

Questions and Responses Submitted to EAC@nsf.gov
(As of 02-10-2023)

1. **Q: My proposal idea involves multiple themes.**
 - A. The proposal must select one single theme. In a proposal, the offeror is free to argue which theme is most relevant.

2. **Q: I have a question about monthly reporting I am concerned about the time and efforts required for this phase one.**
 - A. Monthly Progress Reports are required. During Phase 1, offerors are expected to connect with participating federal agencies through conference calls, including virtual meetings, which will be scheduled at the beginning, middle, and end of the period of performance, and give presentations of research progress. Other check-in calls may be required depending on project progression.

3. **Q: Do we need to submit phase 1 in order to be considered for phase 2?**
 - A. Phase 2 will be released by a separate funding mechanism and open to all offerors regardless of receiving a Phase 1 contract.

4. **Q: I am wondering if there is NSF program staff who can give feedback on project ideas?**
 - A. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity. As such, offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

5. **Q: Is this language in the BAA intended to imply that this opportunity is limited to or that preference will be given to those in the social, economic, or behavioral sciences?**
 - A. Information regarding eligibility to submit a proposal is in section "2.0 Eligibility."

6. **Q: Is it expected that one proposal will answer (a) multiple or all of the questions listed under a given theme or (b) at least one of the questions listed under a given theme?**
 - A. Proposals are requested in five thematic areas aligned with the Learning Agendas of agency partners, see section 2.3 Scope. For each thematic area, example research questions of interest are provided. Offerors may propose other research questions within scope of a theme listed in section 2.3 Scope. However, only one single theme, as defined in section 2.3, should be provided. That is, while submitting more than one proposal is permitted, the offeror must indicate a single theme for each proposal submitted (see sections 2.3 and 3.1).

Also, Phase 1 is a contract opportunity. As such, offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

7. Q: The link to NSF's Learning agenda is not available.

A. This is the direct link to NSF's Learning Agenda:

- https://nsf-gov-resources.nsf.gov/2022-04/NSF_FY22-FY26%20Learning%20Agenda%20Final.pdf
- This is the page to that direct link: <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/policy-planning-reports>
- This is a page that can access all Learning Agendas by Agency: <https://www.evaluation.gov/evidence-plans/learning-agenda/>

8. Q: Who can I contact to discuss data management of big data?

A. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity. As such, offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

Technical Proposal must identify and discuss relevant existing publicly available federal data, existing restricted use data from federal statistical agencies, and/or other relevant existing publicly available data that enable testing of research questions about equity related to one of the thematic areas, as defined in section 2.3 (see 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for details).

Further data details are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

Information about the participating federal partners for phase 1 is provided at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> and further referenced in section 2.4 of the solicitation.

9. Q: What are the details required for the Phase I proposal?

A. Details for Phase I proposals are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors).

10. Q: Are proposals using secondary data collected by other federal departments considered?

A. Details for Phase I proposals are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components).

11. Q: I am writing to ask about the thematic areas?

- A. Proposals are requested in five thematic areas aligned with the Learning Agendas of agency partners, see section 2.3 Scope. For each thematic area, example research questions of interest are provided. Offerors may propose other research questions within scope of a theme listed in section 2.3 Scope. However, only one single theme, as defined in section 2.3, should be provided. That is, while submitting more than one proposal is permitted, the offeror must indicate a single theme for each proposal submitted (see sections 2.3 and 3.1).

12. Q: Do we need to have an NSF [ID] for the submission?

- A. Offerors must be registered in SAM.gov and have a Unique Entity Identifier, or UEI, before applying to an NSF BAA.

13. Q: One page CVS/resumes are required. Do they need to be in NSF biosketch format?

- A. Resumes/CVs for key personnel are to be a maximum of 1 page per resume/CV. Of interest is relevant technical capabilities, subject matter expertise, and experience with similar projects.

There is no preferred template for resumes/CVs.

14. Q: Should the 5 page proposal be structured in traditional NSF proposal sections such as Intellectual merit and broader impact?

- A. This is a contract opportunity (not a grant). Offerors should submit a proposal that addresses section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors.

15. Q: When do you expect to announce the awardees and what is the earliest start date?

- A. Phase 1 proposals are due by 5:00PM EST on March 3, 2023. Evaluation and award decisions will follow. Afterwards, the period of performance for these contracts will be eight months after date of contract.

