**National Science Foundation**
**4201 Wilson Boulevard**
**Arlington, Virginia 22230**

NSF 13-058

# Frequently Asked Questions for NSF 13-534, BRIGE

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1. **How can I obtain more information about the BRIGE Program?**

   Everything you need to know to prepare a proposal in response to the BRIGE solicitation for FY2013 competition should be contained in the solicitation document.  The Frequently Asked Questions are based on the solicitation and should clarify most uncertainties.  Please read the solicitation and these FAQs in their entirety before contacting a Program Officer.

   In addition, there will be two or three webinars (each about 1 hour, but each with the same presentation) for potential PIs.  Information for registering and signing in to the webinar will be posted on the BRIGE Program website.

**A. BRIGE ELIGIBILITY**

2. **Is there a limit on the number of Principal Investigators that I can include in my proposal?**

   Only one PI is allowed on the BRIGE proposal. Co-principal Investigators or other senior personnel are not permitted.

3. **What is the definition of Senior Personnel?**

   NSF defines senior personnel as follows:

   a. (co) Principal Investigator(s) -- the individual(s) designated by the proposer, and approved by NSF, who will be responsible for the scientific or technical direction of the project. NSF does not infer any distinction in scientific stature among multiple PIs, whether referred to as PI or co-PI. If more than one, the first one listed will serve as the contact PI, with whom all communications between NSF program officials and the project relating to the scientific, technical, and budgetary aspects of the project should take place. The PI and any identified co-PIs, however, will be jointly responsible for submission of the requisite project reports.
   b. Faculty Associate (faculty member) -- an individual other than the Principal Investigator(s) considered by the performing institution to be a member of its faculty or who holds an appointment as a faculty member at another institution, and who will participate in the project being supported. Please see the following link: http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf13001/gpp_2.jsp#IIex7

4. **I have a doctoral degree in computer science; however, my computer science department is under the college of engineering.  Am I eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal?**

   Technically, if your primary faculty appointment is in an engineering department, you are eligible.

However, the research proposed must be within the scope of areas supported by programs in the Engineering Directorate.  Proposals for research topics that would normally be supported in other directorates at NSF (such as CISE or MPS) are not eligible for BRIGE.

5.  **Do I have to be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident?**

    Yes.

6.  **I currently hold a post-doctoral appointment. Am I eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal?**

    No. You are not eligible to apply if you hold a post-doctoral appointment. You must hold an active full-time, tenure track faculty position on the date of proposal submission to be eligible to receive support from BRIGE. Your department head/chair or dean needs to certify this eligibility requirement in the letter submitted with your proposal.  (See also Question 7.)

7.  **I am a new investigator recently employed as a tenure track faculty member at my current institution; however, I also held a tenure track appointment at my previous institution. Am I eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal?**

    You are only eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal if you have a combined total of no more than three years in a tenure track position at *all* institutions where you have been a faculty member.

8.  **I am a new investigator at my current institution for less than three years.  However, I have been awarded tenure due to previous experience.  Am I eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal?**

    No. BRIGE is for tenure-track faculty (pre-tenure).

9.  **I am a new investigator and have exceeded the three years of eligibility because of maternity leave. Am I still eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal?**

    Any formal leave granted by your institution does not count towards the three years of eligibility. As long as the duration of your tenure track appointment (minus your leave) does not exceed the 3 year limit at the time of application, you can apply for the BRIGE award. Your department head needs to certify this in the letter submitted with your proposal.

10. **I served on a previous NSF research grant as co-PI. Am I eligible to submit a BRIGE proposal?**

    No. You must not have previously served as Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator on any NSF-funded research grants. However, previous NSF support from the types of non-research awards listed in the solicitation is not a disqualifying criterion.

11. **I received summer salary from another NSF award; however, I was not a PI or co-PI on the award.  Am I eligible to receive a BRIGE award?**

    Yes, if you meet other eligibility requirements.  The prior support restriction is for individuals who were PI or co-PI on another NSF research award.

