

Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing Analysis Organization (RSI-ISAO)

PROGRAM SOLICITATION

NSF 23-613



National Science Foundation
Office of the Director
Office of the Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy

Letter of Intent Due Date(s) (required) (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

September 22, 2023

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

October 30, 2023

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

Any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation should be submitted in accordance with the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) that is in effect for the relevant due date to which the proposal is being submitted. The NSF PAPPG is regularly revised and it is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that the proposal meets the requirements specified in this solicitation and the applicable version of the PAPPG. Submitting a proposal prior to a specified deadline does not negate this requirement.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Information

Program Title:

Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing Analysis Organization (RSI-ISAO)

Synopsis of Program:

NSF, through the Office of the Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy (OCRSSP), seeks to establish an independent Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing Analysis Organization (RSI-ISAO) to empower the U.S. research community (institutions of higher education (IHEs), non-profit research institutions, and small and medium-sized for-profit organizations) to address foreign government interference, support security-informed decision-making, and serve as a conduit that connects research community stakeholders with one another and with U.S. government (USG) agencies via NSF.

We invite proposals that articulate a vision and actionable plan for the RSI-ISAO that would build the capacity of the research community to make risk-informed decisions and create a trusted partnership between USG research-awarding agencies and the research communities they serve. We invite proposers to identify strategic objectives to accomplish this vision consistent with the requirements set out in [Section 10338](#) of the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-167), enacted on August 9, 2022 ([CHIPS and Science Act](#)).

The RSI-ISAO's principal duties include:

- Serving as a clearinghouse for information;
- Developing a set of standard risk assessment frameworks and best practices;
- Providing timely reports on research security risks;
- Providing training and support;
- Enabling standardized information gathering;
- Supporting analysis of patterns of risk and identification; and
- Taking other appropriate steps to enhance research security.

These duties can be categorized using the following three functional domains in research security: (1) tools & training, (2)

community engagement & inquiries, and (3) data analysis & reporting.

Informed by stakeholder engagement and statutory requirements, NSF has determined that the RSI-ISAO will:

- Provide uniform quality of service to all members of the research community;
- Respond to specific requests for assistance from research organizations, and from individual researchers through their organization or affiliated entity;
- Handle unclassified information only; including publicly available information and declassified intelligence from USG agencies; and
- Perform analyses and publish reports, based on information provided by USG agencies, research organizations, and the private sector, for the benefit of research stakeholders.

The RSI-ISAO will not:

- Issue formal opinions, recommendations, or decisions to the research community;
- Assume liability for the use of its products and services or the consequences arising from this use;
- Issue policy;
- Hold or analyze classified information; or
- Conduct investigations.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

- Shawna Cox, telephone: (703) 292-7821, email: shcox@nsf.gov
- Kelvin K. Droegemeier, telephone: (405) 413-7847, email: kdroegem@nsf.gov
- Rebecca L. Keiser, telephone: (703) 292-8000, email: rkeiser@nsf.gov
- Sarah Stalker-Lehoux, telephone: (703) 292-5073, email: sstalker@nsf.gov

Award Information

Anticipated Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement

Estimated Number of Awards: 1

A single cooperative agreement will be awarded in fiscal year (FY) 2024, using FY 2023 funds, with an option of four additional years.

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$9,500,000

The first year of funding will be up to \$9,500,000 and will be committed upon award. Subsequent funding for years two through five, may be at least \$10,000,000 per year, pending availability of appropriated funds, and subject to a satisfactory annual review of accomplishments relative to specified goals.

Eligibility Information

Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US institution of higher education (including through use of subawards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.
- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.
- For-profit organizations: U.S.-based commercial organizations, including small businesses, with strong capabilities in scientific or engineering research or education and a passion for innovation.
- All participating organizations must be physically located in the U.S. and operated as U.S. entities subject to U.S. law.

Who May Serve as PI:

The principal investigator (PI) and co-PI(s) must be a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization: 1

An entity may serve as the lead organization on **no more than one proposal**.

If an organization exceeds these limits, any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation from this organization after the first proposal is received at NSF will be returned without review.

An entity can be involved as a non-lead organization on an unlimited number of proposals in response to this solicitation.

If the proposal involves more than one organization, a single proposal with subawards administered by the lead organization (PAPPG Chapter II.E.3.a) must be submitted; separate submissions as described in PAPPG Chapter II.E.3.b are not accepted and will be returned without review. The requirement of a single submission is meant to facilitate effective coordination among participating organizations and to avoid difficulties that can ensue in large projects when individuals change organizations and/or cease to fulfill project responsibilities.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI: 1

An individual may serve as PI or co-PI on **no more than one proposal** but may serve as Senior Personnel on an unlimited number of proposals submitted in response to this solicitation.

If an individual exceeds these limits, any proposal submitted to this solicitation with this individual listed as PI or co-PI after the first proposal is received at NSF will be returned without review.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Submission of Letters of Intent is required. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not required
- **Full Proposals:**
 - Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.
 - Full Proposals submitted via Grants.gov: *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov* guidelines apply (Note: The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide).

