Slide 1

Good afternoon! I'm Farnam Jahanian, Assistant Director of the National Science Foundation for Computer and Information Science and Engineering. With me here is Jeremy Epstein, Program Director in our Division of Computer and Network Systems.

On behalf of our colleagues at NSF/CISE, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to today's webinar to learn about our new program, the CISE Research Initiation Initiative, or CRII.

Our goal with CRII is to support early-career researchers who will dedicate their careers to advancing CISE research and education.

[SKIP Our mission in CISE…

As you know, the CISE Directorate at NSF has a long history of:

- promoting the progress of computer and information science and engineering research and education;
- advancing the development and use of cyberinfrastructure across the science and engineering enterprise; and
- contributing to universal, transparent, and affordable participation in an information-based society.

To achieve this mission, CISE supports ambitious long-term research and research infrastructure projects across many sub-fields of computing, as well as cyberinfrastructure for all areas of science and

engineering. We also contribute to the education and training of all computing professionals.]

The CRII program provides an opportunity for individuals who are in their first academic position post-Ph.D. to recruit and mentor their first students. This is a critical step – one that we expect will lead to research independence and a subsequent stream of discoveries and impact.

CRII is open to *any* Principle Investigator in his or her first 2 years of an academic position, exclusive of any postdoc or other traineeship appointments. We expanded the eligibility requirements for the program based on overwhelming community input. And, consistent with CISE's commitment to broadening participation, we especially encourage early-career researchers who are members of underrepresented groups to apply.

Through the CRII program, we also encourage potentially transformative proposals in any area of CISE research that we support.

This program reaffirms CISE's dedication to the support and growth of future generations of computer and information scientists and engineers [SKIP and it complements our investments in the Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) program].

Let me take a moment to thank my colleagues on the CISE management team for their leadership in formulating the CRII program. And let me also thank Jeremy and our other PDs, Almadena Chtchelkanova, and Ephraim Glinert, for their efforts in steering this program.

Let me now turn things over to Jeremy to describe the programmatic details of CRII…

Slide 2

I'm going to briefly summarize the goals of the program, requirements for eligibility, areas of interest to the program, the submission process, review process, and a few of the frequently asked questions. Everything I tell you is a synopsis of the solicitation, which has more details. The recently released FAQ also has many questions and answers; if we don't cover whatever questions you have today, please check the FAQ. If you don't' find the answer there, please contact Almadena, Ephraim, or me – our contact information is on the CRII web site, and will also be on the last slide of this presentation.

Before I get into the slides, I'll mention that these slides will be posted to the NSF website after the conclusion of this webinar. We're going to try to keep this to an hour, but can stay longer if needed for Q&A.

Slide 3

The goal of this program, as Farnam described, is to support researchers in the first two years of their academic positions, so they can establish their own research programs independent of their advisors. The funds provided are intended to allow you to hire graduate or undergraduate students to get your research program going, including acquiring data, developing algorithms and approaches, building prototypes, and developing collaborations within or across research disciplines.

Slide 4

Eligibility for this program has been the #1 item we've received questions about over the past two months since the program was announced. In short, there are three parts to eligibility.

First, you must be in an academic position – not a postdoc or research associate – at a university or two-year or four-year college. It doesn't matter if your position is tenured, tenure-track, or neither, nor does your title such as assistant or associate professor. Your primary appointment must be in an area supported by CISE – computer science, information science, or electrical or computer engineering being most common, but not exclusive. For example, you could be in a mechanical engineering department if your research is in the computing aspects of robotics or smart cars.

Second, you must have been in an academic position for no more than two years since your PhD, not counting family or medical leave. Positions in government or industry do not count against the two-year limit. Neither do positions as postdocs or research associates. However, academic positions held overseas, whether tenure-track, tenured, or not, do count towards the two year limit.

Slide 5

The third part of eligibility is that you have not received any grants from NSF or other agencies in the PI role. Being in the co-PI role does not disqualify, nor do any of these other types of NSF grants. Additionally, awards from your university or contracts from a company or private foundation, do not disqualify. Note that if you have a collaborative NSF grant, the lead PI from each institution is considered a PI, so even being the PI from a non-lead institution would disqualify.

The two questions in determining eligibility are (1) where does the money come from and (2) what is your role. The amount of money involved does not matter – be it small or large.

Note that the rule is as of time of award, not as of time of submission. So if your proposal is selected for an award, the NSF program officer will ask you to certify that you have not received any disqualifying grants.

Slide 6

As I said earlier, this program is open to faculty doing research in any of the areas supported by CISE. This slide lists the current CISE programs that are accepting CRII submissions. Your proposal must list at least one program which is relevant to your research proposal. Descriptions of each of the programs can be found on the NSF web site.

