National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

NSF 12-082

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About the PAESMEM Award and Nomination Process

1. **May an individual or organization self-nominate?**

   Yes.

2. **May more than one individual or organizational program from the same institution be nominated in a given round?**

   Yes.

3. **Does the mentoring effort have to be directed to students?**

   No, the mentees can be early career scientists, mathematicians or engineers who have completed their degree in the past three years (this includes post-doctoral fellows, assistant professors and individuals in the private sector).

4. **I've mentored a lot of students during my years as a professor, am I eligible?**

   It depends. Have you made a special effort to mentor students who are under-represented

in the STEM fields? Do you have an innovative program or philosophy that goes beyond what is usually expected from a professor, advisor or mentor? Have you accumulated data about your mentoring efforts so they can be assessed and evaluated for effectiveness? Have you shared your techniques and experiences with others so they can adopt your approach? If so, then you might be a good candidate.

5. **Does a nomination need letters of support?**

None are required; however, a maximum of five letters is permitted. Most successful nominations have three to five letters of support from a variety of individuals familiar with the nominee. If not self-nominated, the letter of nomination replaces one of the five letters of support. If more than five letters are attached, reviewers will be directed to read only the first five.

6. **To whom should the letters of support be addressed?**

The letters of support should be addressed to: PAESMEM Program.

7. **Do letters of support need to be uploaded into the online nomination package?**

Yes. Letters of support are not accepted through email or U.S. mail. Only letters uploaded as PDFs in the FastLane/Grants.gov system are accepted.

8. **How do I submit a nomination?**

Nominees are required to prepare and submit all applications through use of the NSF FastLane system or through Grants.gov. FastLane is the NSF's online system for the preparation and submission of applications. Grants.gov is the government-wide online system to find and apply for Federal grants.

The applicant (the individual or organizational representative) must register as an Individual Researcher in FastLane. This means that the applicant functions as his or her own institutional representative and must submit the application. For most grant competitions at NSF, institutions of higher education have a Sponsored Research Office (SRO) or equivalent that approves submissions. For this announcement, the applicant serves as his or her own SRO for administrative functions.

Detailed registration instructions are found in the PAESMEM Announcement ([NSF 11-563](#)) Section IV. Application Preparation and Submission Instructions.

9. **To submit a nomination in FastLane, does our institution's Sponsored Research Office (SRO) need to submit the application?**

No. Nominees (individual or representing a program) must register in FastLane as an "Individual Researcher" and must then submit the application without using their institution's SRO. See the announcement for additional details.

10. **How long should the Project Summary be?**

The Project Summary must not exceed 1 page.

11. **Can an Organizational nomination change who will be their representative (PI)?**

We will make every effort to accommodate such a request however; it becomes very difficult to change PIs for recognition events after a certain point in the process.

12. **What is the process for announcing the Awardees?**

The PAESMEM program is administered by NSF on behalf of the White House. NSF submits a list of recommended awardees to the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) for final review and decision. The planning of the awards ceremony is independent of the awards notification. The timing of the ceremony must be carefully coordinated with the White House calendar and in the past there has not been a fixed annual date for the awards ceremony.