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:**

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:**

Not Applicable
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:**

Not Applicable

C. Due Dates

- **Letter of Intent Due Date(s) (required)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

September 22, 2023
- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

October 30, 2023

Proposal Review Information Criteria

Merit Review Criteria:

National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review criteria apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

Award Administration Information

Award Conditions:

Standard NSF award conditions apply.

Reporting Requirements:

Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Mission & Scope

To understand the mission and scope of the Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing Analysis Organization (RSI-ISAO), it is valuable to situate research security in the context of other familiar concepts such as research integrity, responsible and ethical conduct of research (RECR), rigor & reproducibility, and research ethics, as well as to define what is being protected. Fundamentally, research security involves protecting well-established values such as transparency, openness, honesty, integrity, respect, and accountability of the U.S. research enterprise. These values are upheld through the interconnected application of RECR, rigor & reproducibility, and research ethics, resulting in research conducted with integrity and wrapped in the protection of research security. It is critical that in striving for research security, values such as transparency and openness are not lost.

The mission of the RSI-ISAO is to empower the research community to make security-informed decisions about research security concerns. The RSI-ISAO will achieve this mission by providing information, tools, and services to institutions of higher education (IHEs), non-profit research institutions, and small and medium-sized businesses. To this end, the RSI-ISAO will:

- Provide uniform quality of service to all members of the research community;
- Respond to specific requests for assistance from research organizations, and individual researchers through their organization or affiliated research entity;
- Handle unclassified information only, including publicly available information and de-classified intelligence information from U.S. government (USG) agencies through NSF;
- Develop innovative and creative means to share information with the research community in a manner that is appropriately coordinated with NSF and the USG Steering Committee (USG SC); and
- Receive information from USG agencies through NSF, research organizations, and the private sector and perform analyses and publish reports based on this information for the benefit of research stakeholders.

The RSI-ISAO will not provide official recommendations and/or determinations on a case-by-case basis nor will it issue formal decisions, opinions, or policy. Additionally, the RSI-ISAO will not:

- Assume liability for the use of its products and services or the consequences arising from this use;
- Hold or analyze classified information; or
- Conduct investigations.

Context & Need

To protect the values at the core of U.S. research, the research community needs support and partnership from the USG to better understand and address the risks posed by foreign interference efforts; improve awareness of these risks through increased communication and information sharing; and promote practices that further the principled international collaborative research that has provided technological and economic advances for the world. This partnership must strike a balance that safeguards the security and integrity of current and future independent and collaborative scientific efforts without limiting U.S.-based researchers' and research organizations' ability to continue pursuing legitimate domestic and international collaborations.

As an important step toward achieving these goals, Congress directed NSF in [Section 10338](#) of the [CHIPS and Science Act](#) to enter into an agreement with a qualified independent organization to establish a RSI-ISAO. Important initiatives and reports that underpin the establishment of the RSI-ISAO include the [National Security Presidential Memorandum-33 \(NSPM-33\)](#), the [NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance](#), and the [2019 and 2023 JASON studies](#). These documents and other resources are available at <https://new.nsf.gov/research-security#resources>.

Stakeholder Engagement

NSF began meeting its mandate to create the RSI-ISAO by conducting an extensive series of stakeholder engagements and publishing a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) [NSF 23-098](#), as required in [Section 10338\(f\)](#). Broadly, OCRSSP has met with other USG agencies, IHEs, academic organizations, and professional societies, to obtain input on:

- What the research community needs to make more informed decisions concerning research security and integrity; and
- How the research community's needs can be met by the RSI-ISAO; and
- How the RSI-ISAO can become a trusted partner, along with its users, in addressing research security and integrity issues.

Consistent themes emerged from these sessions and the responses to the DCL, many of which centered around the critical values of trust and partnership. Stakeholders noted that for the RSI-ISAO to be successful, researchers and organizations must trust that the RSI-ISAO exists to provide services that benefit the research community. To earn that trust, the RSI-ISAO must protect the privacy of its users and any information they share. Stakeholders also noted that ensuring equitable access to the services of the RSI-ISAO by all members of the research community is important in determining any future funding structure. Finally, the RSI-ISAO should respect the autonomy of organizations to make decisions that align with their organizational culture, resources, state laws, etc.

Functional Domains

Additional themes fell broadly into three functional domains in research security - (1) tools & training, (2) community engagement & inquiries, and (3) data analysis & reporting — which provide a conceptual scaffold for thinking about the RSI-ISAO's broad structure and function.

Tools & Training – Stakeholders expressed strong demand for actionable tools, frameworks, rubrics, and best practices that the RSI-ISAO will help identify and may develop to (1) clearly define and contextualize risk; (2) emphasize what to do, not only what to avoid; (3) acknowledge the tension between so-called bright lines that appear in policy and the nuances of real life research situations; (4) include positive case studies that demonstrate successes in mitigating research security concerns; (5) provide balanced information about benefits and risks, particularly as they pertain to international collaborations or trainees; and (6) are viewed as relevant and valuable to all members of the research enterprise.

