



National Science Foundation
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NSF 06-515 GLOBE Program Solicitation: **Frequently Asked Questions**

Questions Related to the Project Description and IESSPs Integrated Earth Systems Science Programs (IESSP)

1. *What is the overall goal of this solicitation?*

A thorough review of the GLOBE Program after ten years of operation has identified new opportunities for the program. NSF seeks to preserve and amplify what has been good and successful about GLOBE (e.g., scientist-student partnerships, establishing protocols, working with real data, and student learning through data acquisition, analysis and interpretation), while expanding the scientific problems and approaches in which students are engaged beyond those presently offered. This solicitation also seeks to leverage existing investments by the NSF Geosciences Directorate and related research programs, in support of further integrating research and education.

2. *What type of program qualifies for being an Integrated Earth Systems Science Program (IESSP)? What do you mean by a “major” program?*

Proposals are sought that link to major research programs that have been funded through the NSF Geosciences Directorate programs, the NSF Office of Polar Programs, or the NASA Earth System Research and Applications programs. NSF and NASA consider IESSP programs to be large, multi- or inter-disciplinary research projects focused on solving a specific scientific problem or a coherent or linked set of problems related to Earth systems; these projects are often multi- or inter-national, but not necessarily so. In general, these projects have involved multiple PIs working collaboratively, and utilize networked observations or multiple instruments, and are data or analysis intensive. Although there is no budgetary “threshold” for what constitutes an IESSP program, they are generally multi-year efforts that have been funded in excess of \$1-2 million per year.

3. *Is there a list of eligible or exemplary IESSP programs?*

There is no set list of eligible programs, but examples of eligible IESSP programs include: EarthScope, SAHRA, Integrated Ocean Drilling Program, the AQUA, ICESat, OCO, and GRACE satellite missions, among many others.

4. *What is an IESSP team? Do I need to be a Principal Investigator or Co-PI on an existing IESSP grant to be eligible to be part of a team?*

IESSP teams are groups of scientists, educators and other personnel who propose to combine forces in order to make appropriate linkages between the IESSP scientific program and the GLOBE educational network. For some proposals this may require direct participation of project scientists currently funded by the IESSP, but this is not a requirement of the solicitation. Other teams may involve participants who have no formal affiliation with a specific IESSP, but who propose to develop infrastructure or bridging activities that can help link the IESSP and GLOBE programs; however, the proposal must clearly demonstrate the substance of the linkage and projected outcome.

5. *Can my proposal focus on a major research project that is currently being planned, but is not yet operational?*

IESSP projects that are in the planning stage would be eligible to respond to this solicitation only if the program will be operational by the end of 2007, so that participating GLOBE students will have access to project data and results during a significant portion of the funded award period.

6. *Can I propose to use archived data for student projects in my proposal, or must they use new or real-time data?*

Proposals that will utilize existing archived data or samples are eligible to respond to this solicitation, as long as these data are in the context of an IESSP and the participating students are able to engage in hands-on research using those archived resources.

7. *Do I need to have international collaborators to be eligible? Will proposals with international collaborations be given preference over those without?*

Proposals that have an international component or are internationally relevant are strongly encouraged, because the GLOBE Program involves an international network of teachers and students. Some research programs, e.g., EarthScope, are not international in terms of their geographic operation and data acquisition, but they can still be developed as an internationally relevant activity, because of the global interest in seismology and earthquakes. Involvement of international scientists and/or collaborators is encouraged, but not required by the solicitation. International participation must be funded through a lead U.S. institution, or through non-NSF funding in the host country. The program solicitation has further details regarding participation of non-U.S. collaborators who are not seeking NSF funding.

8. *My institution has several NASA-funded research projects through the Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES) solicitation. Would our institution be equivalent to an IESSP, thus making it eligible to apply to this solicitation?*

No. IESSPs are collaborative projects focused on answering specific scientific questions, not a collection of multiple projects.

Questions Related to the GLOBE Program

9. *Where can I find out more about the GLOBE program resources?*

GLOBE developed a briefing packet in response to the NSF solicitation that can be found at www.globe.gov/iessp_info. More detailed information about GLOBE is available at their Web site: www.globe.gov

10. *Whom should I contact at the GLOBE Program Office regarding coordination of my project with GLOBE?*

Dr. Sandra Henderson, Director of Education for GLOBE, will answer all questions regarding the resources available through the GLOBE Program Office and how collaborations with the IESSP projects can be achieved. She can be reached at sandrah@globe.gov or 303.497.8108.