16. Q: Does the Funder anticipate awarding multiple applicants per theme category? How should applicants approach pricing, given that this is a planning grant? What does the Funder expect to be the main cost drivers? If an applicant has identified a restricted data source that requires its own substantial application process, can they apply for the planning funding in advance of initiating the process of applying and securing approval for accessing the restricted data (which is not guaranteed)? Has NSF engaged any federal agency partners with restricted datasets to facilitate funded projects in applying for and obtaining data access? Does the Funder consider text data, policy data, and/or publicly available big data applicable?

- A. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity. As such, offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

Technical Proposal must identify and discuss relevant existing publicly available federal data, existing restricted use data from federal statistical agencies, and/or other relevant existing publicly available data that enable testing of research questions about equity related to one of the thematic areas, as defined in section 2.3 (see 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for details).

Further data details are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

Offerors should budget for all aspects of costs required to provide the requested deliverables. There is no specific cost-proposal template but details to include are line-items of all costs where the total must not exceed \$75,000 and a payment schedule (see section 3.3).

Achieving balance across the specified themes will be considered to the extent appropriate (see section 4.3).

17. Q: Is the preference that proposals would address multiple topics within the theme?

- A. Proposals are requested in five thematic areas aligned with the Learning Agendas of agency partners, see section 2.3 Scope. For each thematic area, example research questions of interest are provided. Offerors may propose other research questions within scope of a theme listed in section 2.3 Scope. However, only one single theme, as defined in section 2.3, should be provided. That is, while submitting more than one proposal is permitted, the offeror must indicate a single theme for each proposal submitted (see sections 2.3 and 3.1).

18. Q: Are subrecipients allowed in our budget?

- A. You will have to clarify. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity, so there are primes and subcontractors.

19. Q: We have funding for an existing project, would it qualify here?

- A. Offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

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Further data details are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

20. Q: Is there a project period time limit (i.e. 12 months)?

- A. The period of performance for these contracts will be eight months after date of contract.

21. Q: Is there a specific cost/price budget template or form to submit for the budget?

- A. Offerors should budget for all aspects of costs required to provide the requested deliverables. There is no specific cost-proposal template but details to include are line-items of all costs where the total must not exceed \$75,000 and a payment schedule (see section 3.3).

22. Q: Are there any start date restrictions/guidance?

- A. The period of performance for these contracts will be eight months after date of contract.

23. Q: I am interested in finding more information about the Analytics for Equity Initiative opportunity such as proposal requirements, project timeline, etc. Also, was there an informational webinar?

A. All information about the initiative is available at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative>

24. Q: Just to clarify, is the period of the Phase 1 contract 8 months for \$75,000?

A. The period of performance for these contracts will be eight months after date of contract. Offerors must submit a firm fixed price proposal that may not exceed \$75,000.

25. Q: If a proposal is submitted under a specific Theme, will the agency partner connection be established by NSF?

A. Information about the participating federal partners for phase 1 is provided at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> and further referenced in section 2.4 of the solicitation.

26. Q: Does the proposal page length limit of 5 pages include References?

A. The technical proposal is limited to 5 pages.

27. Q: Are we able to supplement the agency data with other outside data?

A. Details for Phase I proposals are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

28. Q: Line spacing was not specified in the BAA.

A. There is no preferred line spacing. The BAA states: Proposals shall be written in type no smaller than 11-point font. All pages must be formatted for printing on an 8-1/2 by 11-inch paper. Margins must be 1-inch on all sides.

29. Q: What would be the earliest start for funding, if awarded?

A. Phase 1 proposals are due by 5:00PM EST on March 3, 2023. Evaluation and award decisions will follow. Afterwards, the period of performance for awarded contracts will be eight months after date of contract.

30. Q: My question concerns the relationship between proposals and participating agencies.

- A. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity. As such, offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

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Further data details are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

Information about the participating federal partners for phase 1 is provided at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> and further referenced in section 2.4 of the solicitation.

31. Q: Can I submit a proposal that draws upon data from agencies not within the BAA?

- A. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity. As such, offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

Technical Proposal must identify and discuss relevant existing publicly available federal data, existing restricted use data from federal statistical agencies, and/or other relevant existing publicly available data that enable testing of research questions about equity related to one of the thematic areas, as defined in section 2.3 (see 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for details).

Further data details are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

Information about the participating federal partners for phase 1 is provided at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> and further referenced in section 2.4 of the solicitation.