Community Engagement & Inquiries – In this domain, stakeholders emphasized the need for the RSI-ISAO to engage researchers & research organizations with timely, relevant communication, particularly in response to inquiries for assistance. Stakeholders identified a valuable opportunity for the RSI-ISAO to facilitate engagement between interested groups at various levels within and outside the research community, USG, and beyond. It will also be important for the RSI-ISAO to consistently demonstrate value to organizations of all sizes, but stakeholders noted that large organizations are especially concerned about reducing administrative cost and burden of research security programs, whereas smaller/emerging research organizations are more focused on accessing shared resources that can be leveraged.

Data Analysis & Reporting – In this domain, the RSI-ISAO should conduct landscape analyses, risk modeling, collect best practices and risk mitigation plans from organizations, develop an anonymous reporting system, and help the research community by sharing data and issuing timely reports. All activities should be conducted while appropriately protecting the privacy of the RSI-ISAO's users.

Community Priorities

The DCL asked respondents to rank the RSI-ISAO's seven duties defined in CHIPS and Science Act and listed in Section II in order of importance. Among the approximately 20 respondents, Duty 2 — Develop a standard set of frameworks and best practices, relevant to the research community, to assess research security risks in different contexts — emerged as the common priority, whereas Duty 1 — Serve as a clearinghouse

for information to help enable the members and other entities in the research community to understand the context of their research and identify improper or illegal efforts by foreign entities to obtain research results, know how, materials, and intellectual property — was most consistently rated as the lowest priority. The remaining five duties received a similar mix of moderate rankings that varied by respondent type. For example, IHEs tended to rate Duty 5 — Provide training and support, including through webinars, for relevant faculty and staff employed by IHEs on topics relevant to research security risks and response — as a higher priority than respondents from other sectors of the research enterprise. NSF has interest in the RSI-ISAO continuing to obtain further input from the community given that the CHIPS and Science Act requires that "services provided are aligned with the needs of the research community."

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

NSF is issuing this program solicitation under [Section 10338\(a\)](#) of the [CHIPS and Science Act](#), to invite proposers to serve as the "qualified independent organization" to establish and operate the RSI-ISAO.

Duties of the RSI-ISAO

The RSI-ISAO's principal duties as reflected in CHIPS and Science Act fall into the three functional domains that emerged from NSF's stakeholder engagement activities: (1) tools & training, (2) community engagement & inquiries, and (3) data analysis & reporting. However, additional functions and domains may be helpful and included as part of the proposal.

Under the statute, the core duties of the RSI-ISAO are to:

1. Serve as a clearinghouse for information to help enable the members and other entities in the research community to understand the context of their research and identify improper or illegal efforts by foreign entities to obtain research results, know how, materials, and intellectual property;
2. Develop a set of standard risk assessment frameworks and best practices, relevant to the research community, to assess research security risks in different contexts;
3. Share information concerning security threats and lessons learned from protection and response efforts through forums and other forms of communication;
4. Provide timely reports on research security risks to provide situational awareness tailored to the research and STEM education community;
5. Provide training and support, including through webinars, for relevant faculty and staff employed by institutions of higher education on topics relevant to research security risks and response;
6. Enable standardized information gathering and data compilation, storage, and analysis for compiled incident reports;
7. Support analysis of patterns of risk and identification of bad actors and enhance the ability of members to prevent and respond to research security risks; and
8. Take other appropriate steps to enhance research security.

NSF anticipates that the RSI-ISAO's earliest activities will build on the stakeholder engagement already conducted by the agency to gather further input from the research community. NSF will facilitate connections between the awardee and stakeholder groups to expedite this process, as it is vital that the RSI-ISAO identifies and serves the research community's needs as it begins to execute its duties. NSF expects the RSI-ISAO to make progress on duties in each functional domain outlined in Sections I and V.A of this solicitation by the end of Year 2; be engaged in most duties by the end of Year 3; and perform all duties completely by the projected end of the award. Proposals should lay out clear plans to demonstrate how these milestones will be achieved.

Organization and Structure

NSF anticipates that RSI-ISAO may implement its structure and activities via a phased approach, ramping up capabilities over time to ensure it appropriately addresses existing and emerging needs identified by the research community and the USG SC through NSF. A proposal for the RSI-ISAO should include an internal administrative structure that is well-justified for achieving its vision and mission. The strengths, advantages, and challenges of the chosen structure should be articulated clearly and concisely to justify the level of funding and visibility anticipated for the RSI-ISAO. The proposed structure should ensure effective linkages among all proposal participants (including subawardees).

Two external administrative bodies may inform the work of the RSI-ISAO. The first is the USG Steering Committee (USG SC), which is composed of USG leaders and research security subject matter experts and chaired by NSF. NSF will initiate the USG SC to engage its federal interagency partners in supporting the RSI-ISAO's mission through NSF as the liaison. Specific roles of the USG SC include, but are not limited to, advising NSF on research security issues that may impact the work of the RSI-ISAO, making NSF aware of new information — open or classified — that may be relevant to the RSI-ISAO's mission, and coordinating the declassification of information to be shared by NSF with the RSI-ISAO for ultimate dissemination to the U.S. research community.

The second external administrative body would be a board of directors, which the [CHIPS and Science Act](#) authorized as an option for the RSI-ISAO. Unlike the USG SC, the board of directors would be created by the awardee and would provide direct guidance for policies, legal issues, plans, and strategies related to the RSI-ISAO's internal operations as an entity. Proposals should discuss plans for creating a board of directors or a rationale for not convening one.

