



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 25-019

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Regional Resilience Innovation Incubator (R2I2)

1. How/when will proposing organizations/teams expect responses from their Phase 1 Letter of Intent (LOI)?
2. What specific topics are covered in R2I2?
3. The R2I2 Program Objectives state that successful proposals will build upon knowledge gained from research in Earth system science. Could you elaborate on this?
4. Our faculty work on environmental issues, though primarily from a policy perspective. I was wondering if a successful proposal would need to include a collaborator from an Earth system science-related discipline?
5. Per the solicitation, "projects may propose solutions that apply to more than one climate region." Does that mean that key partners can be based outside of the defined region or just that they may have broader applications, but all partners should be within the national climate assessment region?
6. Can proposals address a climate challenge in a region that is outside the region where their organization is located? Can there be multiple partners across geographic regions?
7. The solicitation requires that the R2I2 National Office (RNO) provide a "sustainable" data repository for R2I2 recipients. What guidance can NSF provide on the data repository?
8. We are interested in both the R2I2 Phase-1 award as well as the award for the R2I2 National Office. Can we submit proposals for both? And if so, are separate proposals needed, or could this be written into the same proposal?
9. If an organization submits a proposal to host the National Office and another proposal to run a Phase-1 project, would this have any impact during review? That is, if an organization was selected to manage the National Office, would they have the same chance at also being selected to lead a Phase-1 research project?
10. What is a regional climate challenge?

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1. How/when will proposing organizations/teams expect responses from their Phase 1 Letter of Intent (LOI)?

The LOIs are for NSF merit review planning purposes only. NSF will **not be** providing feedback on LOIs or send invitations for submission of full proposals based on the LOI. However, proposers must submit a LOI by the deadline indicated in the R2I2 solicitation to be eligible to submit a proposal to the R2I2 solicitation.

2. What specific topics are covered in R2I2?

Any topic related to climate resilience is covered in R2I2. The proposers need to make a strong case for their particular idea and how it leverages fundamental research in climate and Earth system science to address climate challenges. As stated in the solicitation, "R2I2 will support community-engaged team science to co-design high-impact solutions to climate-related societal challenges that leverage recent advances in fundamental climate change and Earth system science research." It is highly recommended that proposers carefully read the solicitation and pay attention to the

solicitation specific review criteria in addition to the NSF review criteria of Broader Impacts and Intellectual Merit.

3. **The R2I2 Program Objectives state that successful proposals will build upon knowledge gained from research in Earth system science. Could you elaborate on this?**

We are inviting proposals that build upon Earth system science knowledge to address real world climate resilience challenges. As such, we would like to see proposals that identify regional climate/resilience challenge(s) they want to address. The R2I2 program will support use-inspired research and enable the application and translation of outcomes of Earth system science research into climate solutions that benefit society. R2I2 will build upon fundamental geoscience research by integrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and translational research to achieve solution-focused goals with measurable impacts.

4. **Our faculty work on environmental issues, though primarily from a policy perspective. I was wondering if a successful proposal would need to include a collaborator from an Earth system science-related discipline?**

We strongly recommend proposers to form teams that bring together expertise from various fields relevant to the climate resilience issue they propose to address. The proposing team would need to demonstrate that they have the right expertise to develop solution(s) to the issue that they are proposing to address. R2I2 Phase-1 funding is up to \$500,000 for a two-year duration to support partnership building, refinement of the proposed regional climate challenge, and conceptual development of potential solutions.

5. **Per the solicitation, "projects may propose solutions that apply to more than one climate region." Does that mean that key partners can be based outside of the defined region or just that they may have broader applications, but all partners should be within the national climate assessment region?**

Projects may propose solutions that apply to more than one region but they must focus on a specific challenge or set of challenges in one of the ten climate regions identified in the [5th National Climate Assessment](#). Key partners can be based outside of the defined region, but they have to demonstrate how they can work with the regional/local communities to address the climate challenge they propose to offer solutions to.

6. **Can proposals address a climate challenge in a region that is outside the region where their organization is located? Can there be multiple partners across geographic regions?**

Yes, proposers may address a climate challenge in a region outside their organizational

location. In such cases, it would benefit the proposers to explain how the project team will engage and work with the impacted communities in the defined climate region. Proposers need to demonstrate that geographic distance does not create barriers to engagement with the community where they propose to implement solutions.

Yes, proposers may have multiple partners across geographic regions. However, as stated in the response to question 5 above, proposers must choose one climate region as their primary region.

7. The solicitation requires that the R2I2 National Office (RNO) provide a "sustainable" data repository for R2I2 recipients. What guidance can NSF provide on the data repository?

We encourage proposers to consider leveraging existing repositories versus creating a new repository in order to ensure FAIR data principles for scientific data, i.e. findability, accessibility, interoperability, and re-usability.

8. We are interested in both the R2I2 Phase-1 award as well as the award for the R2I2 National Office. Can we submit proposals for both? And if so, are separate proposals needed, or could this be written into the same proposal?

Yes, the same organization may submit a proposal for Phase-1 and a proposal for the R2I2 National Office. However, the organization would need to submit separate proposals and follow the guidelines in the solicitation. Please note the following eligibility requirements as noted in the solicitation:

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization: There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI: 2

An individual may participate **as lead PI on at most one proposal** for this solicitation. A lead PI may serve as a Co-PI on one other proposal.