11. Do I need to submit some form of documentation about my discussions with the GLOBE Program Office?

No explicit documentation is required.

12. Is the NSF 06-515 solicitation strictly limited to development of new protocols for the GLOBE program or should I only propose to work with existing protocols?

This goal of this solicitation is to expand the types of Earth systems research being used by the GLOBE network. While it may be possible to partially achieve this goal by utilizing the existing GLOBE protocols, it is likely that new protocols will need to be developed. This solicitation is not intended to continue support for existing GLOBE protocols, unless it is an essential component required for the success of the proposed work in the context of this solicitation.

13. Will GLOBE continue to provide a core set of measurements obtained through the established protocols? What will happen to existing GLOBE protocols that are not included in awards funded through this solicitation?

The GLOBE Program Office will continue to provide core data sets actively being used by the network, but will not update protocols used for collecting those data unless specifically funded through this solicitation. If an existing protocol experiences a prolonged period of inactivity, it may be allowed to lapse.

14. I am currently funded as a science partner for the GLOBE program. Can I propose to get a supplement to my current award through this solicitation?

No. This solicitation is intended to fund new partnerships between the GLOBE Program and IESSP's, expanding the Earth systems content disseminated through GLOBE and broadening the pool of scientists involved; it is not to sustain existing efforts. Current science partners are eligible to be part of an IESSP proposal.

15. My institution is a current GLOBE partner – how can we get involved with proposals being developed in response to this solicitation?

There is currently no simple and fair mechanism for identifying which IESSP projects may be involved in proposals submitted in response to this solicitation. GLOBE partners who would like to participate in a specific IESSP project proposal should contact the respective project office directly to explore potential collaborations.

16. Can GLOBE partner institutions submit letters of support for more than one proposal?

The answer is yes, in principle, but letters of support should clearly identify how the collaboration serves the needs of the specific GLOBE partner institution and the IESSP.

17. My school would like to join the GLOBE network. Can I obtain funding to do this through this solicitation?

This solicitation is not intended to bring new schools or partners into the GLOBE network unless it is within the context of linking an IESSP program to GLOBE. For example, a non-GLOBE school or network of schools may have a pre-existing partnership with a nearby institution that participates in a major Earth systems research

project. In this case, the PIs could propose to have the school(s) join the GLOBE network as part of a larger proposal to integrate their major research project with the GLOBE network.

Questions Related to Federal Agency Proposals

18. *I am a NASA civil service employee. Can I serve as PI or Co-PI on a proposal for this solicitation?*

The Program Solicitation indicates that proposals will be accepted from “U.S. colleges, universities, professional societies, **agencies**, and other not-for-profit institutions and organizations.” As such, NASA employees can serve as PI or Co-PI on proposals. The procedures for submission of proposals by Federal agency employees are different, however. Federal employees should not use Grants.gov or FastLane for proposal submission, but should contact the NSF Cognizant Program Officer [Jill Karsten (jkarsten@nsf.gov) or Paul Filmer (pfilmer@nsf.gov)] to get specific instructions on proposal submission procedures.

19. *How should I address NASA’s full-cost accounting requirements in my proposal?*

The budget pages in the proposal should include all of the anticipated salary and benefit expenses associated with the NASA employee's activity on the project. The proposal should include appropriate signatures from the authorized institutional officials of the respective NASA installation, acknowledging their intent to permit the employee to engage in this activity should the proposal be selected as well as the appropriate civil servant salary support as identified. If the NASA Center is prepared to cover the civil servant salary costs out of its internal funding (e.g., investment pool, Center Director's discretionary fund, etc.), the Center management can make such a commitment; additionally, the cognizant program managers at NASA Headquarters (HQ) should be informed, but no commitment on their part is required. If the Center management expects the civil servant support (including G&A, service pools, travel, etc.) to be covered by HQ, the proposal **MUST** be submitted to the relevant HQ program manager for consideration prior to submission to NSF, allowing sufficient time (several weeks) for the manager's consideration. The manager may, then, provide one of three responses: (a) the manager agrees to fund the civil servant salary costs assuming NSF funds all the remaining parts of the proposal; (b) the manager agrees to work with his/her NSF counterpart to make a joint decision, which could involve a coordinated review process or rely on the NSF review process - but the manager does not provide an up-front commitment; or (c) the manager expresses no interest in supporting the civil servant part of the proposal regardless of the results of the NSF review process. Pending further budget negotiation upon selection, NASA will be responsible for paying the necessary civil service costs and the NSF-funded award will be reduced commensurately.

