Internal Selection Procedures

for

NSF 11-503 Major Research Instrumentation Program: Instrument Acquisition or Development (MRI)

Summary: 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. Development and acquisition of research instrumentation for shared inter- and/or intra-organizational use are encouraged, as are development efforts that leverage the strengths of private sector partners to build instrument development capacity at academic institutions. The MRI program assists with the acquisition or development of shared research instrumentation that is too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs. Proposals must be for either acquisition or development of a single instrument or for equipment that, when combined, serves as an integrated research instrument (physical or virtual).

Instrument acquisition or development proposals that request funds from NSF in the range of $100,000 to $4 million will be accepted. Proposals that request funds less than $100,000 will also be accepted for the disciplines of mathematics or social, behavioral and economic sciences. Cost-sharing at the level of 30% of the total project cost is required for Ph.D.-granting institutions.

Proposal Limitations: The University can only submit three proposals. If three are submitted, one must be for instrumentation development. Only two proposals can be submitted for instrumentation acquisition.

An unfunded collaboration does not count against the submission limit. Inclusion as a funded subawardee on a development proposal at a level in excess of 20% of the total budget request from NSF, or on any acquisition proposal, will be counted against an organization's proposal submission limit. However, if a subaward to an organization in a development proposal is 20% or less of the proposal's total budget request from NSF, the subawardee's submission limit will not be affected. For subawards within a linked collaborative proposal, the 20% threshold applies to the budget request from NSF in the proposal containing the subaward(s), not to the combined budget request from NSF for the collaborative project.

Selection Process: The following procedures for an internal Notice of Intent (NOI) describe the process to select the proposals that will be submitted on behalf of the University. Should more than the allowable number of NOIs be received from across the University, they will be reviewed by a committee formed by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and in consultation with the Provost. The OVPR will notify each applicant whether or not their proposal has been selected to move forward and represent the University.

Proposal Schedule: Internal NOI due to OSP on 12 October 2012, 5:00 p.m. CST
Notification of NOIs selected to move forward by 29 October 5:00 p.m. CST
Full Proposal due to OSP on 21 January 2013, 5:00 p.m. CST
Full Proposal due to NSF on 24 January 2013, 5:00 p.m. CST
NOI Format and Content:
Proposal pages should have at least 1” margins all around, and use no smaller than an 11-point font for the text. Tables and figures are exempt from the 11-point requirement, but must be clearly legible.

Submission Method: Electronic files emailed to OSP Contract Administrator.
NOTE: Project Summary and Project Description file MUST be in MS Word. Other NOI elements can be in any format, e.g., PDF or Excel.

NOI Contents:
1. Cover Page:
   a. Include “NSF 11-503 Major Research Instrumentation Program.”
   b. Project title (which should identify the scientific discipline(s) for which the instrumentation is requested, should convey the primary purpose of the proposal, e.g., “MRI: Acquisition of _______” or “MRI: Development of _______”
   c. Names, departments/centers, campus address and email address for each PI, Co-I, and key personnel proposed.
   d. List of other partnering institutions and entities.

2. Project Summary: (Limit: 2 pages double-spaced) The Project Summary must consist of two parts, separated in different paragraphs: 1) provide a succinct summary of the Intellectual Merit of the proposal; 2) describe the Broader Impacts for the proposed project.

3. Project Description¹: (Limit: 6 pages, double-spaced) Please include in this section the following information, each in its own subsection with the following headings:
   a. Instrumentation Location and Type
   b. Research Activities to be Enabled
   c. Description of the Research Instrumentation and Needs
   d. Impact on Research and Training Infrastructure
   e. Management Plan

4. Recurring Costs: A one-page double-spaced description of the recurring costs associated with operating and maintaining the instrument, and a description of who will be responsible for providing these funds.

5. One to two-page tentative budget and budget justification showing estimated costs and justification (the OSP Contract Administrator is available to assist you if requested)

6. Include a signed letter from the fiscally responsible organization, acknowledging the cost-sharing 30% of total eligible project costs that NSF is requiring. If cost-sharing is being accomplished through multiple sources, please have a signed letter from each fiscally responsible organization.

7. One to two-page bio for each PI, Co-I and key personnel proposed.

Questions about the internal NOI preparation or process should be directed to your OSP Contract Administrator.

¹ See NSF 11-503, Section V.A.3.a-e, for description of the content of these subsections