature of the foreign collaboration. Fellowship support is intended to both advance the research and develop a cadre of scientists and engineers who will play a leadership role in forging international collaborations of great value to the nation.

IRFP awards are available in any field of science and engineering research or education supported by NSF. Applicants are encouraged to consider any site that will provide a unique and beneficial research experience.

Appropriate organizations include institutions of higher education, industrial research institutions/laboratories, government

research institutes/laboratories/centers, nonprofit research organizations, and foreign centers of excellence. Applicants should check the [IRFP Funding Opportunity page on the OISE website](#) for possible country-specific opportunities.

Eligible applicants, in addition to being citizens or permanent residents of the United States, must have earned a doctoral degree within three years of the deadline date, or expect to receive the doctoral degree by the start of the project. Women, minorities, and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Support may be requested for residence abroad for nine to 24 months. The 24-month period may include up to one year (or some portion equal to or less than that at the foreign site) as a "re-entry" component in the United States. This period must be specified in the proposal at the time of application.

Awardees are expected to work full time on their research projects.

Applicants are evaluated on their ability, accomplishments, and potential, as evidenced by the biographical sketch/cv/resume and reference letters. The research is evaluated on its scientific merit, its feasibility, its significance in generating new knowledge, and its impact on the career development of the applicant. Other important evaluative factors are the suitability and availability of the host scientist(s) and host institution(s), including colleagues and facilities, and evidence of actual planned collaboration between applicant and host.

Reviewers are most influenced by strong publication records, enthusiastic letters of reference, and clear, detailed, well-written, hypothesis-driven proposals. NOTE: The project description should be written to an expert in the substantive field of research. Detailed and enthusiastic host invitation letters are viewed very positively. Applicants have been faulted for not providing enough detail, and for not being familiar with current literature in their field.

IRFP aims to provide an international experience to those individuals who have never had one previously. Consequently, those applicants who already have international research experience and/or are currently working at the foreign host institution must justify why they should receive fellowship consideration. Applicants who received their Ph.D. at a foreign institution will be given lower priority. Also, priority will be given to those applicants who are not currently in a tenure-track position. Therefore, where reviews and ranking are equal, those with no previous international experience and/or those who have not yet secured a tenure-track position, will take precedence.

As this program is open to all research fields and disciplines supported by NSF, as well as suitable research institutions anywhere in the world, efforts will be made to ensure appropriate distribution of fellowships across disciplinary fields and geographic regions.

### III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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Applicants must: 1) be U.S. citizens or permanent residents as of the application deadline date; 2) have been awarded a doctoral degree within three years of the application deadline date or expect to receive the doctoral degree by the start of the project (if the Ph.D. has not been awarded by the time of an award recommendation, a clause will be written into the grant letter stating that no funds will be released until proof of the degree is provided.); and 3) desire to conduct scientific and engineering research at appropriate institutions of higher education, industrial research institutions/laboratories, government research institutes/laboratories/centers, nonprofit research organizations, and foreign centers of excellence located outside of the United States.

Recipients of previous International Research Fellowship awards are not eligible. Each applicant may submit only one application per program year.

**Host Site Eligibility:** Appropriate host sites are foreign science or engineering centers in all geographical regions. (Applicants should check the [IRFP Funding Opportunity page on the OISE website](#) for possible country-specific opportunities.)

Appropriate establishments include institutions of higher education, industrial research institutions/laboratories, government research institutes/laboratories/centers, and non-profit research organizations, and foreign centers of excellence located outside of the United States. Applicants who are permanent residents of the United States may not select a host site in their country of origin. Competition is very strong for applicants who wish to conduct research in Western Europe and, in general, in the more developed countries. All proposals are ranked based on scientific merit. However, given two equally ranked proposals, priority will be given to the proposal with research in an underrepresented country. In addition, the number of awards for specific countries may be limited in the interest of widening the geographic scope of the program. A U.S.-affiliated institution outside of the United States, for example the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) in Panama, would be an acceptable host site, but with equivalent reviews and ranking, would be considered lower priority than a fellowship to be conducted at a non-U.S. affiliated institution.