12. **When I submitted my BRIGE proposal I had not received any NSF funding. Since then I have received a NSF research grant. Am I still eligible to receive a BRIGE award?**

    No. Please see the eligibility criteria cited in the solicitation: *"In addition, at the time that an award is made, the PI may not be a PI or Co-PI on any awarded National Science Foundation research*

*grant."* If you submitted a BRIGE grant, **you are expected to contact one of the NSF program directors listed in the solicitation if you receive any NSF research support.**

13. **I am currently a new professor but had been in industry and had SBIR funding from the NSF. Am I eligible to apply for BRIGE?**

Yes, if you meet other eligibility requirements. As noted in the solicitation, SBIR or STTR funding awarded while you were in industry is not disqualifying.

14. **I have not received any NSF research grants. However, I have had research support from other federal agencies. May I submit a BRIGE proposal?**

Yes. The restriction with respect to prior research funding is for NSF-funded research grants only. The reviewers will consider the prior experience of the PI, relative to the goals of the BRIGE program, in developing a recommendation. BRIGE is intended for beginning investigators to initiate their research programs and to integrate broadening participation as a sustainable component of their scholarly enterprise.

15. **I have a collaborator, who will assist me with the research. Can I provide funds to serve as compensation for his/her time?**

No. The only Senior Personnel who may be listed in the Budget (Line A.1 through Line A.7) is you. You may request funds under Lines B.1 through B.6, to support students and other similar personnel. NSF funds are not allowed for a collaborator on this award.

16. **I do not have any current or pending (C and P) support research since I started my tenure track position, do I need to provide the "Current and Pending" support section of the proposal?**

Yes. You must submit the current and pending support section, and list the BRIGE proposal as your pending support.

17. **I want my proposal to be reviewed by CMMI under a specific program, how can I ensure that my proposal will be reviewed under this specific program?**

The primary division for submission of a BRIGE proposal is Engineering Education and Centers (EEC). You or your sponsored research office should indicate the secondary unit of consideration as the ENG research program within the CMMI division in which your proposed research is most closely affiliated. Likewise, for any BRIGE submission, the secondary unit of consideration should be the ENG program within the CMMI, CBET, ECCS, or EEC division with which the proposed research is most closely affiliated.

## B. BRIGE SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS, BUDGET PREPARATION, AND FASTLANE SUBMISSION

18. **Should I include a description of my Broadening Participation activities in the body of my Project Description?**

Yes. This is a change from the FY2012 solicitation. The Project Description must include a description of proposed broadening participation activities and show how they are integrated with the research and innovation objectives of the proposal. Proposals that do not include a broadening participation component will be returned without review

19. **What are the supplementary documents that I must provide with my proposal in the**

**"Supplementary Documents" section?**

Required supplemental documents include:

    A. **Letter from the PI's Department Chair or Dean,** which must include confirmation of the following criteria:
- The PI meets the eligibility requirements described in Section IV of the BRIGE solicitation, with specific reference to each element of those requirements
- The PI has access to facilities and support for the proposed activities from the submitting institution, and
- The proposed integration of research and broadening participation activities is consistent with the department chair's/head's or dean's assessment of a successful career plan for the PI.

    B. Documentation of official Leave of Absence, if applicable.

    C. A Post-Doctoral Mentoring Plan, if post-docs will be supported, as required by the NSF PAPPG (NSF 13-001).

    D. A Data Management Plan, as required by the NSF PAPPG (NSF 13-001).

    E. Letters describing any **collaborative arrangements and commitments**.  However, letters of recommendation or endorsement are not allowed.

20. **What types of Broadening Participation activities are appropriate for BRIGE projects?**

Activities should support the goals of the Broadening Participation in Engineering Program of the Engineering Directorate, which seeks the development of a diverse and well-prepared workforce of engineering graduates, particularly those with advanced degrees. Activities should use innovative ways to attract and retain members of underrepresented groups to careers in engineering, especially at the advanced degree level.  Broadening participation activities should strengthen the quality of the research, and the research activities should promote diversity. BRIGE award winners should be prepared to become champions for diversity and broadening participation of underrepresented groups in engineering through their careers.  (Please refer to Question 1.)

