



# ADVANCE Institutional Transformation **Catalyst** FY 14 Competition

Information on the Program and Developing  
the Proposal

Prepared by the ADVANCE Program Office

August 2013

# Outline

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- Institutional Transformation Catalyst (IT Catalyst) Proposal Components and FAQs
- Merit Review
- Formatting reminders
- Useful websites
- ADVANCE Contact Information

# IMPORTANT DATES

- REQUIRED LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)
  - **October 4, 2013 COB** local time
  - If you do not submit an LOI, your proposal **WILL** be returned without review
- FULL PROPOSAL DEADLINE
  - **November 12, 2013 COB** local time
  - There will be no extensions (barring environmental disasters, e.g., superstorm Sandy)

# ADVANCE Program

- To increase the participation & advancement of women at all levels in academic science and engineering careers
- Strategies to achieve goals based on & justified by relevant theoretical frameworks (see p. 5 in solicitation)
- Proposals from community colleges, PUIs, MSIs, HBCUs, HSIs, Native Hawaiian serving, women's colleges, EPSCoR states, serving persons with disabilities strongly encouraged
- Unique programming to achieve ADVANCE goals

# ADVANCE IT Catalyst Program Description

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- Two year projects
- Designed to support historically resource-challenged institutions
  - Unique strategies and/or adaptation of proven strategies in a unique way to achieve ADVANCE goals
  - Self assessment activities related to recruitment, retention & promotion of women in STEM
  - Data collection, data analysis, policy review
  - Planning to undertake institutional transformation
- Both men & women involved in implementation

# Eligibility to Apply

- **Eligible**

- Non-profit academic institutions of higher ed
  - Programs supported by NSF
- An institution that is historically under-resourced
  - See additional merit review criteria
- Be in US, territories, Commonwealths & Freely Associated States

- **Not eligible**

- Clinical faculty (NIH funded)
- Those previously awarded an IT or PAID award

# ADVANCE IT Catalyst Proposals MUST

- Have LOI
- Justify & demonstrate institutional need within the proposal
  - Unrelated to decreased state funding or natural disaster unless disproportionately affected
- Include all of STEM including social & behavioral sciences
- Have program evaluation
  - Must be at a minimum independent internal evaluation
- Not come from institution that has had an IT or PAID
- Have a framework of analysis
- NOT be a partnership or collaborative arrangement

# Catalyst Project Scope: Preparation for institutional transformation

- Two year projects
- Data collection & analysis
- Review of institutional practices & policies
- Inclusion of all STEM disciplines including social & behavioral sciences
- Data collection/activities targeted toward special populations of women faculty must include institutional data in support
- See solicitation page 7 a list of possible activities, proposals SHOULD not be limited to those listed

# Project Description

- Clearly explain why you have chosen a series of activities for self-assessment
  - Provide institutional context to match
  - Activities to promote campus readiness – could be developing databases, analysis, awareness raising
- Clearly indicate the range of activities
- Be specific about the broad range of faculty involved
- Link activities to your objectives & goals
- Examples – you are NOT limited
  - See p. 11 of solicitation

# Institutional Context and Data

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- Data to motivate your project – argue effectively for reasons for & rational behind proposal
- Discussion of current & past activities related to project
- Comprehensive institutional data on faculty are NOT required
  - Include data on targeted special populations
  - Include data relevant to motivating your program as are available
- Section should NOT take up a significant portion of 15 pages

# Institutional Commitment & Project Management

- Letters of commitment from key administrators are required as supplementary documents
  - Financial commitments are prohibited
- **Project Management & Timeline**
  - How will the projects be organized and managed?
  - Timeline for each activity including milestones and responsible individuals
  - Encouraged committees
    - internal & external steering or advisory committees

# Required Project Evaluation

- Formative – usually internal
  - Include benchmarks & indicators of progress of implementation
- Summative – could be either internal or external
  - Assess achievement of program goals & objectives
  - Think impact not just output
- General information about project evaluation available at the Online Evaluation Resource Library:  
<http://ctl.sri.com/projects/displayProject.jsp?Nick=oerl>

# Only These Supplementary Docs

- Data management plan (required by NSF)
- Post-doctoral mentoring plan (if included)
- Letters of commitment
- External evaluator CVs, if using one

# Required NSF Merit Review Criteria

- Intellectual activity
  - Advance knowledge and understanding?
  - Creative, original, potentially transformative concepts?
  - Well conceived and organized?
- Broader impacts
  - Advance discovery while promote training?
  - Enhance infrastructure for research & education?
  - Broad dissemination?
  - Benefit to society?

# Additional IT Catalyst Merit Review Criteria

- How has institution demonstrated need for financial resources?
- How strong is explanation of institutional need for external support for these activities?
- How strong are the indicators of institutional commitment to project activities and goals?
- If women from special populations are included, how likely are activities to target unique circumstances?
- How likely will project lead to institutional readiness for sustained transformation?
- Are mechanisms for sustainability beyond funded duration of project include?

# NSF Prior Support

- Relevant prior NSF awards to any of the co-PIs and PI must be described in the description of the proposal.
- Your proposal can be returned without review for not addressing prior support.

# Mentoring for Postdoctoral Researchers

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- Proposals with funding for postdoctoral researchers must include a description of mentoring activities for postdocs.
- Mentoring activities might include:
  - Career counseling
  - Training in preparation of grant proposals
  - Publications and presentations
  - Guidance on ways to improve teaching and mentoring skills
  - Guidance on how to effectively collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas
  - Training in responsible professional practices.

