



To: Distribution List

From: Susan De Los Santos, Faculty Research Support Officer
Monica Fishel, Faculty Research Support Officer
Allison Hagerman, Faculty Research Support Officer
Office of the Vice President for Research

Subject: NSF: Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI) (NSF 15-504)

Date: October 17, 2014

If you are affiliated with HSC, please contact Corey Ford at 272-6950 for more information.

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, not-for-profit museums, science centers and scientific/engineering research organizations. The program provides organizations with opportunities to acquire major instrumentation that supports the research and research training goals of the organization and that maybe used by other researchers regionally or nationally. Each MRI proposal may request support for the acquisition (Track 1) or development (Track 2) of a single research instrument for shared inter- and/or intra-organizational use; development efforts that leverage the strengths of private sector partners to build instrument development capacity at MRI submission-eligible organizations are encouraged.

The MRI program assists with the acquisition or development of a shared research instrument that is, in general, too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs. The program does not fund research projects or provide ongoing support for operating or maintaining facilities or centers. The MRI program does not support the acquisition or development of a suite of instruments to outfit research laboratories or facilities, or that can be used to conduct independent research activities simultaneously.

This program invites applications for instrument acquisition proposals, which have a project period of up to three years and instrument development proposals, which have a project period of up to five years. The anticipated earliest start date is August 1, 2015. Proposals may request funds in the range \$100,000-\$4 million. Proposals that request funds from NSF less than \$100,000 may also be accepted from any MRI-eligible organization for the disciplines of mathematics or social, behavioral and economic sciences. At least 70% of the Total Project Cost must fall under the Equipment category. For acquisition proposals from institutions required to include cost sharing, grant funds may only be requested for the Equipment budget category. Subawards may be included in development proposals but not in acquisition proposals unless the submitting organization is a non-Ph.D. granting institution of higher education.

NSF anticipates awarding 160 grants. Cost-sharing of precisely 30% of the total project cost, *not* 30% of the NSF request, is required. Details from this year's call can be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2015/nsf15504/nsf15504.htm>. The due date for this year's full proposals to NSF is January 22, 2015.

This is a limited competition. The MRI program requires that an MRI-eligible organization may, as a performing organization, submit or be included as a significantly funded subawardee in no more than three (3) MRI proposals. However, at UNM, one (1) acquisition submission has already been approved through an earlier process. At this time we are requesting pre-proposal submissions for one (1) acquisition and one (1) development proposal. If you have questions concerning this limit please contact Kevin Malloy, Associate Vice President for Research at 277-7374.

Please submit your 3-page pre-proposal addressing the review criteria below (plus budget overview, cost share budget and abbreviated CV; all documents in a SINGLE PDF file, 11 point font) by NOON on Tuesday, November 11, 2014 to limited@unm.edu with the subject line indicating: NSF MRI (designate "Acquisition" or "Development") - your name. No late submissions will be considered.

Priority for selection will be given to pre-proposals that provide evidence that (1) this instrument will be broadly shared, servicing multiple educational scientific users, and (2) that there is a plan for the mandatory cost sharing. Arrangements for meeting cost sharing requirements must be made in advance of submission of the pre-proposal. The OVPR has limited funding available for cost sharing and investigators are encouraged to identify external and college/departamental in-kind contributions. Additionally, the level of external/in-kind cost share contributions will be used as criteria for evaluation during review by the Limited Competitions Committee. The scoring will be weighted as follows: proposal narrative (70%), draft budget overview (15%), and abbreviated PI CV (15%).

Pre-proposals should address these major points and review criteria to be used by the limited competitions committee:

Instrument acquisition proposals: A Track 1 proposal should request support for the acquisition of a shared, major, state-of-the-art instrument, thereby improving access to, and increased use of, a modern research instrument by scientists, engineers, and students. Provide a technical description of the requested instrumentation that clearly explains why the requested equipment is needed. Describe how the instrument will serve to attract researchers and make a substantial improvement in the institution's capabilities to conduct leading-edge research. Provide business and management plans with information on space, technical staffing for operations and maintenance, training of users, access for external users, and the sources of funding and plans for long-term operations and maintenance.

Instrument development proposals: A Track 2 proposal should request support for the development of the next generation of major instrumentation, resulting in a new type of instrument that is more widely used, and/or opens up new areas of research and research training. Provide rationale for the new instrument, a description of the design concept, and development strategy and methods to address technical feasibility. Describe the expected capabilities of the instrument upon completion, and its likely availability for shared use at the end of the award period. Justify the necessity and adequacy of the new instrumentation for the proposed research projects, with reference to instruments that are currently available. Describe how the instrument will serve to attract researchers and make a substantial improvement in the institution's capabilities to conduct leading-edge research. Provide management plans for the design, construction and commissioning phases of the project, including discussion of required personnel and anticipated costs in each phase of the project, risk mitigation, and knowledge transfer upon completion.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Susan De Los Santos (sdelossa@unm.edu or 277-0272) or Monica Fishel (mlfishel@unm.edu or 277-8114).