



From: Faculty Research Development Office
Office of the Vice President for Research

Subject: Limited Competition: NSF- MRI: Major Research Instrumentation Program (NSF 18-513)

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The NSF Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Program serves to increase access to multi-user scientific and engineering instrumentation for research and research training in our Nation's institutions of higher education and not-for-profit scientific/engineering research organizations. An MRI award supports the **acquisition or development** of a multi-user research instrument that is, in general, too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs. MRI provides support to acquire critical research instrumentation without which advances in fundamental science and engineering research may not otherwise occur. MRI also provides support to develop next-generation research instruments that open new opportunities to advance the frontiers in science and engineering research. Additionally, an MRI award is expected to enhance research training of students who will become the next generation of instrument users, designers and builders.

An MRI proposal may request up to \$4 million for either acquisition or development of a research instrument. Each performing organization may submit in "Tracks" as defined below, with *no more than two submissions in Track 1* and *no more than one submission in Track 2*. Any MRI proposal may request support for either the acquisition or development of a research instrument. Within their submission limit, NSF strongly encourages organizations to submit proposals that seek to develop next-generation research instruments that open new frontiers of research.

- Track 1: Proposals request funds from NSF greater than or equal to \$100,000 and less than \$1,000,000.
- Track 2: Proposals request funds from NSF greater than or equal to \$1,000,000 up to and including \$4,000,000.

Proposals requesting less than \$100,000 from NSF will be accepted only for the disciplines of *mathematics or social, behavioral and economic sciences*.

Applications for instrument acquisition proposals have a project period of up to three years and instrument development proposals have a project period of up to five years. The anticipated earliest start date is August 1, 2022. Cost-sharing of precisely 30% of the total project cost, **not** 30% of the NSF request, is required. *The cumulative amount requested from NSF must be exactly (to the nearest dollar) 70% of the Total Project Cost and the total cost sharing shown on the budget form must be exactly (to the nearest dollar) 30% of the Total Project Cost.* Further details can be found at <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2018/nsf18513/nsf18513.htm>. The due date for this year's full proposals to NSF is January 19, 2022.

This is a limited competition. The MRI program requires that an MRI-eligible organization may submit or be included as a significantly funded subawardee in no more than three (3) MRI proposals. (Up to two submissions in Track 1 and one submission in Track 2.)

The required 3-page pre-proposal for the internal competition must include:

- A brief description of the instrument to be purchased or developed that clearly explains why it is needed, how the research to be enabled is compelling and justifies the instrument request. List the specific research and research training activities and projects that will be enabled with the new instrumentation.
- An explanation of how this instrument contributes to the unit's strategic research plan and enhanced capability for the department(s) or center(s).
- How the instrument will better enable future funding support. For requests over \$1 million, describe the impact of the instrument on the regional or national research community.
- A description of the extent to which the instrument will be used for multi-user, shared-use research and/or research training, including any outreach and DEI-related activities. Include a list of prospective users (faculty, staff, post docs, students, etc.), including their department affiliations, and the focus of their research.
- How the instrument will be managed and sustained beyond the period of the award and where it will be located so that it is accessible to multiple users.
- A description of anticipated support for cost share from all stakeholder units [i.e. department(s)/center(s)/college(s)].

In addition (not in the 3 pages), provide a statement from the relevant Department Chair(s) and/or Center Director(s) that confirms how this instrument will support their unit's strategic research plan.

The preproposal, a budget overview, and NSF formatted CVs for the PI and Co-PIs must be submitted through the InfoReady Review portal (<https://unm.infoready4.com>) between Tuesday, September 28, 2021 and NOON, Tuesday, October 12, 2021. No late submissions will be considered. All applications will be routed to the relevant ADR(s)/Center Director(s) for approval. If multiple applications are submitted by the same unit, the ADR/Center Director will be asked to rank the applications.

Priority for selection will be given to pre-proposals that provide evidence that (1) this instrument will be broadly shared, servicing multiple educational and/or scientific users, and (2) it clearly supports a strategic priority for the department/center/college. A plan for meeting mandatory cost sharing requirements will be made by the PI in collaboration with unit leadership and the OVPR after proposals have been reviewed and ranked by the internal review committee. The amount of cost share OVPR will provide will depend on availability of funding and alignment with university goals and priorities for research.

If you have any questions, please contact limited@unm.edu.