

Multi-User Equipment and Instrumentation Resources for Biological Sciences (MUE) Program

Program Solicitation

NSF 05-534

Replaces Document 98-137



National Science Foundation
Directorate for Biological Sciences
Division of Biological Infrastructure

Full Proposal Target Date(s):

July 06, 2005

First Wednesday in July

annually thereafter

REVISIONS AND UPDATES

PLEASE NOTE: THE MUE PROGRAM IS NO LONGER ACCEPTING PROPOSALS. THE JULY 2005 AND FUTURE TARGET DATES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Information

Program Title:

Multi-User Equipment and Instrumentation Resources for Biological Sciences (MUE) Program

Synopsis of Program:

The Multi-User Equipment and Instrumentation Resources for Biological Sciences (MUE) Program aids organizations in the purchase of expensive items of research equipment to be shared by a number of independent investigators who have actively-funded research projects in areas supported by the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO). Proposals may request aid in the purchase of a single item of research equipment or of several items if they constitute an integrated system, including any necessary software; two or more unrelated equipment items may not be requested with one proposal. The minimum request is \$40,000, and the maximum is \$400,000.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

- Helen G Hansma, MUE Program Director, Directorate for Biological Sciences, Division of Biological Infrastructure, telephone: 703-292-8470, fax: 703-292-9063, email: dbiid@nsf.gov
- Gerald B Selzer, MUE Program Director, Directorate for Biological Sciences, Division of Biological Infrastructure, telephone: 703-292-8470, fax: 703-292-9063, email: dbiid@nsf.gov

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.074 --- Biological Sciences

Eligibility Information

- **Organization Limit:**

Proposals are accepted from colleges, universities and independent non-profit research organizations that conduct research and education activities in areas supported by the NSF Directorate for Biological Sciences (see full text for details).

- **PI Eligibility Limit:**

At least one of the Principal Investigators (PI or co-PIs) must have an active NSF award at the time of submission. This requirement is waived for proposals submitted by Research in Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) eligible academic organizations (see full text for details).

- **Limit on Number of Proposals:** None Specified.

Award Information

- **Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard Grant
- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 20 to 25
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$3,500,000 (approximately) will be available for new MUE awards in FY 2006, pending availability of funds.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** This solicitation contains information that deviates from the standard Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is not required by NSF.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** No indirect costs are provided.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Target Date(s):**
July 06, 2005
First Wednesday in July
annually thereafter

Proposal Review Information

- **Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations 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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary of Program Requirements

I. Introduction

II. Program Description

III. Eligibility Information

IV. Award Information

V. Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

- A. Proposal Preparation Instructions
- B. Budgetary Information
- C. Due Dates
- D. FastLane Requirements

VI. Proposal Review Information

- A. NSF Proposal Review Process
- B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard

VII. Award Administration Information

- A. Notification of the Award
- B. Award Conditions
- C. Reporting Requirements

VIII. Contacts for Additional Information

IX. Other Programs of Interest

I. INTRODUCTION

For over 20 years, the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) at the National Science Foundation (NSF) has aided academic and non-profit research organizations in the purchase of multi-user equipment through its Multi-User Equipment and Instrumentation Resources for Biological Sciences (MUE) Program. MUE provides support to organizations for the purchase of expensive items of equipment to be shared by three or more independent investigators with actively-funded research programs in areas of basic research supported by BIO. Eligible equipment includes, but is not limited to, analytical instruments, microscopes, other devices used for synthesis, detection, characterization or measurement of biological molecules, and specialized equipment needed to maintain or alter the environment in which organisms are grown or studied. Portable instruments and other special purpose equipment used in the field are also eligible. The MUE program expects that projects it supports will improve access to modern instrumentation for use in research and in the training or education of undergraduate, graduate and/or postdoctoral students. Therefore, in the selection of projects for support, the program emphasizes projects that will be conducted in academic environments.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Multi-User Equipment and Instrumentation Resources for Biological Sciences (MUE) Program aids groups of investigators in the purchase of shared-use, special purpose research equipment with awards of up to \$400,000. Requested equipment must be intended for use by three or more independent investigators who have actively-funded research projects in areas of research eligible for support by the Directorate for Biological Sciences.