Leadership and Staffing

A full-time director will be critical to the scientific leadership and management of a successful RSI-ISAO and NSF expects this position to be held by the Principal Investigator (PI). The RSI-ISAO's leadership will be responsible for the overall success of the organization, including but not limited to, mission-focused strategic planning and program development; active and continuous engagement with NSF; management and staffing including ensuring an inclusive and equitable environment that is welcoming to the full spectrum of diverse talent that society has to offer; fiscal and compliance activities related to the award.

The RSI-ISAO must be staffed by qualified personnel required to support its activities and achieve its objectives. Proposals should include a description of key personnel roles and responsibilities, the leadership model and structure (team-based leadership approaches are welcome), and a staffing plan for the duration of the award. For example, staffing might include project and product managers, data scientists, software developers and programmers, postdoctoral scholars and other scientists, instructional design and education staff, and administrative support personnel.

Membership & Funding

The RSI-ISAO will serve all members of the U.S. research community, which includes IHEs, non-profit research institutions, and small and medium-sized businesses. Congress has appropriated \$9,500,000 in FY 2023 to establish the RSI-ISAO; NSF will make this award in FY 2024.

NSF will work with the awardee to develop a plan for the sustainability of the RSI-ISAO beyond the term of this award, consistent with applicable authority. Regarding future funding, Section 10338(d)(2) of the CHIPS and Science Act notes that:

As soon as practicable, members of the RSI-ISAO shall be charged an annual rate to enable the RSI-ISAO to cover its costs. Rates shall be set on a sliding scale based on research and development expenditures to ensure that membership is accessible to a diverse community of stakeholders and ensure broad participation. The RSI-ISAO shall develop a plan to sustain the RSI-ISAO without Federal funding, as practicable.

The sustainability planning would include obtaining input from the research community and USG SC. Additionally, any sustainability plan would examine the feasibility of a membership and fee structure and alternative sources of funding while ensuring that all members of the U.S. research community have equitable access to the RSI-ISAO. NSF anticipates that any specific provisions regarding sustainability planning will be addressed in the cooperative agreement.

Webinars

NSF will hold two identical informational webinars regarding this program solicitation for the RSI-ISAO on:

- Monday August 14, 2023 from 3 to 5 pm ET
- Thursday August 24, 2023 from 1 to 3 pm ET

Registration information for these webinars will be posted on the NSF Research Security website (<https://new.nsf.gov/research-security>).

III. AWARD INFORMATION

Anticipated Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement

Estimated Number of Awards: 1

A single cooperative agreement will be awarded in fiscal year (FY) 2024, using FY 2023 funds, with an option of four additional years.

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$9,500,000

The first year of funding will be up to \$9,500,000 and will be committed upon award. Subsequent funding for years two through five, may be at least \$10,000,000 per year, pending availability of appropriated funds, and subject to a satisfactory annual review of accomplishments relative to specified goals.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Who May Submit Proposals:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) - Two- and four-year IHEs (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in the US, acting on behalf of their faculty members. Special Instructions for International Branch Campuses of US IHEs: If the proposal includes funding to be provided to an international branch campus of a US

institution of higher education (including through use of subawards and consultant arrangements), the proposer must explain the benefit(s) to the project of performance at the international branch campus, and justify why the project activities cannot be performed at the US campus.

- Non-profit, non-academic organizations: Independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations located in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activities.
- For-profit organizations: U.S.-based commercial organizations, including small businesses, with strong capabilities in scientific or engineering research or education and a passion for innovation.
- All participating organizations must be physically located in the U.S. and operated as U.S. entities subject to U.S. law.

Who May Serve as PI:

The principal investigator (PI) and co-PI(s) must be a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization: 1

An entity may serve as the lead organization on **no more than one proposal**.

If an organization exceeds these limits, any proposal submitted in response to this solicitation from this organization after the first proposal is received at NSF will be returned without review.

An entity can be involved as a non-lead organization on an unlimited number of proposals in response to this solicitation.

If the proposal involves more than one organization, a single proposal with subawards administered by the lead organization (PAPPG Chapter II.E.3.a) must be submitted; separate submissions as described in PAPPG Chapter II.E.3.b are not accepted and will be returned without review. The requirement of a single submission is meant to facilitate effective coordination among participating organizations and to avoid difficulties that can ensue in large projects when individuals change organizations and/or cease to fulfill project responsibilities.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or co-PI: 1

An individual may serve as PI or co-PI on **no more than one proposal** but may serve as Senior Personnel on an unlimited number of proposals submitted in response to this solicitation.