#### IV. AWARD INFORMATION

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

Anticipated Type of Award: Fellowship

Estimated Number of Awards: 30-35 - Approximately 30-35 fellowships will be offered each year to U.S. investigators for research abroad. Awards in recent years have ranged in size from \$15,000 to \$195,000, depending on location of host site, cost of research project, duration and number of dependents.

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$3,500,000 - Total program support will be approximately \$3.5 million in each fiscal year, contingent upon the quality of applications and availability of funds.

#### Limitations

Fellowships will provide support for periods of from nine to 24 months. Requests to divide the fellowship term between multiple institutions should be clearly described in the application.

Awardees are encouraged to begin the fellowship within 12 months of notification of an award. Any exceptions, such as a delay in completion of the Ph.D., will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

NOTE: Any requests for a re-entry component must be made within the original application. A re-entry host and project must be included. That component is reviewed along with the foreign component. A request for a re-entry component to write up results back in the United States is not appropriate.

#### V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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##### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

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#### Full Proposal Instructions:

Proposals submitted in response to this program announcement/solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF Website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg). Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [pubs@nsf.gov](mailto:pubs@nsf.gov).

All page limits indicated within this program solicitation include images, figures, graphics, tables, etc. Applicants must adhere to page limitations, font size (no smaller than 10 point), and margins (minimum of 2.5 cm). While specified guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, PIs are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal. Proposals that do not conform to the requirements will be returned without review. In cases where requirements given in this program solicitation differ from those given in the Grant Proposal Guide, this solicitation takes precedence.

**International Research Fellowship Program (IRFP) Application** must be submitted electronically using FastLane.

Go to [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov), click on FastLane, select Postdoctoral Fellowships on the FastLane navigation bar, select 'I am An Applicant', choose IRFP from list of postdoc programs, and **print detailed How to Apply instructions**.

The instructions describe how you register as an individual (rather than through your research institution) in order to apply to this program. This registration step must be completed before beginning your actual application. After you have registered, you may begin your proposal application.

Your **International Research Fellowship Program (IRFP) application** consists of:

1. **Cover Page** - You must complete the cover page first. Check that **your** name and address show as both Awardee and Performing Organization. Select this program announcement from the list shown.

