National Science Foundation
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NSF 12-100

Frequently Asked Questions: For Solicitation NSF 12-557, Data Infrastructure Building Blocks (DIBBs)

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1. **Is my proposal a good fit for the DIBBS solicitation?**

The DIBBS solicitation aims to advance the ability of scientific communities to deal with data exchange issues in a scalsable and replicable way. DIBBS contains 3 separate aspects: conceptualization, interop and implementation. Conceptualization awards are for community requirements gathering and proof of concept designs. Interop awards are for the connection of 2 or more disparate datasets into a unified aggregation. Implementation awards are for implementation of data exchange facilities which serve a large community and are replicable. Proposals that focus primarily on application of existing, leading edge methods (e.g., machine

learning algorithms, statistical analysis) to data sets in a specific science domain or on implementation of tools based on existing techniques are appropriate for this solicitation.

2. **How does DIBBS differ from BIGDATA?**

   DIBBS advances the state of deployed systems and/or community understanding of requirements. BIGDATA advances the state of the art in data handling algorithms and methodologies.

3. **How do I submit a proposal to this program?**

   Please carefully read and follow the instructions provided in (i) the solicitation itself (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2012/nsf12557/nsf12557.htm) and (ii) the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Part I: Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) available at (http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg) If you need additional help preparing and submitting your proposal, we recommend that you contact your institution's Sponsored Projects Office.

4. **Are duplicate submissions allowed?**

   No. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation may not duplicate or be substantially similar to other proposals concurrently under consideration by NSF, NIH, or other agencies' programs or study sections.

5. **Do I need to use Grants.gov or Fastlane to apply?**

   You may use either Grants.gov or Fastlane. Collaborative proposals must use Fastlane

6. **Is my project likely to get funded?**

   If your proposal fulfills the criteria in FAQ # 1 above, then you are encouraged to apply to the program for funding. The proposal will be reviewed using the NSF merit review criteria by panelists or reviewers with expertise in the topics covered in your proposal. Program officers cannot provide proposers with further advice regarding the likelihood that a specific proposal would receive funding.

7. **Can I obtain a postdoctoral fellowship through the DIBBS program?**

   A DIBBS research proposal may request funding for a postdoctoral fellow as part of the project. However, the program does not accept applications for individual postdoctoral traineeships.

8. **Can employees of Federal Agencies or Federally Funded Research and Development Centers submit proposals in response to this solicitation?**

   NSF does not normally support research or education activities by scientists, engineers or educators employed by Federal agencies or Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs). A scientist, engineer or educator who has a joint appointment with a university and a Federal agency (such as a Veterans Administration Hospital, or with a university and a FFRDC) may submit proposals through the university and may receive support if he/she is a bona fide faculty member of the university, although part of his/her salary may be provided by the Federal agency (See http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_1.jsp). Furthermore, scientists, engineers, or educators employed by FFRDCs can be sub-awardees on a project led by an

entity, e.g., a university, that is eligible to apply for grants from NSF. Such a sub-award typically does not provide funds for salary, but can provide funds for travel to work with their collaborators on the project or for students to work on the project as interns in FFRDC labs.

9. **Can for-profit entities apply for funding through this solicitation?**

US commercial organizations, especially small businesses with strong capabilities in scientific or engineering research or education can submit proposals in response to this solicitation. NSF is interested in supporting projects that couple industrial research resources and perspectives with those of universities; therefore, it especially welcomes proposals for cooperative projects involving both universities and the private commercial sector (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_1.jsp).

10. **What are the "intellectual property" implications for a for-profit entity that submits a proposal in response to this solicitation?**

Plans for data management and sharing of the products of research is a required element of the proposal: The data management plan should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results (See http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp#dmp). Proposers should note that the NSF data sharing policy requires investigators to share data gathered under an NSF grant with other researchers "within a reasonable time" after the data are generated. The policy also recognizes that investigators and their employers have a legitimate interest in protecting rights to inventions that are developed under an NSF grant. Details about NSFs Intellectual Property policy can be found at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/aag_6.jsp #VID. The degree to which the proposed data management plan demonstrates the intellectual merit and broader impacts will be considered by the review panel as part of the standard NSF review criteria (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_3.jsp).

11. **Can a foreign organization submit a proposal?**

NSF rarely provides support to foreign organizations. NSF will consider proposals for cooperative projects involving US and foreign organizations, provided support is requested only for the US portion of the collaborative effort.

12. **Will there be future DIBBS solicitations?**

This solicitation is one component in a long-term strategy to address national data challenges.

13. **Fastlane won't accept a .csv file, yet the Solicitation specifies that for the Conflict Of Interest list. What do I do?**

Upload the file as a .pdf document, or rename the file .txt and Fastlane will convert it to pdf for you.