Note that in most cases, it is expected that GLOBE-related work would amount to a relatively small fraction of a NASA civil servant's time.

20. *I work at a Federal agency other than NASA, can I submit a proposal in response to this solicitation?*

Employees at other Federal agencies are eligible to submit proposals, but the proposed project must address the goal of the solicitation to support IESSP research that has been funded by the NSF Directorate for Geosciences and Office of Polar Programs, or the NASA Earth Systems programs.

The Program Solicitation indicates that proposals will be accepted from “U.S. colleges, universities, professional societies, **agencies**, and other not-for-profit institutions and organizations.” As such, employees at Federal agencies other than NASA can serve as PI or Co-PI on proposals, but the proposed project must address the goal of the solicitation to support IESSP research that has been funded by the NSF Directorate for Geosciences and Office of Polar Programs, or the NASA Earth Systems programs. The procedures for submission of proposals by Federal agencies are different, however. Federal employees should not use Grants.gov or FastLane for proposal submission, but should contact the NSF Cognizant Program Officer [Jill Karsten (jkarsten@nsf.gov) or Paul Filmer (pfilmer@nsf.gov)] to get specific instructions on proposal submission procedures.

Questions Related to Budgetary Issues

21. *Do I need to include travel funds in my budget request so that I can attend this year’s annual GLOBE meeting?*

The program solicitation specifically requires that travel funds for at least one person from the project be included in the budget request so that they can attend the annual GLOBE meeting. This includes the 2006 meeting, which is being held in Phuket, Thailand between July 27 and August 4. Award decisions will be made by early June, allowing sufficient time to arrange for international travel and visas for this meeting.

22. *I am at a non-U.S. institution, can I serve as a PI or Co-PI on a proposal submitted in response to this solicitation and receive NSF funding for that effort?*

In order to receive U.S. Government funding, U.S. institutions must submit the proposal. Proposals submitted by non-U.S. institutions will undergo merit review but will not receive U.S. government funding. The following scenarios for your participation are possible: 1) You may serve as a Co-PI on a proposal submitted by a lead U.S. institution, but will need to include letters of endorsement demonstrating a commitment to execute the elements of the activity to be conducted at your institution should the proposal be selected. If selected, a separate Agreement will be executed between the lead institution, any additional international funding sources, and the GLOBE Office, outlining the funding conditions, monitoring and oversight responsibilities. 2) You may serve as PI on a proposal submitted by a non-U.S. institution; however, if you are requesting funding for participation by a U.S. institution or organization, the request for their support must come from a U.S. institution.

Questions Related to Award Selection

23. *What are the review criteria on which proposals will be judged?*

In addition to the two standard NSF review criteria related to Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts, proposals will be reviewed for their ability to integrate research and education and broaden participation in the geosciences. Additional review criteria

include: 1) commitment to and expertise in design, implementation or evaluation of student- and teacher-based science activities that align with standards for content, instruction, and assessment; 2) ability to deliver results and products in a timely fashion with excellence; 3) mutual strong commitment from a scientist-educator team; 4) cost effectiveness; and, 5) willingness and ability to contribute to the overall GLOBE Program.

24. *When do you expect award decisions to be made?*

Proposals are due March 8, 2006. We anticipate that the review process will be completed by the end of May 2006, allowing award decisions and PI notification in early June.

25. *How much funding is available for this solicitation?*

NSF will have \$4 million for this program, with approximately \$1 million available in each of the next four fiscal years, pending availability of funding.

26. *Does NSF expect to fund 1 or 2 large projects, or a series of smaller ones?*

NSF anticipates funding 3 to 5 projects, each with an average annual budget in the range of \$200,000 to \$300,000.

27. *Will this solicitation be offered annually?*

No, this is the only solicitation for the next four years. If funding is available, it is our intent to re-issue this program solicitation in the year 2009.