2. **Project Summary (1-page limit)**- Include a heading with your name, project title, host(s) name and institution(s). Provide paragraphs with a description of dissertation research, description of the proposed research project, your objective, technical approach and expected results. Describe why you want to go to a particular site and why you want to work with your host. Use terms understandable to a lay person. (This applies only to the Project Summary, not to the Project Description.) Do not use jargon.
3. **Detailed Project Description (not to exceed seven single-spaced pages)** - If necessary, up to an additional 3 pages may be used for forms, graphs and images, to be submitted as Supplementary Documents. The Project Description must contain the following six items:
  - a. Detailed project description - If you are also requesting a re-entry component, it must be included within the seven-page limit.
  - b. Detailed justification for conducting the research abroad.
  - c. Identification of the collaborating host(s).
  - d. Clear relationship between your proposed research and the current research efforts at the host institution.
  - e. Description of facilities and any other evidence of the suitability of the foreign collaborator(s) and site(s).
  - f. Explanation of your long-term career goals and the role of this postdoctoral experience in achieving them, including future plans for collaborative activities.
4. **References Cited**
5. **Applicant's Biographical Sketch** and list of publications with full title and complete references. (Do not send reprints or abstracts.) At the top of this document, include your name and current affiliation. You may substitute your curriculum vitae or resume as this biographical sketch. This document, plus your two letters of reference, is what the reviewers will use to evaluate you. Be sure to include all that you believe they need to know in order to evaluate your abilities and potential.
6. **Host Scientist's Invitation/Sponsoring Scientist Statement** - Applicant uses the Supplementary Document section in FastLane to upload this letter and curriculum vitae (CV) from the host. An important basis for judging the suitability of the host institution is the degree to which the host scientist invitation letter describes and offers a research environment and mentoring opportunity that could not be obtained without fellowship support. The Letter of Invitation is from the prospective host scientist(s) or engineer(s) both for the foreign tenure and any re-entry component. The letter must describe the proposed interaction between the applicant's research plan and ongoing research efforts at the foreign site. The host's CV in English (strictly limited to two pages) must be attached following the letter. The host should be the person who will actually collaborate with the applicant. Evidence of real collaboration is critical.
7. **NSF Budget Data** - You provide the total requested amount when asked within the FastLane application process. The FastLane system will create an actual budget form with this amount entered for you.
8. **Budget Breakdown** - Under Supplementary Documents, use one or more additional page(s) for an actual budget breakdown. List each budget item per Allowable Expenses in Section B below. (For example - applicant's airfare = \$2,000, dependent's airfare = \$2,000, dependent's allowance - \$150 X 12 months = \$1,800, etc.) Be as specific as possible for elements such as materials and equipment. Reviewers must see that you will have what you need to accomplish what you propose. For any items where justification is needed (materials, in-country travel, etc.) write one or two sentences after the entry. (See section on Budgetary Information below.) Note: If recommended for an award, a detailed, final budget will be worked out through discussion with NSF, based on funds available and per diem rates in effect at that time.
9. **Timeline of Project** (submit as a Supplementary Document).
10. **Two Letters of Reference (which include rating sheets in the FastLane reference module)** - You do not enter these letters. Your reference letter writers use FastLane to directly enter and submit them after you have listed their names within the "Add/Delete Letter of Reference Writers" section in your FastLane application. You must list their names before your references can submit their letters. The references must be two senior researchers familiar with your work. One reference **must** be from your Ph.D advisor. Do not request references from proposed foreign hosts or host institutions. You are responsible for assuring that your references use FastLane to submit their letters **by the application deadline**. No proposals will be reviewed until both letters have been received.
11. **Application Form** - Basic information such as name, address, etc.
12. **Application Form B** - Foreign language skills (do not list English), dependent information, and international experience.

**The following are NOT included in the seven- page limit:** Project Summary, References Cited, Applicant's Biographical Sketch/CV/Resume, Host Scientist's Invitation/Sponsoring Scientist Statement, NSF Budget Data, Budget Breakdown, Timeline, Two Letters of Reference, and any graphics, forms, or images. **The seven- page limit applies only to the Project Description.**

Proposers are reminded to identify the program announcement/solicitation number (05-599) in the program announcement/ solicitation block on the proposal Cover Sheet. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

## B. Budgetary Information

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### Cost Sharing:

Cost sharing is not required by NSF in proposals submitted under this Program Solicitation.

#### Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:

No indirect costs are allowed.

#### Other Budgetary Limitations:

#### Allowable Expenses for IRFP

- **Round trip economy airfare and necessary ground transportation** from the awardee's permanent residence or the place where the application was made to the host institution. Air travel must be performed on a U.S. flag carrier if such service is available (see para. 761.2 and 761.3 of the Grant Policy Manual at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpm](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpm)).
- **Up to \$300 of excess baggage allowance**
- **In-country travel.** Travel between countries and within the host country may be included if justified in the proposal.
- **Up to \$2,500 a year relocation allowance.**
- **Living allowance** of \$500 to maximum of \$5,000 per month to be determined at time of award on basis of U.S. Government per diem rates for host locality. Per diem rates can be viewed at <http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm>. Use the Maximum Per Diem Rate. If your host city is not listed, use the rate listed under Other. The first 30 days are calculated at the full per diem rate. The rate is reduced to 50% for all days thereafter. (Calculate as follows: Per diem rate multiplied by 30 days, divided by 2, times number of remaining months, plus first month figure, divided by total tenure months. Example: 12 months in host city at per diem rate of \$100 would be figured: \$100 X 30 days = \$3,000 (first month rate) divided by 2 = \$1,500 X 11 months = \$16,500 plus \$3,000 (first month rate) = \$19,500 divided by 12 months (total duration) = a monthly stipend of \$1,625.) For any re-entry component, \$3,750 per month will be provided for living allowance, regardless of location.
- **Health insurance allowance** of \$150 per month.
- **Support for field/lab expenses, materials, supplies and equipment**, if justified by proposal.
- **Partial support for language training**, for applicant, if justified, with the amount determined on a case-by-case basis.
- **Up to \$3,000 per award for a return professional visit(s).** May be used for presentation of results at conferences, consultation with colleagues, job interviews, or attendance at professional conferences.
- **Dependent Support:** For each dependent accompanying the awardee for six months or more: Round trip economy airfare (see U.S. flag carrier requirements above), excess baggage allowance of \$300, health insurance allowance of \$50 per month, and a supplementary living allowance of \$150 per month.
- **Institutional allowance** - up to 10 percent of the award amount may be requested to help defray research costs incurred by host institution in support of the fellow. Expenses must be documented at time of award. NOTE: NSF funds no indirect costs for these fellowships.