## C. BRIGE REVIEW AND DECISIONS

21. **How will my BRIGE proposal be reviewed?**

After the submission deadline for BRIGE proposals, the proposals are reviewed by external panels comprised of experts with the necessary discipline specializations to adequately critique the full complement of proposals. Panels will include members who have experience with and a demonstrated commitment to the goals of the Broadening Participation in Engineering Program. Each panel may include reviewers from the previous panels; however, the make-up of the panel is different from one year to the next. Additional ad hoc reviews may also be sought. Funding recommendations are made by the cognizant Program Director.  They will be based on the individual reviewer ratings, panel discussion and recommendation, funding availability, and the desire to balance the portfolio among sub-fields within the program and a comparison with panel recommendations of other BRIGE panels considering proposals to the FY13 solicitation.

22. **Are there any other review criteria for BRIGE awards that will be of interest to the reviewers?**

Yes. As specified in the solicitation, in addition to the Intellectual Merit and the general Broader Impacts criteria, BRIGE proposals will be evaluated with respect to the integration of broadening participation into the research activities.  Reviewers will be asked to consider how the proposed integrated activity will contribute to recruiting and retaining underrepresented groups in

engineering, particularly at advanced degree levels, as described in the solicitation. Additionally, the proposal will be judged on the potential of the research initiation activities to produce sufficient preliminary results to serve as the basis for future competitive research proposals to the Engineering Directorate of NSF, consistent with the long-term research and education goals of the PI.

23. **When will I be notified if my BRIGE proposal is being recommended for award?**

It is standard NSF practice to process all proposals within six months from the submission deadline; therefore, you will be notified of the status of your BRIGE proposal within six months from the BRIGE submission deadline. Sometimes unexpected events can delay proposal review.

24. **How will my BRIGE award be managed at the NSF?**

The cognizant program officer for the research program at NSF with which your project is most closely affiliated will be the managing program officer. That individual will review and approve your annual and final reports.

25. **Am I eligible for supplemental funding to my BRIGE award?**

Yes, subject to the limitations specified in the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (NSF 13-001), with respect to supplements.

## D. CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS

26. **Whom should I contact if I have additional questions about my BRIGE proposal?**

For questions or information on submission of a BRIGE proposal, contact the Broadening Participation in Engineering Program Director or the Program Coordinator designated for each engineering discipline. Program officers from divisions unrelated to your research will not be able to answer questions about the alignment of your research with programmatic areas supported by NSF. Question about the broadening participation component of BRIGE proposals should be addressed to the Program Director of the Broadening Participation in Engineering Program. Remember; please be sure that you have read the solicitation and these FAQs in their entirety before contacting a Program Officer.

- Dr. Richard N. Smith, Program Director, Broadening Participation in Engineering Program, Division of Engineering Education and Centers, telephone: (703) 292-8071, rnsmith@nsf.gov
- Dr. Ted A. Conway, BRIGE Coordinator for CBET, telephone: (703) 292-7091,email: tconway@nsf.gov
- Dr. Juan E. Figueroa, BRIGE Coordinator for IIP, telephone: (703) 292-7054, email: jfiguero@nsf.gov
- Dr. Mary Toney, BRIGE Coordinator for CMMI, telephone: (703) 292-7008, email: mtoney@nsf.gov
- Dr. Lawrence S. Goldberg, BRIGE Coordinator for ECCS, telephone: (703) 292-5373, email: lgoldber@nsf.gov
- Dr. Richard N. Smith, BRIGE Coordinator for EEC, telephone: (703) 292-8071, email: rnsmith@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of FastLane or Grants.gov contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: fastlane@nsf.gov.
- Grants.gov Contract Center, telephone 1-800-518-4726; email: support@grants.gov