If any individual exceeds this participation limit, any proposal submitted to this solicitation with this individual listed as PI or Co-PI, **after the second proposal is received at NSF**, will be returned without review (RWR). No exceptions will be made.

9. If an organization submits a proposal to host the National Office and another proposal to run a Phase-1 project, would this have any impact during review? That is, if an organization was selected to manage the National Office, would they have the same chance at also being selected to lead a Phase-1 research project?

An organization that submits a proposal to lead a Phase-1 project and also submits a proposal to host the National Office will not experience any adverse impacts during the

review process. The review process will follow the corresponding review criteria in the solicitation for both types of proposals. The input from the review process will be used to build a balanced portfolio for the program.

10. What is a regional climate challenge?

A regional climate challenge for the purpose of this solicitation is a climate challenge that is impacting one or more of the ten climate regions defined by the [5th National Climate Assessment](#) and outlined in the R2I2 solicitation. Regional climate challenges may include a broad range of issues or challenges faced by regional/local communities, such as seasonal changes that affect local crops, coastal erosion, flooding, excessive heat, sea level rise, heat related health and related issues. Please note that the challenges quoted above are provided as examples only and not inclusive of all possible regional climate challenges.

11. Please expand on the meaning of "Earth System Research Translation".

Earth Systems Science "aims to discover and integrate knowledge on the structure, nature, and scales of interactions among natural (e.g., physical, chemical, and biological) and social (e.g., cultural, socioeconomic, and geopolitical) processes" as defined in the [NAS article \(https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/26042/next-generation-earth-systems-science-at-the-national-science-foundation\)](https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/26042/next-generation-earth-systems-science-at-the-national-science-foundation). Earth Systems Research Translation in the context of the R2I2 solicitation refers to the translation of the outcomes of Earth Systems science research into climate solutions that benefit society.

12. How much of the project proposal should focus on original, novel research, versus implementation of existing earth system science research?

The R2I2 program is about research translation, i.e. implementation of existing earth system science research knowledge. The program will support transformative ideas that make an impact in the climate solution space. The proposed solutions would apply existing knowledge in ways that address a climate issue and make a significant impact towards solutions.

13. Are organizations or individuals from organizations outside of the United States eligible to be PIs, partners, or sub-awardees?

Organizations outside of the United States are not eligible to submit proposals. However, PIs from organizations in the United States can partner with collaborators from organizations outside the United States, pursuant to the relevant guidelines in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG). <https://new.nsf.gov/policies/pappg/24-1>.

14. What kind of organization is eligible to receive NSF funds?

The R2I2 solicitation states the eligibility criteria. R2I2 is open to proposals submitted by eligible organizations as listed under the eligibility information (section IV) of the R2I2 solicitation.

15. Would leveraging existing partnerships be acceptable if they align with goals and objectives of the R2I2 Phase 1 proposal?

Yes, it is okay to leverage existing partnerships. Based on your project objectives, you may want to carefully evaluate where you may benefit from adding new partnerships or collaborators.

16. Is R2I2 looking for neighborhood solutions or those that reach a broader community?

NSF is looking for bold ideas on high-impact solutions to climate-related societal challenges. These ideas may entail neighborhood solutions with a high impact or that reach a broader community. Potential impacts of the proposed projects would be assessed based on whether the solutions would be scalable with a climate region and beyond.

17. How does R2I2 program balance translational pathways for ideas with commercial value versus the often competing efforts with high societal value, but with potentially lower commercial value?

The R2I2 program is looking for projects with strong scientific and technical advancement towards climate solutions that contribute to the overall well-being of the region. To facilitate translation, solutions should be cost-effective or have a pathway to cost effectiveness and practicality. Commercial success of every solution is not a requirement, though ultimately each R2I2 project must demonstrate a path to becoming self-sustainable in operations beyond the Phase-2 funding period.

18. Is R2I2 intended to be focused on more technical solutions, or would solutions oriented towards a Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) approach be viable?

Successful proposals to the R2I2 program will develop solutions to societal challenges. The balance between social/behavioral and technological approaches will be dependent on the climate resilience challenge being addressed.

19. We are not a large public or private R-1 university. How can we find out more about R2I2 and how we can engage in the competition?

The first place to start will be to carefully read the solicitation and note the requirements and the merit review criteria. We also recommend that you watch the R2I2 webinar posted on the R2I2 web page:

https://players.brightcove.net/679256133001/NkgrDczuol_default/index.html?videoId=6362125607112.

We will be happy to respond to any specific questions via email that can be sent to r2i2@nsf.gov.

20. What is NSF's guideline on providing a techno-economic analysis for a R2I2 project?

Techno-economic analysis (TEA) integrates technical and economic factors into its evaluation of the feasibility, competitiveness, and potential impact of a technology or project. TEA is commonly used to understand the market readiness of a technology. Key inputs into TEA are financial considerations and benchmarking against existing technologies. For project topics lacking a viable market, cost assessments, details on existing TEA frameworks, and insights into the state of the field would be useful.