If an individual exceeds these limits, any proposal submitted to this solicitation with this individual listed as PI or co-PI after the first proposal is received at NSF will be returned without review.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Letters of Intent (required):

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required to help NSF program staff gauge the size and range of the competition, enabling earlier selection and better management of reviewers and panelists. An LOI is not externally evaluated or used to decide on funding. LOIs can only be submitted through Research.gov (not Grants.gov) and must contain the following information:

- **Lead PI and Co-PIs** – Include the lead PI and up to four (4) co-PIs or senior personnel.
- **Synopsis** – Provide a brief description (2500 character maximum) of the proposers' vision for the RSI-ISAO, including relevant experience of the lead PI and organization as evidence of the ability to manage a project of this size and scope. Include a separate paragraph each on intellectual merit and broader impact in the description.
- **Recommended Reviewers** – In the Other Comments section (2500 character maximum), provide up to 5 reviewer recommendations. Include the names, organizations/affiliations, phone numbers, email addresses, along with a brief (up to 3 sentences) rationale for the recommendation.

Letter of Intent Preparation Instructions:

When submitting a Letter of Intent through Research.gov in response to this Program Solicitation please note the conditions outlined below:

- Submission by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) is required when submitting Letters of Intent.
- A Minimum of 0 and Maximum of 4 Other Senior Project Personnel are permitted
- Submission of multiple Letters of Intent is not permitted

Full Proposal Preparation Instructions: Proposers may opt to submit proposals in response to this Program Solicitation via Research.gov or Grants.gov.

- Full Proposals submitted via Research.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg. Paper copies of the PAPPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov. The Prepare New Proposal setup will prompt you for the program solicitation number.
- Full proposals submitted via Grants.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation via Grants.gov should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov*. The complete text of the *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: (https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide). To obtain copies of the Application Guide and Application Forms Package, click on the Apply tab on the Grants.gov site, then click on the Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions link and enter the funding opportunity number, (the program solicitation number without the NSF prefix) and press the Download Package button. Paper copies of the Grants.gov Application Guide also may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

See PAPPG Chapter II.D.2 for guidance on the required sections of a full research proposal submitted to NSF. Please note that the proposal preparation instructions provided in this program solicitation may deviate from the PAPPG instructions.

In addition to the required components described in the PAPPG, proposals submitted in response to this solicitation must follow all of the additional instructions specified below.

Project Description

The project description is limited to **25** pages. In addition to the requirements specified in the PAPPG, including a separate section labeled "Broader Impacts", the project description must contain the following named sections, in the order presented below:

Vision and Strategic Objectives

Present a vision and strategic objectives for the RSI-ISAO, as well as a broad timeline for achieving them. In identifying the vision, the proposer should describe how it will work with the research community to empower the research community to identify, mitigate and respond to risks they are experiencing on research security issues and to make security-informed decisions.

Organizational Design

Describe the overall design of the RSI-ISAO, particularly as it pertains to the minimum of these three main functional domains in research security: (1) tools & training, (2) community engagement & inquiries, and (3) data analysis & reporting. These functions should be discussed at an overview level in this section, and more deeply in later sections. Discuss the infrastructure to be created, opportunities to be leveraged, and strategies to be employed to engage a broad scientific community in best research security practices. Describe the process for prioritizing activities, making course corrections, and/or sunseting activities that have reached end-of-life.

Leadership & Management

Describe the organizational and management structure, including the roles, responsibilities and specific expertise of the director and other key personnel. This section should include a discussion of leadership, hiring, and management philosophies, particularly as they pertain to the participation of the full spectrum of diverse talent in STEM to the RSI-ISAO's staff. Present a roster of positions that are envisioned for the mature RSI-ISAO, including broad expertise required for each position and an estimate of when that position will be brought online.

If collaborations and/or a team-based structure are envisioned, provide a plan that includes best practices to ensure that these relationships are highly successful. This could include but is not limited to anticipated norms for meeting frequency, duration, and style; specific tools for different forms of communication; mechanisms by which expectations are set and a clearly defined process for addressing misaligned expectations and other forms of conflict quickly and constructively.

Governance

Section 10338(e) of the CHIPS and Science Act states that *the RSI-ISAO may establish a board of directors to provide guidance for policies, legal issues, and plans and strategies of the entity's operations*. Discuss whether such a board will be established, and the rationale for that decision. If established, *the board shall include a diverse group of stakeholders representing the research community, including academia, industry, and experienced research security administrators*. Describe how this requirement will be met, specifically addressing how the perspectives of non-R1 research institutions will be fully integrated into the RSI-ISAO's governance.

Functional Domains

Describe the functional domains for the proposed Organizational model and include at least the three domains listed below. For each of the functional domains identified, provide specific, detailed examples from one or more of the leadership team members that demonstrate prior successes.

Tools & Training – Describe the types of tools and training envisioned for the RSI-ISAO, including the topic(s), target audiences, format, and relevant underlying theories as well as dissemination of other available tools and training, including the four training modules on research security currently being developed with NSF funding (see <https://new.nsf.gov/news/nsf-2022-research-security->

training-united-states). Examples of prior successes would ideally include the creation and implementation of tools and training that assisted the target audience in navigating a complex regulatory environment. Given that the RSI-ISAO may receive from the USG through NSF resources including tools and training that the RSI-ISAO will review independently and augment and share with the research community as appropriate, describe how this process would work.