Slide 7

As described in the solicitation, proposals are limited to 10 pages, not the 15 page limit most typical for NSF proposals. I am not going to review the rules for fonts and margins – please see the NSF Grant Proposal Guide for instructions. Trying to squeeze in more text by reducing fonts or margins is not only frustrating to reviewers, but is also likely to have your proposal returned without review.

A few other points on submission: No co-Pis or other senior personnel are permitted, however, consultants and subawardees are allowed. The proposal must be for no more than $175,000 over 2 years. You may only submit one CRII proposal. A common question is whether a PI may submit both a CRII and CAREER proposal; the answer is yes.

An important point with respect to eligibility is the two year rule. If you started your academic appointment on Sep 1 2012 (for example), you may submit to this solicitation, but ONLY if your submission is received by Sep 1 2014. If you wait until the Sep 24 2014 deadline, you will be ineligible, unless part of your time was spent on family or medical leave.

Slide 8

The Data Management Plan is required to be submitted as a supplementary document in Fastlane. If you have included postdocs in your budget, you must also have a one-page postdoc mentoring plan, submitted as a supplementary document.

Your proposal must include a letter from your department chair certifying that you meet the eligibility requirement, including the two-year rule. If you joined your institution prior to Sep 24 2012 (two years before the solicitation due date), the department chair letter must state the exact date when you joined, and if you are using the medical or family exemption, should explain that time window.

Slide 9

As previously noted, every proposal must be targeted at one or more of these CISE programs. The title of your proposal should begin with the string *CRII:*, followed by the acronyms (in parentheses on this slide) of the program or programs that are appropriate. We suggest one or two programs, although there is no limit. This program name does not guarantee which program will look at your proposal, but will help us find the most appropriate program officer to manage your proposal.

Slide 10

Proposals will be reviewed using the standard NSF merit review process, which will include consideration of both intellectual merit and broader impact. Unlike CAREER proposals, there is not a specific educational component required.

Factors that will be considered in the review process include relevance to one or more of the CISE programs (as mentioned on the previous slide), the appropriateness of the research to a 2 year window, the potential to produce sufficient preliminary research to help you prepare for other research awards such as CAREER, and whether the activities are appropriate to help you achieve research independence.

Slide 11

The budget is intended to mostly be spent on students, including both undergraduates and graduates. Some fraction may go to specialized equipment, such as unique hardware or software. Ordinary laptops and servers should not be included in the budget. Some travel funds are expected. No funds may go to the PI, whether for summer salary, course buyouts, or academic year support. As noted, the total must not exceed $175,000. REU supplements may be embedded in the proposal (see the GPG for instructions) in which case the budget can exceed $175,000 by the amount of the REU supplement. REU supplements can also be added after the fact, following standard NSF policies.

Slide 12

I'm going to go over just a few of the common questions we've been hearing a lot over the past few months, and then will open the phones.

Slide 13

Q: Is a tenure-track appointment required?

A: No; eligible PIs must be in the first two years of a tenure-track or research science or education position (or equivalent).

Q: Does receiving an EAGER as a PI disqualify me?

A: Yes, any grant from an agency as a PI (or as a PI from a non-lead institution), regardless of size (with exceptions previously noted) disqualifies the PI.

Slide 14

Q: What are appropriate uses of funds for faculty at 2-year and undergraduate-only institutions?
A: Funds may be allocated to undergraduate support. The proposal should describe a mentoring plan as well as strategies for integrating the undergraduates into a research group given their heavy course load.

Q: Does submitting to CRII prevent a future CAREER award?
A: No, we expect that many CRII awardees will subsequently submit CAREER proposals.

Slide 15

Q: May I submit to CAREER and CRII in the same year?

A: Yes, you may (provided the two proposals are substantially different). However, the CRII program is intended to provide faculty with resources to enable them to begin their research and achieve preliminary results that will, in turn, allow them when ready to write proposals that are more likely to succeed in very competitive programs such as CAREER.

Slide 16

Q: May I submit the same proposal to CRII as another program?

A: No, the same proposal may not be submitted twice.

Q: Does a submission to CRII count towards the 2 proposal limit for CISE core programs or other CISE programs?

A: No, you can submit 1 proposal to CRII without impact on the limits in any other solicitation.

Slide 17

Q: How many awards will be made?

A: We expect to make 25-30 CRII awards, subject to the availability of funds.

Slide 18

Thanks for listening to this summary of the program. My colleague Almadena Chtchelkanova and I will be happy to answer your questions. Operator, please open the phone lines.

Slide 19

Thanks for participating in this webinar. We hope the CRII program will enable new faculty members to initiate independent research through funding students and related support.

The slides and audio will be posted to the CISE web site in the next few days.

As a final reminder, proposals are due September 24, but if your two-year anniversary date comes sooner, then that is your deadline.