



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 23-056

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Designing Materials to Revolutionize and Engineer our Future (DMREF) Program Solicitation **NSF 23-530**

1. What types of institutions are eligible to submit proposals to the DMREF solicitation?
2. Is there a preference whether a collaborative proposal is submitted as separate submissions from multiple institutions or a single proposal with subawards?
3. Can Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) submit a proposal to a program in the Division of Materials Research and another proposal on a different topic to the DMREF program in the same submission window?
4. Can Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) be part of two DMREF teams for this cycle?
5. Is it mandatory to include any of the participating DMREF Federal partners for a collaborative research proposal? Or can I collaborate with other US Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)?
6. We would like to submit a revised version of a proposal previously submitted to DMREF, taking into consideration the feedback from the 2021 Review Panel. Would this submission be considered a new submission or a resubmission? In the latter case, is a one-page letter of responses to the Reviewers needed in the narrative?
7. Can we submit a GOALI DMREF proposal or a GOALI collaborative DMREF proposal?
8. Can we submit a renewal to an existing DMREF project?
9. Are industrial or National Lab partners required for successful proposals?
10. The solicitation mentions partnerships with National Labs; can they receive funds from the program?
11. How many Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) should be in a DMREF project?
12. Awards are expected to range from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 over four years - are

these limits strict? Can we go slightly below 1,500,000 or above 2,000,000?

13. What are the limits on the size of a subaward?
 14. We need equipment for the proposed research. Can we devote a percentage of the budget toward capital equipment?
 15. Can an international co-PI be funded through DMREF?
 16. Do nonprofit private research institutes count as industry partners for the purpose of GOALI?
 17. Should workforce development be included within broader impacts?
 18. Does DMREF expect development of a new digital database? Is it okay to contribute data produced from the project to an existing database?
 19. Is there a limit on the total number of letters of collaboration we can include?
 20. Is it necessary to contact the program officers to discuss DMREF proposals?
 21. What would be the program starting date?
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1. What types of institutions are eligible to submit proposals to the DMREF solicitation?

Only Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) are eligible to submit to DMREF, as the solicitation clearly states.

2. Is there a preference whether a collaborative proposal is submitted as separate submissions from multiple institutions or a single proposal with subawards?

No. Both types of collaborative proposals are allowed. It is up to the proposing IHE and the specific circumstances and needs of the proposed project.

3. Can Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) submit a proposal to a program in the Division of Materials Research and another proposal on a different topic to the DMREF program in the same submission window?

Yes. Individuals designated as Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) are eligible to be a 'senior personnel' on a single DMREF proposal in the 2023 competition, regardless of any proposals they have submitted elsewhere at NSF.

4. Can Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) be part of two DMREF teams for this cycle?

No. Individuals designated as Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) can be only a member of one DMREF team per cycle.

5. Is it mandatory to include any of the participating DMREF Federal partners for a collaborative research proposal? Or can I collaborate with other US Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)?

It is NOT necessary that you have a partner from another Federal agency. You can have other IHEs as partners, although this is also not required. The proposal can be from a single institution, although you need to have at least two senior personnel on the proposal.

6. We would like to submit a revised version of a proposal previously submitted to DMREF, taking into consideration the feedback from the 2021 Review Panel. Would this submission be considered a new submission or a resubmission? In the latter case, is a one-page letter of responses to the Reviewers needed in the narrative?

All DMREF submissions are considered ‘new’ and not ‘renewals’ or ‘resubmissions’. A one-page response for resubmissions is NOT a DMREF requirement and it is not allowed. It is expected that a 2023 DMREF submission related to a prior DMREF proposal would be updated to reflect new opportunities that have developed over the past two years.

7. Can we submit a GOALI DMREF proposal or a GOALI collaborative DMREF proposal?

Yes, you can submit a GOALI DMREF proposal, but for 2023, GOALI DMREF proposals cannot be submitted as separately submitted collaborative proposals. For GOALI collaborative DMREF proposals, the proposal must be submitted by a single organization with any collaborators listed as subawards. Collaborative proposals submitted through multiple organizations will not be accepted. Chapter II.F.5 of the NSF PAPPG describes the requirements for GOALI proposals.

8. Can we submit a renewal to an existing DMREF project?

All DMREF submissions are considered ‘new’ and not ‘renewals’ or ‘resubmissions’. Follow-on funding for existing DMREF projects will only be considered when ambitious plans for advancing along the materials development continuum or along significantly new research directions will be proposed. Routine continuations of existing projects will not be considered compelling for funding. For PIs with DMREF projects that have been active within the past five years, accomplishments derived from DMREF support must be described in the Results from Prior NSF Support section and must substantially

address progress made under the prior or current DMREF award with respect to Intellectual Merit, Broader Impacts, Data Management Plan, and DMREF Solicitation Specific Review Criteria. A clear explanation of how MGI principles are being applied to accelerate materials discovery and development, and a detailed vision for advancement along the Materials Development Continuum (as described in the MGI Strategic Plan) toward eventual deployment, must be provided in the new proposal.

9. Are industrial or National Lab partners required for successful proposals?

No. However, please note that if submitting a GOALI proposal, an industrial partner is required.

10. The solicitation mentions partnerships with National Labs; can they receive funds from the program?

NSF funds cannot be budgeted or subawarded to DMREF's federal partners, including National and Federal Laboratories. National Labs can only participate as unfunded collaborators. DMREF funds could be allocated to pay standard user fees at user facilities.

11. How many Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) should be in a DMREF project?

All DMREF proposals must involve at least two Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel); typically 3-5 Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI, Faculty or Other Senior Personnel) are involved in a DMREF projects.

12. Awards are expected to range from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 over four years - are these limits strict? Can we go slightly below 1,500,000 or above 2,000,000?

The requested funding can be slightly higher or lower than these limits. If the requested funding is substantially lower than \$1.5M, other core programs in NSF may be more appropriate to consider.

13. What are the limits on the size of a subaward?

There is no specific limit on the size of a subaward, but it needs to be balanced with the scope of the proposed work.

14. We need equipment for the proposed research. Can we devote a percentage of the budget toward capital equipment?

Equipment needed for a DMREF project can be included in the budget. There is no specific limit on the dollar amount, but the requested amount should not adversely affect the actual budget available to perform the research tasks. The equipment needs to be

clearly justified for achieving the goals of the project.

15. Can an international co-PI be funded through DMREF?

Please contact one of the NSF program officers listed in the solicitation to discuss. See PAPPG Chapter I.E.2(c) for NSF's policy regarding funding of a foreign organization or foreign individual.

16. Do nonprofit private research institutes count as industry partners for the purpose of GOALI?

No. See Chapter II.F.5 of the PAPPG for specific guidance on Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI) proposals. GOALI proposals must include at least one industrial (for-profit) partner. Per the PAPPG, proposals may include the participation of a "third partner" such as a National Laboratory or non-profit organization.

17. Should workforce development be included within broader impacts?

Yes. Workforce development is an expectation of DMREF projects and is viewed as a Broader Impact.

18. Does DMREF expect development of a new digital database? Is it okay to contribute data produced from the project to an existing database?

Both are supported in the DMREF program.

19. Is there a limit on the total number of letters of collaboration we can include?No.

However, Letters of Collaboration should follow the guidelines as described in the PAPPG.

20. Is it necessary to contact the program officers to discuss DMREF proposals?No.

21. What would be the program starting date?

It is expected that award notifications will be sent in June/July with projects starting around **October 1**.