Engagement & Inquiries – Describe how the RSI-ISAO leadership and staff will cultivate the relationships of trust with the research community necessary for the RSI-ISAO to be successful. Include a specific plan for how the RSI-ISAO will be marketed to the community and how services will be provided equitably to all research community members, particularly emerging research institutions, minority-serving institutions, and 2- and 4-year colleges. Examples of prior successes in this domain may include relationships inside or outside of the research security and integrity sphere, but ideally would include governmental/regulatory bodies as well as most, if not all, of the target audience for the RSI-ISAO's services. Include in the description the hosting of at least one annual meeting for the research community to help share information, develop further expertise, and improve engagement.

Data Analysis & Reporting – Examples of prior successes should demonstrate a deep understanding of research security as it pertains to IHEs, non-profit research institutions, and small & medium-sized for-profit organizations. Additionally, provide examples of questions that the RSI-ISAO may answer that would be of value to the research community. Describe what data sets are available or would need to be made available, the types of analyses that would be done, the kinds of written products or reports that would be most valuable, and the mechanisms for sharing findings with the research community.

Cyberinfrastructure

Given the RSI-ISAO's focus on data analysis and information sharing, advanced cyberinfrastructure capabilities are central to its operations. Use of existing state-of-the-art resources and platforms, including those supported by NSF, is encouraged. Development of completely novel infrastructure concepts to meet the RSI-ISAO's needs may be proposed but must be particularly well justified.

Proposals must detail the following:

- Plans for addressing the software, data, and computing needs of the Organization and its users, teams, and communities based on the type, nature and volume that the proposer anticipates the RSI-ISAO will collect, maintain and use;
- Plans to integrate or leverage existing cyberinfrastructure and repositories to realize the Organization's vision;
- Establishment of FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) practices for all data and metadata that will be generated and analyzed throughout the life cycle of projects;
- Development of collaborative scientific workflows and data processing pipelines to facilitate efficiency, transparency, and reproducibility;
- Strategies for data attribution, curation, storage, sharing, and authentication;
- Realistic plans for maintenance of infrastructure and information content beyond the time frame of the proposed work; and
- Plans to ensure the privacy of institutions or research entities interested in consulting with the RSI-ISAO is protected.

Strategic Plan and Assessment Strategy

Provide an outline of key strategic objectives and a roadmap for developing and implementing a strategic plan within the first six months of the Organization's operation. In addition, describe the strategy for assessing the RSI-ISAO throughout its lifetime, including methods, metrics, milestones, and timelines for both formative and summative evaluation of the RSI-ISAO's performance and progress toward its core vision and strategic objectives. The strategic plan should incorporate relevant alignment with NSF Strategic Objectives, such as:

- **Service to the Community** – How will trust-building between the research community and the USG SC be part of the RSI-ISAO strategy?
- **Transparency and Open Science** – How will the RSI-ISAO ensure that appropriate transparency is in place? What will its data management practices be to ensure protection of privacy and accessibility of information? Will its analyses be open and available for the research community to see how the RSI-ISAO came to its conclusions?
- **Equitable Access** – How will the RSI-ISAO promote equitable access and ensure its services are available to the entire research community?

Timeline/Phases

Describe what will happen each year, including milestones, deliverables, etc. for the anticipated life span of the award.

Anticipated Challenges/Blockers

Identify anticipated challenges or blockers to the success of the RSI-ISAO and how those challenges will be addressed. Examples of such challenges include, but are not limited to, infrastructure, culture, talent recruitment & retention, and outreach to the research community.

Host/Lead Organizational Capabilities

Describe how the current capabilities and resources of the host/lead organization(s) will facilitate the RSI-ISAO vision. Include information on organizational leadership, technical expertise, general support, space, technologies, and other infrastructure that will support its activities.

Intellectual Contribution and Credit

Provide a clear plan for management of the rights and credits of participants related to the RSI-ISAO's deliverables, including but not restricted to data analysis, tools, methods, code, models, and other intellectual products. This section should complement rather than duplicate the Data Management Plan and must explain how teams will collaboratively ensure fair and equitable assignment of credit to all participants based on

agreed-upon criteria of contribution. The plans must address varying expectations among different disciplines and sub-disciplines about credit for all participants, especially early-career researchers and non-traditional authors such as staff members, including programmers, data managers, team facilitators, among others.

Supplementary Documents

Letters of Commitment

A brief (one-page) letter of commitment is required from any entity that commits support to the RSI-ISAO but is not named as a subawardee. The signed letter should specify the entities intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing:

Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.

C. Due Dates

- **Letter of Intent Due Date(s) (required)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

September 22, 2023

- **Full Proposal Deadline(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

October 30, 2023

D. Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements

For Proposals Submitted Via Research.gov:

To prepare and submit a proposal via Research.gov, see detailed technical instructions available at: https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=research_node_display&_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationandSubmission.html. For Research.gov user support, call the Research.gov Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 or e-mail rgov@nsf.gov. The Research.gov Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the Research.gov system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

For Proposals Submitted Via Grants.gov:

Before using Grants.gov for the first time, each organization must register to create an institutional profile. Once registered, the applicant's organization can then apply for any federal grant on the Grants.gov website. Comprehensive information about using Grants.gov is available on the Grants.gov Applicant Resources webpage: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>. In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide (see link in Section V.A) provides instructions regarding the technical preparation of proposals via Grants.gov. For Grants.gov user support, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or by email: support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Contact Center answers general technical questions related to the use of Grants.gov. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this solicitation.

