



# MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

## ASCENDING POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

### MPS-ASCEND (**NSF 23 - 501**)

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*Frequently Asked Questions about the ASCEND Solicitation can be found [here](#).*



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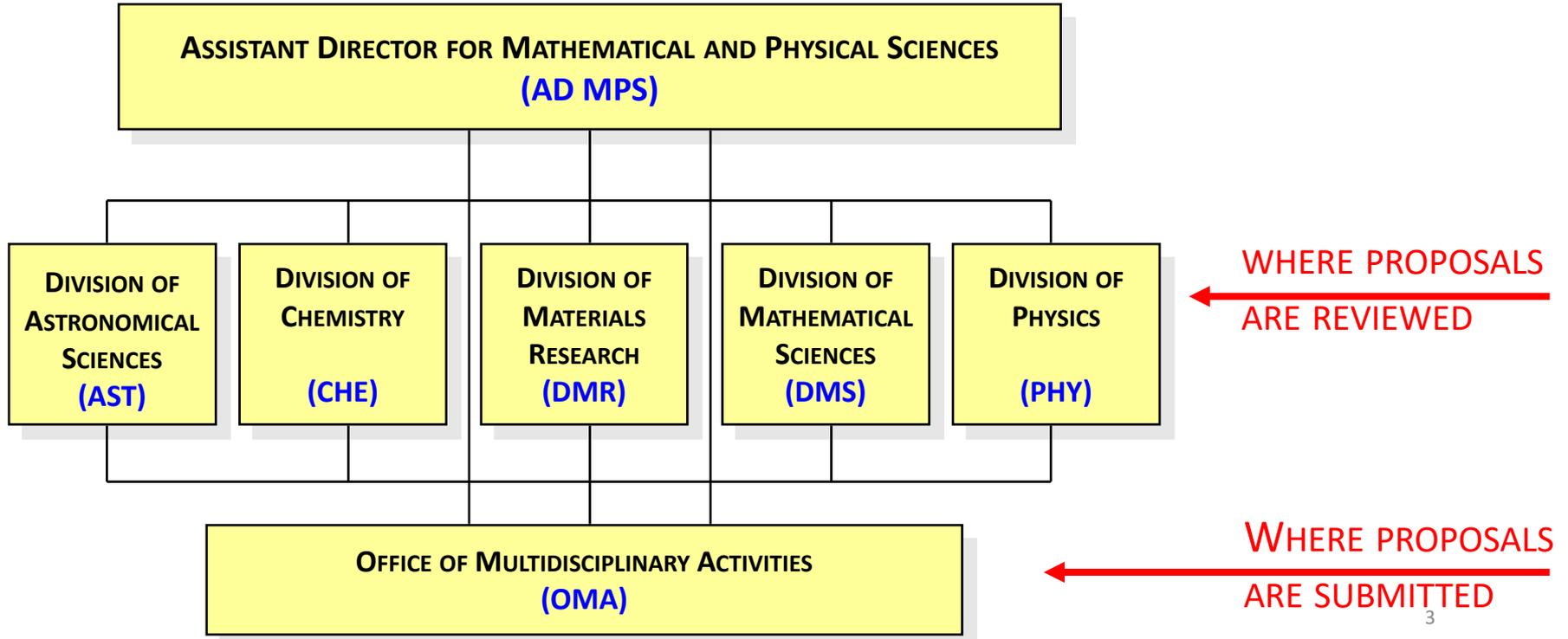


