



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 24-032

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for International Research Experiences for Students (IRES) (NSF 24-506)

1. May I recruit IRES students from other universities, not only from my own?
2. Do I have to pay stipends to the students?
3. In my IRES proposal, may I request support for a graduate research assistant (GRA)?
4. May I budget some salary for my foreign collaborator who will mentor our IRES students in their lab?
5. My IRES students will need supplies while working abroad. Can I pay a foreign organization for these supplies?
6. Am I allowed to make subawards, subcontracts, or pay consulting fees?
7. My international collaborators, who will serve as mentors to U.S. IRES students, are willing to come to our U.S. campus to help with student preparation prior to their departure. Can I pay them?
8. I am an undergraduate (or graduate) student, very interested in this IRES opportunity. How do I apply for this grant?
9. Do I need to submit letters of collaboration from my foreign collaborators?
10. Do I need to submit biographical sketches of my foreign collaborators?
11. Can I select a Foreign Campus of a U.S. institution as the host site for my IRES project?
12. May I propose an IRES project that does not exactly follow the traditional IRES Site structure?
13. How do I contact the IRES program team?
14. What are the guidelines for a 4-5-year IRES proposal?
15. Can I pay the foreign lecturers for the Advanced Studies Institute or workshop that I am planning as part of my IRES project?

1. May I recruit IRES students from other universities, not only from my own?

Yes, you may recruit locally, regionally, or nationally. Explain your recruitment and student selection strategy thoroughly and clearly in the proposal as it is a key IRES-specific review criterion.

2. Do I have to pay stipends to the students?

Yes. Participating students, whether undergraduate or graduate, must be given a stipend in the range of \$600-\$700 per week for the duration of their active engagement in the IRES project. The same hourly rate of stipend should be used to compensate students involved in hybrid models or part-time research.

3. In my IRES proposal, may I request support for a graduate research assistant (GRA)?

No. The IRES proposal is not your own research project where you request NSF to support graduate assistants for your work. Graduate students can be part of the IRES cohort, and they can receive a stipend in the range of \$600-\$700 per week for their participation in, and contribution to the project; but full-time graduate research assistant (GRA) support or payment of their tuition fees are not allowed.

4. May I budget some salary for my foreign collaborator who will mentor our IRES students in their lab?

No. They will be "unfunded collaborators" in the project. You may NOT use IRES funds to support your foreign collaborators or foreign students.

5. My IRES students will need supplies while working abroad. Can I pay a foreign organization for these supplies?

Yes, you may use IRES funds to cover materials, supplies, and services if they are needed for your students to work on their research projects. You can pay U.S. or foreign organizations for supplies and services; however, the payment can NOT be arranged as a subaward to a foreign institution. You also need to provide a justification for such charges in your budget.

6. Am I allowed to make subawards, subcontracts, or pay consulting fees?

Subawards/subcontracts and consulting fees to domestic entities are allowed, in accordance with the guidance contained in the PAPPG. You need to provide a justification for such charges in your budget. Subawards, subcontracts and consulting

fees to foreign institutions or international branch campuses of U. S. institutions of higher education are not allowed. Payments for services and materials (e.g., rentals, lab fees, translators' fees, computer time, etc.) can be made as direct payments.

7. My international collaborators, who will serve as mentors to U.S. IRES students, are willing to come to our U.S. campus to help with student preparation prior to their departure. Can I pay them?

While it is expected that the majority of IRES funds will directly support the U.S students participating in an IRES project, it is possible to cover modest standard travel expenses for your international collaborators, when such costs are reasonably justified.

8. I am an undergraduate (or graduate) student, very interested in this IRES opportunity. How do I apply for this grant?

Students do not apply directly to NSF for this grant. IRES grants are made to U.S. Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and U.S. non-profit, non-academic organizations and the grantee organization will announce/advertise the availability of slots for student recruitment. You can check the currently active IRES Sites by clicking this link: [#results](https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/advancedSearchResult?ProgEleCode=079Y,080Y,7727&BooleanElement=Any&BooleanRef=Any&ActiveAwardS=true)

9. Do I need to submit letters of collaboration from my foreign collaborators?

Yes. This solicitation requires descriptive letters of collaboration, in lieu of the standard language contained in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG). Please see the proposal preparation instructions in the solicitation (Item 4: Supplementary Documentation) for details.

10. Do I need to submit biographical sketches of my foreign collaborators?

Yes. Biographical sketches (in the NSF format outlined in PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.h) for principal foreign collaborators are required.

11. Can I select a Foreign Campus of a U.S. institution as the host site for my IRES project?

The goal of the IRES program is to provide experiences in foreign research environments. Branch campuses of U.S. institutions try to emulate the U.S. research environment. So, although there is no restriction against partnering with branch campuses of U.S. institutions, it is preferable for IRES projects to collaborate with a foreign institution as the host.

12. May I propose an IRES project that does not exactly follow the traditional IRES Site structure?

Yes, you are welcome to submit creative, innovative proposals that address the overall goals of the IRES program. Please email the IRES program team (ires@nsf.gov) with a 2–3-page summary of your ideas and planned activities, including budget, before you develop the proposal.

13. How do I contact the IRES program team?

Send email to ires@nsf.gov.

14. What are the guidelines for a 4-5-year IRES proposal?

Longer than 3 years (up to 5 years) duration can be requested if the proposal has some unique components, and/or the typical 3-year timeframe is not enough to accomplish its scientific/technical goals. In your proposal, provide clear justification and motivation for the requested longer duration.

15. Can I pay the foreign lecturers for the Advanced Studies Institute or workshop that I am planning as part of my IRES project?

Yes, you may provide travel expenses and/or reasonable honoraria as appropriate for their participation.