NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 22-038

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Mathematical and Scientific Foundations of Deep Learning and Related Areas (MoDL+) (NSF 22-023)

1. What is the deadline for submission of proposals in response to this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL)?

2. Which program should I submit my proposal to?

3. We want to submit a proposal via Research.gov and list other relevant programs, but the system does not give the option to specify secondary units of consideration. What should we do?

4. How will a proposal in response to the DCL be reviewed?

5. Does the proposal need to address the research areas from both MoDL+ and the specific program to which it is submitted?

6. Is the DCL aligned with the SCALE MoDL solicitation (NSF-21-561) in FY 2021? What does the "+" in "MoDL+" imply?

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1. **What is the deadline for submission of proposals in response to this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL)?**

   This DCL does not represent an additional funding opportunity, nor are there any additional deadlines imposed beyond those of existing NSF programs in one of the participating divisions. This DCL is intended to encourage PIs to submit multi-disciplinary proposals in the mathematical foundations of deep learning and machine learning, as well as provide a mechanism to alert Program Directors (the "MoDL:" prefix) to proposals that address this funding priority. A proposal submitted in response to this DCL must meet the requirements and deadlines of the program to which it is submitted.

   Please see Chapter I.C of the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide*

(PAPPG) for information about DCLs and other categories of NSF funding opportunities.

2. **Which program should I submit my proposal to?**

   Proposals in response to this DCL should be submitted to appropriate existing NSF programs in one of the participating divisions: Division of Computing and Communication Foundations (CCF) and Division of Information and Intelligent Systems (IIS) from the Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE), Division of Electrical, Communications and Cyber Systems (ECCS) from the Directorate for Engineering (ENG), Division of Social and Economic Sciences (SES) from the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SES), and Division of Mathematical Sciences (DMS) from the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS). The proposal should include the prefix "MoDL:" in the proposal title after any program specific title requirements. Principal Investigators (PIs) may include other relevant programs as secondary units for consideration even if the deadlines for the secondary units have passed. We recommend searching recent awards (https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/) to determine which area the proposed work will have the most impact.

3. **We want to submit a proposal via Research.gov and list other relevant programs, but the system does not give the option to specify secondary units of consideration. What should we do?**

   The PI may include a single copy document in the proposal specifying the other relevant programs from participating divisions as secondary units of consideration.

4. **How will a proposal in response to the DCL be reviewed?**

   The review process will begin in the primary program to which the proposal is submitted, but the MoDL+ team has a streamlined process to co-review and pursue co-funding possibilities for those proposals that review well. PIs are encouraged to include relevant programs as secondary units of consideration.

   PIs may also refer to these FAQs for information related to interdisciplinary research and co-reviews.

5. **Does the proposal need to address the research areas from both MoDL+ and the specific program to which it is submitted?**

   Yes. The proposal must address the research areas from both MoDL+ and the specific program to which it is submitted.

6. **Is the DCL aligned with the SCALE MoDL solicitation (NSF-21-561) in FY 2021? What does the "+" in "MoDL+" imply?**

Expanding the scope of the SCALE MoDL solicitation, this DCL is meant to encourage the submission of proposals to existing NSF programs to address theoretical and foundational questions in deep learning and related areas of machine learning. The "+" in "MoDL+" indicates that proposals that go beyond or compete with deep learning are also relevant.