#### C. Due Dates

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Proposals must be submitted by the following date(s):

**Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

October 11, 2005  
Second Tuesday in September annually thereafter

#### D. FastLane Requirements

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Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this announcement/solicitation through the FastLane system. Detailed instructions for proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov). The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program announcement/solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this announcement/solicitation.

*Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets.* The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Proposers are no longer required to provide a paper copy of the signed Proposal Cover Sheet to NSF. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>

## VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

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### A. NSF Proposal Review Process

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

The National Science Board approved revised criteria for evaluating proposals at its meeting on March 28, 1997 ([NSB 97-72](#)). All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

On July 8, 2002, the NSF Director issued [Important Notice 127](#), Implementation of new Grant Proposal Guide Requirements Related to the Broader Impacts Criterion. This Important Notice reinforces the importance of addressing both criteria in the preparation and review of all proposals submitted to NSF. NSF continues to strengthen its internal processes to ensure that both of the merit review criteria are addressed when making funding decisions.

In an effort to increase compliance with these requirements, the January 2002 issuance of the GPG incorporated revised proposal preparation guidelines relating to the development of the Project Summary and Project Description. Chapter II of the GPG specifies that Principal Investigators (PIs) must address both merit review criteria in separate statements within the one-page Project Summary. This chapter also reiterates that broader impacts resulting from the proposed project must be addressed in the Project Description and described as an integral part of the narrative.

Effective October 1, 2002, NSF will return without review proposals that do not separately address both merit review criteria within the Project Summary. It is believed that these changes to NSF proposal preparation and processing guidelines will more clearly articulate the importance of broader impacts to NSF-funded projects.

The two National Science Board approved merit review criteria are listed below (see the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) Chapter III.A for further information). The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which he/she is qualified to make judgments.

#### **What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?**

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

#### **What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?**

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

NSF staff will 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. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

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

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented



minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

**Additional Review Criteria:**

**IN ADDITION TO THE REVIEW CRITERIA ABOVE**, the reviewers are asked to consider the following criteria:

Prospective benefits to the applicant, the research discipline, and the United States;

Qualifications of proposed host and host institution, and complementarity;

Qualifications of applicant, including applicant's potential for continued growth;

Merit of the proposed international collaboration; and

Expected mutual benefits to be derived from the proposed collaboration of the scientists and engineers in each country.

Applicants are evaluated on their ability, accomplishments, and potential as evidenced by the biographical sketch/ curriculum vitae/resume and reference letters. The research is evaluated on its scientific merit, its feasibility, its significance in generating new knowledge, and its impact on the career development of the applicant. Other important evaluative factors are the suitability and availability of the host scientist(s) and host institution(s), including colleagues and facilities, and evidence of actual planned collaboration between applicant and host.