The program will support:

- the purchase of a single item of eligible equipment or the purchase of several related items;
- the establishment of instrumentation resources (core facilities) consisting of several items of equipment with a related purpose, or the purchase of additional equipment for such resources;
- shared computational resources, including workstations, clusters and other computing equipment dedicated to broad research needs; and
- controlled environment systems.

In selecting projects for support, the MUE program gives priority to equipment that has multiple identified users with active NSF support. Funds are not provided for purchase of personal computers, workstations or printers, except as part of an integrated system, or for general use equipment such as refrigerators, autoclaves and dishwashers. MUE will provide support for costs of equipment set-up, if included in the quoted price of the equipment. Other costs of installation, including any necessary renovation or new construction of space to be used to house equipment, or for removal of existing equipment, are ineligible for support. The minimum request to this program is \$40,000. While there is no upper limit on the cost of eligible equipment, the maximum amount that can be requested of NSF is \$400,000.

Consistent with BIO policy, the MUE program will not simultaneously review proposals that duplicate a separate request to another Federal agency or to another NSF program. However, in cases where the cost of the proposed equipment exceeds the maximum provided through an MUE award, parallel proposals may be sent to the MUE program and to one or more other Federal agencies for simultaneous review. Proposals may also be sent to another NSF program if the cost of the equipment also exceeds the upper limit in that program. Proposers intending to submit parallel proposals must obtain prior written approval from one of the MUE program directors. At the time of submission, it is important to identify on the Cover Sheet the other agencies to which parallel proposals have been submitted, in order to facilitate coordinated funding if an award is made. Proposers who have already submitted a parallel proposal to another Federal agency, or who expect to do so while the MUE proposal is pending, should contact one of the MUE program directors for guidance. Parallel proposals may not be submitted to MUE and another NSF program without prior written approval of one of the MUE program directors and of the cognizant program director of the other NSF program.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SHARING OF MULTI-USER EQUIPMENT

MUE proposals must include an assurance that the requested equipment will be used by a minimum of three independent investigators, termed major users, and their associated students and support staff. Proposals may identify and describe the research programs of up to five major users and their group members; additional minor users may be identified. It is expected that a majority of the major user groups will have outside, peer-reviewed funding and that some of the major users will have active or recent NSF research funding. At least one Principal Investigator (PI or co-PI) named on the cover sheet must have active NSF funding, unless the proposal is submitted by an RUI-eligible academic institution (see below). Use of this equipment in educational activities is encouraged, consistent with the needs of the research uses discussed in the proposal. Responsibility for managing use of the proposed equipment must lie with an individual who is competent to independently operate the equipment. Some major or minor users may use the equipment through collaboration with a qualified operator; however, in no case may more than 60% of the equipment time be allocated to one research group and its collaborators. The MUE program encourages proposals from user groups that include individuals from several departments and/or organizations.

Equipment requests not meeting these guidelines should be addressed to a disciplinary research program in the Directorate for Biological Sciences or other appropriate NSF program. Individuals interested in single-user equipment should consult a program officer with responsibility for the area of research corresponding to their interests.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS BY RUI-ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

The MUE Program accepts proposals from Research in Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) eligible academic institutions, directly in response to this announcement, or in response to the RUI program announcement (see [NSF 00-144](#)). Although MUE proposals are normally required to have at least one PI with an active NSF award, this requirement is waived for proposals submitted by RUI-eligible institutions, provided that (1) the user group is conducting research in BIO-supported areas, and (2) the user group is able to show adequate research support from other funding sources (including institutional research funds) to sustain the research activities used to justify the request.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Organization Limit: Proposals are accepted from colleges, universities and independent non-profit research organizations that conduct research and education activities in areas supported by the NSF Directorate for Biological Sciences (see full text for details).

PI Eligibility Limit: At least one of the Principal Investigators (PI or co-PIs) must have an active NSF award at the time of submission. This requirement is waived for proposals submitted by RUI-eligible academic organizations (see full text for details).

Limit on Number of Proposals: None Specified.