**\*Always use the most recent GPG for proposal preparation guidelines.**

**[http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf13001/gpg\\_index.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf13001/gpg_index.jsp)**

# FAQs

- Do **all** the proposed activities need to be innovative?
  - No. You do not need to “reinvent the wheel.”
  - You need to demonstrate a familiarity with the strategies of earlier ADVANCE awardees and the relevant literature and explain how your activities build off of that and if relevant how you will adapt those activities to your institution in unique ways.
  - However, the innovation in your project could be what will make your project stand out in the competition.
- If a particular activity was implemented by another institution is that adequate justification for doing it at my institution?
  - No. Your activities need to be justified by your institutional context, your project goals, and the conceptual framework on which your project is founded. In addition, the proposed activities need to be within your project team’s capacities. For example, if you are proposing a survey – the team must be expert in survey research.

# FAQs

- Does the PI of this proposal have to be a senior level administrator?
  - No, but it may be a way to demonstrate institutional commitment to the project. It also depends on your institution's organization and culture. The PI should be involved with the general project management – like the PI of a research grant.
- Who should be the co-PIs?
  - There are no requirements for who should be included as co-PIs. You may want to have faculty representation from across the STEM & SBS disciplines. You may want Deans and Chairs to be co-PIs. Like the PI, co-PIs are expected to be involved with the management of the program.
- Can I have more than four co-PIs and one PI?
  - No. The FastLane proposal template only allows one PI & four co-PIs. You can include other senior personnel in the project which you would make clear in your project management plan.

# FAQs

- What is an internal advisory committee (IAC)?
  - The IAC should include key stakeholders in the implementation of the project. For example, it may include senior faculty (male & female), department chairs, deans, representatives from important offices, etc.
  - Think about sustainability with the membership – which offices would likely take over the project activities?
  - Think about involving people to expand the participation of important stakeholders in the project like male faculty and key leaders.
  - This committee meets frequently and works closely with the project team.
- What is an external advisory committee (EAC)?
  - The external advisory committee provides an objective group of expert advisors to give you feedback on your project success.
  - The members may have certain expertise that your project team is lacking or they may be administrative leaders.
  - Is recommended that they meet on campus at least once a year. Additional virtual meetings may be appropriate.

# FAQs

- Does the proposal need to have all the names of committee members?
  - No, but you want to know what kind of people you want on the committees.
- What if we do not have anyone with the social science expertise that is needed on campus?
  - You can use consultants/subawards to supplement your expertise.
  - The external advisory committee may supplement but not replace.
- Should we submit our Human Subjects Approval at the time of the proposal submission?
  - Yes, or at least a preliminary indication from your IRB that approval will be forthcoming. Should your project be recommended for an ADVANCE award, you must submit human subjects approval prior to receiving the award.

# FAQs

- What is the difference between formative and summative evaluation?
  - Formative – how will you evaluate your activities as they are implemented to know if you are making progress towards your goals and modify activities as needed to improve the project
  - Summative – how will you know that you have met your goals and objectives at the end of the project? What is the impact?
  - Note that if awarded, you must submit a detailed evaluation plan, but you still must address evaluation in a substantive way in the project description.
- What is internal vs. external evaluation?
  - Internal evaluation could be done by someone on your campus who is not involved in the implementation of your project (may be a faculty member who is qualified to evaluate projects)
  - External evaluation is done by someone outside of your institution who is not invested in the project outcomes.
  - Evaluation activities can be supported by someone on your project management team who collects data for the internal and/or external evaluators & does analysis of event evaluation forms for formative evaluation.

# FAQs

- Do I need to have headers with intellectual merit and broader impacts in the project summary?
  - No – but it does make it very clear to the readers what you are presenting as the intellectual merit and broader impacts.
- Do I need to address all of the additional review criteria in the project summary (one page)?
  - No. These are not the same as the two NSF merit review criteria. These will be used by the peer reviewers to evaluate the quality of your proposal so these should be addressed in the project description.
- Do I need to address the additional review criteria in the project description (15 pages)?
  - Yes.

# FAQs

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- After I submit the LOI, can I make changes to the project description, the PIs, and/or the partners in the original LOI?
  - Yes. However, the project must still be responsive to the ADVANCE solicitation. If it is not, then it can be returned without review.
- Can I support undergraduate or graduate student activities?
  - No. However, you can support students who assisting with the project.
- Can we include non-tenure eligible faculty in our programming? Can we include post-doctoral researchers in our programming?
  - Yes and sometimes. ADVANCE grants are not training grants so programming for post-docs must relate to the representation & advancement of women in academic STEM.

# FAQs

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- If the proposal was submitted before, will my proposal have the same reviewers?
  - No. Most peer reviewers are new each competition/solicitation.
- Who will be reviewing my proposal?
  - Peer reviewers include STEM faculty and administrators as well as social science experts on gender and organizational change.
- Can medical school (clinical) or other non-basic science faculty be included in the ADVANCE budget?
  - No. However, non-STEM faculty administrators can participate and non-STEM and clinical faculty can participate in activities and events if there is no cost charged to the grant, should you choose.

# Formatting

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- Follow the rules outlined in the Grant Proposal Guide for font and page margins.
- Make the reviewers happy when they read your proposal – use headers, a large font, and white space!
- Your proposal can be returned without review for violating the formatting rules.

# Useful Websites for Information

- NSF Policy Office
  - [Http mp://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/](http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/)
    - Everything you always wanted to know & more
- NSF Disciplines
  - <http://www.nsf.gov/funding/aboutfunding.jsp>
- NSF ADVANCE web portal
  - <http://www.portal.advance.vt.edu/>
- Toolkits – indicators & evaluation
  - [http://www.advance.vt.edu/measuring\\_progress/tag\\_toolkits.html](http://www.advance.vt.edu/measuring_progress/tag_toolkits.html)
- Abstracts of IT awards
  - <http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/tab.do?dispatch=2>
  - Enter “7690” into the “element code” box
  - Hit the search button

Questions?

# ADVANCE



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