



National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

NSF 15-114

Dear Colleague Letter - Support for Engaging Students and the Public in Polar Research

August 25, 2015

The Geosciences and Education and Human Resources Directorates are partnering to advance and develop understanding of learning environments that build upon the rich interdisciplinary resources emerging from polar investments. To that end, the Division of Polar Programs (PLR), the Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) and the Division of Research on Learning (DRL) encourage proposals that will leverage the extensive National Science Foundation (NSF) investment in polar sciences and infrastructure, and STEM education research and development, to promote an informed citizenry and the next generation of polar scientists. In order to advance polar science educational opportunities, PLR, DUE and DRL will accept and review proposals for research and development projects that facilitate the **use of data from polar regions in (1) undergraduate education or (2) informal science education.** Proposals in response to this Dear Colleague Letter must be submitted to either the Improving Undergraduate Science Education: Education and Human Resources (IUSE: EHR) deadline of November 3, 2015, or the Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) deadline of November 4, 2015.

The integration of research and education is essential to NSF's mission.

http://www.nsf.gov/about/performance/strategic_plan.jsp. In addition, NSF strives to broaden participation in science and to make the results of research projects widely accessible to students and the public. Specifically, PLR seeks to meet these objectives by supporting the engagement of students, educators, and the public in polar research projects. While participation of educators and students in both Arctic and Antarctic research projects are encouraged, logistical costs are often prohibitive. Therefore, PLR, DUE, and DRL are seeking education research and development proposals that make use of innovative technology for remote communication to give large groups of students, educators and the public access to polar research efforts. Proposals that engage audiences with long-term investments in polar research and logistics, (e.g. the Arctic or Antarctic science stations), or databases with an extended lifespan, (e.g. data from the Arctic Observing Network), are particularly encouraged. In addition to addressing polar STEM content, proposals should clearly articulate how they advance understanding of one of the three EHR core research areas: (1) Learning and Learning Environments, (2) Broadening Participation, or (3) Work Force Development. www.nsf.gov/ehp/about.jsp. Projects should explain plans for sustaining access to data and resources for a period that extends well beyond the end of any potential award and for evaluating the outcomes of the investment in education research and development.

In order to support the goals above, NSF encourages the submission of proposals to either of two solicitations issued by the Directorate of Education and Human Resources:

1. Improving Undergraduate Science Education: Education and Human Resources (IUSE:EHR) solicitation for the November 3, 2015 deadline.

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf15585

2. Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) deadline of November 4, 2015

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2015/nsf15593/nsf15593.htm>

Proposals submitted in response to this letter must be identified by starting the proposal title with the term: "Polar (NSF 15-114): (*Insert Project Title Here*)"

Those considering submitting a proposal in response to this opportunity are strongly encouraged to contact Lisa Rom: elrom@nsf.gov; 703-292-7709, the cognizant program officer who can answer questions and provide further guidance.

Sincerely,

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
Assistant Director, Education and Human Resources

Roger Wakimoto
Assistant Director, Geosciences