32. Q: Will there be an informational session?

- A. All information about the initiative is available at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative>

33. Q: How can I submit my materials in BAAM?

- A. User guidance on BAAM will be posted at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> when available. It will instruct:
- Complete the “Cover Sheet” fields.
 - For “Full Proposal” upload your Technical Proposal file (either as a PDF or Word file) where the page length cannot exceed 5 pages.
 - For “Cost Proposal” upload your Cost or Price Volume file (either as a PDF, Word, or Excel file).
 - For “Supplemental Documents” upload your:
 - Cover Page file as a Word or PDF file.
 - Resumes/CVs file as a Word or PDF file.
 - Disclosure of OCI file (if applicable) as a Word or PDF file.

34. Q: For each grant proposal, my institution requires us to create a proposal record and are asked to provide “Project Dates” for the record.

A. Please note this is a contract opportunity, not a grant.

Phase 1 proposals are due by 5:00PM EST on March 3, 2023. Evaluation and award decisions will follow. Afterwards, the period of performance for awarded contracts will be eight months after date of contract.

35. Q: Can NSF confirm whether members of the relevant agency partners will participate in the within-theme reviews, defined in section 4.4 of the BAA? Can NSF provide any information on the anticipated number of Phase 1 awards under each of the five thematic areas defined in section 2.3 of the BAA? Can NSF provide any information about the number and maximum size of the awards anticipated for Phase 2?

A. How proposals are evaluated are discussed in section 4.

Total budgeted amount for phase 1 is up to \$1.0 million, subject to the availability of funds. An offeror must submit a firm fixed price proposal that may not exceed \$75,000.

Phase 2 will be released by a separate funding mechanism and open to all offerors regardless of receiving a Phase 1 contract.

36. Q: Is funding only available for work with the agencies listed as participating?

A. Information about the participating federal partners for phase 1 is provided at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> and further referenced in section 2.4 of the solicitation.

Lastly, the topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3 of the solicitation.

37. Q: I read about this grant, and can I apply for this grant without having a particular agency I'm working with?

- A. Phase 1 is a contract opportunity (and not a grant).

Offerors must decide how best to create a proposal with a budget and other information. The topics of interest for phase 1 are discussed in section 2.3. The specific components to a proposal are discussed in section 3. Deliverables are discussed in section 5.1. Evaluation factors are discussed in section 4.

Technical Proposal must identify and discuss relevant existing publicly available federal data, existing restricted use data from federal statistical agencies, and/or other relevant existing publicly available data that enable testing of research questions about equity related to one of the thematic areas, as defined in section 2.3 (see 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for details).

Further data details are provided in the solicitation (ex. see section 3.0 Instructions to Offerors for data-relevant components, including but not limited to "Proposals should address how the research team will link disparate datasets").

Information about the participating federal partners for phase 1 is provided at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> and further referenced in section 2.4 of the solicitation.

38. Q: Does an Organizational Conflict of Interest mean I cannot submit a proposal?

- A. In the BAA, the organizational conflicts of interest (OCI) are discussed in section 2.2: "offerors are required to identify and disclose all facts relevant to potential OCIs involving the offeror's organization and any proposed team member (subcontractor, consultant)."

Instructions on disclosing OCIs (if applicable) are further discussed in section 2.2 and 3.4.

39. Q: Who is eligible to apply?

- A. Information regarding eligibility to submit a proposal is in section "2.0 Eligibility."

40. Q: Will there be another cycle in which to apply?

- A. Phase 1 proposals are due by 5:00PM EST on March 3, 2023. Evaluation and award decisions will follow. Afterwards, the period of performance for these contracts will be eight months after date of contract. Offerors must submit a firm fixed price proposal that may not exceed \$75,000.

Phase 2 will be released by a separate funding mechanism and open to all offerors regardless of receiving a Phase 1 contract.

41. Q: Can you please share application information?

- A. Offerors shall submit their phase 1 proposal via NSF's Broad Agency Announcement Managements System (BAAM) at the following URL: <https://baam.nsf.gov/s/>. Offerors must be registered in SAM.gov and have a Unique Entity Identifier, or UEI, before applying to an NSF BAA. To begin the registration and UEI process, visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). For BAAM technical support, offerors can contact the BAAM helpdesk at BAAMSupport@nsf.gov. Further user guidance on BAAM will be posted at <https://beta.nsf.gov/od/oia/eac/analytics-equity-initiative> when available.