Reviewers are most influenced by strong publication records, enthusiastic letters of reference, and clear, detailed, well-written, hypothesis-driven proposals. Detailed and enthusiastic host invitation letters are viewed very positively. Your proposal should be clearly written and understandable to someone in your area of research. Applicants have been faulted for not providing enough detail and for not being familiar with current literature in their field.

IRFP aims to provide an international experience to those individuals who have never had one previously. Consequently, those applicants who already have international research experience and/or are currently working at the foreign host institution must justify why they should receive fellowship consideration. Applicants who received their Ph.D. at a foreign institution will be given lower priority. Also, priority will be given to those applicants who are not currently in a tenure-track position. Therefore, where reviews and ranking are equal, those with no previous international experience and/or those who have not yet secured a tenure-track position, will take precedence.

**B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard**

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All proposals are carefully reviewed by at least three other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement/solicitation will be reviewed by Ad Hoc and/or panel review.

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

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

NSF is striving to be able to tell proposers whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the closing date of an announcement/solicitation, or the date of proposal receipt, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

## VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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### A. Notification of the Award

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Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program Division administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See section VI.A. for additional information on the review process.)

### B. Award Conditions

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An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (NSF-GC-1); \* or Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Terms and Conditions \* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreement awards are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC). Electronic mail notification is the preferred way to transmit NSF awards to organizations that have electronic mail capabilities and have requested such notification from the Division of Grants and Agreements.

\*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at <http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/>. Paper copies of these documents may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [pubs@nsf.gov](mailto:pubs@nsf.gov).

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions is contained in the NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpm](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpm). The GPM is also for sale through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC 20402. The telephone number at GPO for subscription information is (202) 512-1800. The GPM may be ordered through the GPO Website at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

#### Special Award Conditions:

NSF claims no rights to any inventions or writings that may result from its fellowship awards. However, Fellows should be aware that NSF, other Federal agencies, or private parties may acquire such rights through other grant support. Applicants are encouraged to discuss institutional policies on intellectual property rights with the host institution before submitting an application, as well as the policies of the sponsoring scientist regarding what materials and projects must remain with the host institution, and which can be released to the Fellow at the end of the fellowship. Fellows at foreign institutions should be aware that specific provisions regarding allocations of intellectual property rights apply to particular countries, and Fellows should be cognizant of any such provisions before commencing work.

Fellows are obligated to include an acknowledgment of NSF support and a disclaimer in any publication arising from the fellowship-supported research.

Fellows are expected to agree to complete and open sharing of data and material in an expeditious manner. By submitting an application, it is understood that all participants agree to NSF guidelines on sharing of findings, data, and other research products. For further information, see the current issuance of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg).

### C. Reporting Requirements

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

Within 90 days after the expiration of an award, the PI also is required to submit a final project report. Failure to provide final technical reports delays NSF review and processing of pending proposals for the PI and all Co-PIs. 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 FastLane, for preparation and

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

## VIII. CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Susan L. Parris, Program Manager, Office of the Director, Office of International Science and Engineering, 935 N, telephone: (703) 292-8711, fax: (703) 292-9067, email: [sparris@nsf.gov](mailto:sparris@nsf.gov)

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- OISE FastLane Contact, telephone: (703) 292-8710, email: [oisefl@nsf.gov](mailto:oisefl@nsf.gov)
- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: (800) 673-6188, email: [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov)

## IX. OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

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

Many NSF programs offer announcements or solicitations concerning specific proposal requirements. To obtain additional information about these requirements, contact the appropriate NSF program offices. Any changes in NSF's fiscal year programs occurring after press time for the *Guide to Programs* will be announced in the NSF *E-Bulletin*, which is updated daily on the NSF Website at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/ebulletin>, and in individual program announcements/solicitations. Subscribers can also sign up for NSF's *MyNSF News Service* (<http://www.nsf.gov/mynsf/>) to be notified of new funding opportunities that become available.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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

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

*Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities* (FASED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the GPG Chapter II, Section D.2 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

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 <http://www.nsf.gov>

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#### PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0023. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 12 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, Division of Administrative Services, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230.

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