# THE MPS-ASCEND PROGRAM: EXCELLENCE THROUGH DIVERSITY

- **PURPOSE.** TO SUPPORT POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS WHO WILL BROADEN THE PARTICIPATION OF UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITIES IN MPS FIELDS IN THE U.S., ENABLING FELLOWS TO DEVELOP AS FUTURE LEADERS IN SCIENCE.
- **INTENT.** TO RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT BEGINNING INVESTIGATORS OF SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IN:
  - RESEARCH EXPERIENCES THAT WILL BROADEN PERSPECTIVES, FACILITATE INTERDISCIPLINARY INTERACTIONS, AND HELP BROADEN PARTICIPATION WITHIN MPS FIELDS.
  - PREPARE FELLOWS FOR THEIR NEXT CAREER STAGE (E.G., FACULTY POSITION).
- AWARDS WILL SUPPORT RESEARCH IN ANY SCIENTIFIC AREA WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF THE FIVE MPS DIVISIONS: ASTRONOMICAL SCIENCES (AST), CHEMISTRY (CHE), MATERIALS RESEARCH (DMR), MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES (DMS), AND PHYSICS (PHY).
  - FELLOWSHIPS ARE AWARDS TO INDIVIDUALS, NOT INSTITUTIONS, AND ARE ADMINISTERED BY THE FELLOWS.
  - FELLOWS WILL BENEFIT FROM SUPPORT FOR COHORT BUILDING AND EXTERNAL MENTORING. [SEE LINK TO MENTORING AWARD](#)



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# BROADENING PARTICIPATION OF URMs

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- APPLICANTS MUST HAVE A SUBSTANTIVE PLAN TO BROADEN PARTICIPATION OF UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITIES (URMs) IN THE MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES. EVIDENCE OF PREVIOUS INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES THAT BROADEN PARTICIPATION OF THESE URM GROUPS IS DESIRABLE.
- APPLICANTS DO NOT HAVE TO BE MEMBERS OF URMs.
- MEMBERS OF THE URMs ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY.



## ELIGIBILITY

- PROPOSALS ARE SUBMITTED BY THE POTENTIAL POSTDOC (NOT BY THE MENTOR OF THE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW).
- MUST BE U.S. CITIZENS (OR NATIONALS) OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS WHEN THE PROPOSAL IS SUBMITTED.
- MUST HAVE A DOCTORAL DEGREE CONFERRED BEFORE THE START DATE OF THE POSTDOCTORAL TENURE.
- MAY NOT HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN A PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR OR CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR OF AN NSF AWARD (OTHER THAN A GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP OR AN AWARD IN SUPPORT OF A CONFERENCE OR WORKSHOP);
- THE RESEARCH PLAN MUST NOT BE A DUPLICATE OF ANOTHER PENDING OR FUNDED NSF PROPOSAL;
- IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE FELLOW WILL CONDUCT RESEARCH AT AN INSTITUTION DIFFERENT FROM THEIR PHD-GRANTING OR CURRENT POSTDOCTORAL INSTITUTION. IF FELLOW PROPOSES TO REMAIN AT CURRENT INSTITUTION, PROPOSAL SHOULD STRONGLY JUSTIFY HOW THIS CHOICE BENEFITS THEIR RESEARCH AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT.



# DURATION AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT

DURATION: UP TO 36 MONTHS (MINIMUM 12 MONTHS)

BUDGET: \$100,000 PER YEAR (PAID DIRECTLY TO FELLOW) INCLUDES:

- A MONTHLY STIPEND OF \$5,833 (UP TO \$70,000 ANNUALLY)
- AN ANNUAL ALLOWANCE OF \$30,000 FOR:
  - A) EXPENSES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CONDUCT OF THE RESEARCH AND/OR
  - B) SUPPORT OF FRINGE BENEFITS, DEPENDENT CARE, AND MOVING EXPENSES.

UP TO 2 MONTHS OF PAID LEAVE OVER 36 MONTHS. THIS LEAVE CANNOT BE USED TO INCREASE THE DURATION OR LEVEL OF NSF SUPPORT.



# MPS-ASCEND PROGRAM: HOW TO APPLY

1. FOLLOW THE SOLICITATION (NSF 23-501) IN FULL, ESPECIALLY THE PARTS THAT DESCRIBE WHAT IS REQUIRED IN THE PROPOSAL. ALSO FOLLOW GUIDELINES IN THE NSF PROPOSAL & AWARD POLICIES & PROCEDURES GUIDE (PAPPG; [NSF 23-1](#)); WHERE REQUIREMENTS IN SOLICITATION DIFFER FROM ONES IN PAPPG, THE SOLICITATION TAKES PRECEDENCE.
2. REACH OUT TO POTENTIAL POSTDOC MENTORS. TO APPLY, YOU AND A MENTOR WILL NEED TO HAVE A WELL-DEVELOPED PROJECT AND MENTORING PLAN.
3. ASK QUESTIONS (AFTER READING THE SOLICITATION)! THE CONTACTS WITHIN EACH MPS DIVISION AND AT OMA ARE HAPPY TO HELP (SEE FIRST AND LAST SLIDES FOR CONTACT INFORMATION).