Submitting the Proposal: Once all documents have been completed, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit the application to Grants.gov and verify the desired funding opportunity and agency to which the application is submitted. The AOR must then sign and submit the application to Grants.gov. The completed application will be transferred to Research.gov for further processing.

Proposers that submitted via Research.gov may use Research.gov to verify the status of their submission to NSF. For proposers that submitted via Grants.gov, until an application has been received and validated by NSF, the Authorized Organizational Representative may check the status of an application on Grants.gov. After proposers have received an e-mail notification from NSF, Research.gov should be used to check the status of an application.

VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program for acknowledgement and, if they meet NSF requirements, for review. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons

outside NSF either as *ad hoc* reviewers, panelists, or both, who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal. In addition, Program Officers may obtain comments from site visits before recommending final action on proposals. Senior NSF staff further review recommendations for awards. A flowchart that depicts the entire NSF proposal and award process (and associated timeline) is included in PAPPG Exhibit III-1.

A comprehensive description of the Foundation's merit review process is available on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/.

Proposers should also be aware of core strategies that are essential to the fulfillment of NSF's mission, as articulated in *Leading the World in Discovery and Innovation, STEM Talent Development and the Delivery of Benefits from Research - NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2026*. These strategies are integrated in the program planning and implementation process, of which proposal review is one part. NSF's mission is particularly well-implemented through the integration of research and education and broadening participation in NSF programs, projects, and activities.

One of the strategic objectives in support of NSF's mission is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions must recruit, train, and prepare a diverse STEM workforce to advance the frontiers of science and participate in the U.S. technology-based economy. NSF's contribution to the national innovation ecosystem is to provide cutting-edge research under the guidance of the Nation's most creative scientists and engineers. NSF also supports development of a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce by investing in building the knowledge that informs improvements in STEM teaching and learning.

NSF's mission calls for the broadening of opportunities and expanding participation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines, which is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

A. Merit Review Principles and Criteria

The National Science Foundation strives to invest in a robust and diverse portfolio of projects that creates new knowledge and enables breakthroughs in understanding across all areas of science and engineering research and education. To identify which projects to support, NSF relies on a merit review process that incorporates consideration of both the technical aspects of a proposed project and its potential to contribute more broadly to advancing NSF's mission "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes." NSF makes every effort to conduct a fair, competitive, transparent merit review process for the selection of projects.

1. Merit Review Principles

These principles are to be given due diligence by PIs and organizations when preparing proposals and managing projects, by reviewers when reading and evaluating proposals, and by NSF program staff when determining whether or not to recommend proposals for funding and while overseeing awards. Given that NSF is the primary federal agency charged with nurturing and supporting excellence in basic research and education, the following three principles apply:

- All NSF projects should be of the highest quality and have the potential to advance, if not transform, the frontiers of knowledge.
- NSF projects, in the aggregate, should contribute more broadly to achieving societal goals. These "Broader Impacts" may be accomplished through the research itself, through activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified.
- Meaningful assessment and evaluation of NSF funded projects should be based on appropriate metrics, keeping in mind the likely correlation between the effect of broader impacts and the resources provided to implement projects. If the size of the activity is limited, evaluation of that activity in isolation is not likely to be meaningful. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these activities may best be done at a higher, more aggregated, level than the individual project.

With respect to the third principle, even if assessment of Broader Impacts outcomes for particular projects is done at an aggregated level, PIs are expected to be accountable for carrying out the activities described in the funded project. Thus, individual projects should include clearly stated goals, specific descriptions of the activities that the PI intends to do, and a plan in place to document the outputs of those activities.

These three merit review principles provide the basis for the merit review criteria, as well as a context within which the users of the criteria can better understand their intent.

2. Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board approved merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF

will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. **Both** criteria are to be given **full consideration** during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria. (PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.d(i) contains additional information for use by proposers in development of the Project Description section of the proposal). Reviewers are strongly encouraged to review the criteria, including PAPPG Chapter II.D.2.d(i), prior to the review of a proposal.

When evaluating NSF proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all proposals against two criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and
- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to
 - a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
 - b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

Proposers are reminded that reviewers will also be asked to review the Data Management Plan and the Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan, as appropriate.

Additional Solicitation Specific Review Criteria

In addition to the National Science Board-approved merit review criteria, proposals submitted to this solicitation will be reviewed using the following criteria:

1. To what extent do the proposed vision, organizational design, and implementation align with the specified duties of RSI-ISAO?
2. How effectively does the governance structure demonstrate the ability to develop and execute the RSI-ISAO, address potential legal issues, develop plans and strategies of the entity's operations, and develop trusted relationships with a diverse group of research community stakeholders?
3. How effectively does the evaluation plan allow for evidence-based decisions and demonstrate impact at all levels and across all timescales of the RSI-ISAO's implementation?

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review, or Reverse Site Review.

Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will undergo an initial panel review following the standard merit review process with an external panel review and/or ad hoc reviews. After the panel review, up to three proposals/PI teams will be selected for a pre-award reverse site review. The reverse site review will be an opportunity for PI teams to provide clarifications, additional details, and address questions on their proposals raised by the proposal review panel and posed by NSF staff. The reverse site review will be in-person at NSF headquarters in Alexandria, VA, with hybrid/virtual attendance options for maximum flexibility. PI teams will be responsible for travel costs.

Reviewers will be asked to evaluate proposals using two National Science Board approved merit review criteria and, if applicable, additional program specific criteria. A summary rating and accompanying narrative will generally be completed and submitted by each reviewer and/or

panel. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF strives to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. Large or particularly complex proposals or proposals from new awardees may require additional review and processing time. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director acts upon the Program Officer's recommendation.

After programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements or the Division of Acquisition and Cooperative Support for review of business, financial, and policy implications. After an administrative review has occurred, Grants and Agreements Officers perform the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

Once an award or declination decision has been made, Principal Investigators are provided feedback about their proposals. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers or any reviewer-identifying information, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award notice, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award notice; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1)*; or Research Terms and Conditions* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award notice. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF. Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-8134 or by e-mail from nsfpubs@nsf.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Build America, Buy America

As expressed in Executive Order 14005, [Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers](#) (86 FR 7475), it is the policy of the executive branch to use terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance awards to maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States.

Consistent with the requirements of the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58, Division G, Title IX, Subtitle A, November 15, 2021), no funding made available through this funding opportunity may be obligated for an award unless all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. For additional information, visit NSF's [Build America, Buy America](#) webpage.

TBD - Programmatic Terms and Conditions:

The RSI-ISAO award will be made in the form of a cooperative agreement (CA). The CA will include a section of Special Conditions that may include,

but are not limited to, a detailed work description that documents awardee-only, NSF-only, and joint NSF-awardee responsibilities; additional scheduled and on-demand reporting from the awardee to NSF, including annual site visits (as determined through the CA), to ensure effective performance and administration; senior personnel; a communication and teaming plan that defines expectations for the interaction between RSI-ISAO and NSF, to include mechanisms for either entity to raise concerns and achieve prompt resolution; funding amounts and funding schedule; and other conditions. NSF will facilitate interactions between the RSI-ISAO, the USG Steering Committee, and other national & international partners.

Within 180 days of the award, the RSI-ISAO must provide a final, consolidated strategic plan that includes milestones and criteria for evaluating success. This plan must cover the full five (5) years of the award. The plan must be grounded in the solicitation, the submitted proposal, and feedback received during the merit review process. Feedback from NSF must be incorporated and once approved, the strategic plan must be reviewed annually and revised to reflect any feedback provided by NSF. Support for each year of the CA will be contingent upon a satisfactory annual review of the RSI-ISAO's progress and future plans, with an emphasis on milestones and evaluation criteria outlined in the strategic plan.

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer no later than 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require submission of more frequent project reports). No later than 120 days following expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final project reports, or the project outcomes report, will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for all identified PIs and co-PIs on a given award. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through Research.gov, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on accomplishments, project participants (individual and organizational), publications, and other specific products and impacts of the project. Submission of the report via Research.gov constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report also must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF Website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Please note that the program contact information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Shawna Cox, telephone: (703) 292-7821, email: shcox@nsf.gov
- Kelvin K. Droegemeier, telephone: (405) 413-7847, email: kdroegem@nsf.gov
- Rebecca L. Keiser, telephone: (703) 292-8000, email: rlkeiser@nsf.gov
- Sarah Stalker-Lehoux, telephone: (703) 292-5073, email: sstalker@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of NSF systems contact:

- NSF Help Desk: 1-800-381-1532
- Research.gov Help Desk e-mail: rgov@nsf.gov

For questions relating to Grants.gov contact:

- Grants.gov Contact Center: If the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of application, please contact via telephone: 1-800-518-4726; e-mail: support@grants.gov.

IX. OTHER INFORMATION

The NSF website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, "NSF Update" is an information-delivery system designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF [Grants Conferences](#). Subscribers are informed through e-mail or the user's Web browser each time new publications are issued that match their identified interests. "NSF Update" also is available on [NSF's website](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <https://www.grants.gov>.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 55,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Arctic and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. See the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* Chapter II.F.7 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090 and (800) 281-8749, FIRS at (800) 877-8339.

The National Science Foundation Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at <https://www.nsf.gov>

- **Location:** 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
- **For General Information** (703) 292-5111
(NSF Information Center):
- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired):** (703) 292-5090
- **To Order Publications or Forms:**
Send an e-mail to: nspubs@nsf.gov
or telephone: (703) 292-8134
- **To Locate NSF Employees:** (703) 292-5111

PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; and project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to proposer institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies or other entities needing information regarding applicants or nominees as part of a joint application review process, or in order to coordinate programs or policy; and to another Federal agency, court, or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See [System of Record Notices, NSF-50](#), "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," and [NSF-51](#), "Reviewer/Proposal

File and Associated Records." Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

Suzanne H. Plimpton
Reports Clearance Officer
Policy Office, Division of Institution and Award Support
Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management
National Science Foundation
Alexandria, VA 22314

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