SUBMIT VIA RESEARCH.GOV OR GRANTS.GOV. RESEARCH.GOV SUBMISSION IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED BECAUSE THESE ARE FELLOWSHIPS WITH UNIQUE REQUIREMENTS. IF SUBMITTING THROUGH GRANTS.GOV, AFFIRM THAT ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY UPLOADED INTO RESEARCH.GOV BY THE DEADLINE DATE. OTHERWISE, PROPOSAL WILL BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE OR LATE AND WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT REVIEW.



# MPS-ASCEND PROPOSAL: KEY COMPONENTS

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION (10 PAGES) ADDRESSES:

- WHAT THE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW PROPOSES TO ACCOMPLISH DURING THE FELLOWSHIP PERIOD AND HOW IT RELATES TO THE FELLOW'S CAREER GOALS.
- HOW THE APPLICANT AND PROJECT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO BROADEN THE PARTICIPATION OF URM'S IN MPS FIELDS.
- HOW THE PROPOSED RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF MPS FIELD(S)
  - WRITE IN A WAY THAT CAN BE UNDERSTOOD BY SPECIALISTS AND NON-SPECIALISTS



# MPS-ASCEND PROPOSAL: KEY COMPONENTS

SPONSORING SCIENTIST STATEMENT (3 PAGES), WHICH DESCRIBES:

- HOW THE SPONSOR AND HOST INSTITUTION WILL PROVIDE A VIBRANT AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE FELLOW'S PROPOSED RESEARCH AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDE A BASIS FOR THE FELLOW'S FUTURE INDEPENDENT RESEARCH CAREER.
- A SUBSTANTIVE MENTORING PLAN, INCLUDING EXPERIENCE AND TRACK RECORD OF MENTORING POSTDOCS AND/OR MENTORING URMS, AS WELL AS BROADENING PARTICIPATION.
- AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT APPLICANT IN COHORT BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (MAY BE EXTERNAL TO HOST INSTITUTION)
- APPLICANT'S RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS AND GOALS AND HOW THEY ALIGN WITH THOSE OF THE SPONSOR.
- SUITABILITY OF THE MATCH BETWEEN FELLOW AND SPONSOR.

*THE STATEMENT SHOULD BE CO-SIGNED BY THE SPONSORING SCIENTIST AND THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR (OR EQUIVALENT) AT THE HOST INSTITUTION.*



# MPS-ASCEND PROPOSAL: KEY COMPONENTS

## TWO OR THREE LETTERS OF REFERENCE:

- ONE REFERENCE LETTER FROM THE DOCTORAL ADVISER
- OTHER LETTER(S) FROM SCIENTIST(S) WHO KNOW(S) THE APPLICANT AND/OR THE APPLICANT'S RESEARCH WELL.

*THE SPONSORING SCIENTIST MAY NOT PROVIDE A REFERENCE LETTER, UNLESS THEY ARE ALSO THE APPLICANT'S DOCTORAL ADVISER.*

*(APPLICANTS SHOULD INFORM THE REFERENCE WRITERS THAT THE LETTERS ARE UPLOADED BY THE APPLICANT; HENCE THEY ARE NOT CONFIDENTIAL)*

IF APPLICABLE, LETTERS OF COLLABORATION (E.G., THOSE CONFIRMING ACCESS TO EQUIPMENT AT NATIONAL LABS OR FACILITIES, ACCESS TO A COLLABORATOR, ETC.)

LETTERS OF COLLABORATION SHOULD BE IN THE FORMAT REQUIRED BY THE [NSF 23-1 PROPOSAL AND AWARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDE](#).



THANKS! QUESTIONS?

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