The following FAQs are for use by proposers to NSF DCL 20-052. Given that COVID-19 and the associated impacts continue to evolve, proposers are strongly encouraged to monitor NSF’s website for updates.

1. **Why is NSF offering this DCL?**

NSF’s mission is “to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure the national defense.” NSF-funded research can explore how to model and understand the spread of COVID-19; to inform and educate about the science of virus transmission and prevention; and to encourage the development of processes and actions to address this global challenge. Results from NSF-funded research can inform national and international preparedness and response decision making, and explore lessons learned and best practices for the future.

2. **Who do I contact if I am interested in submitting a COVID-19 related proposal pursuant to this DCL? Is there a deadline by which I must make this contact? How fast will I receive a response on my proposal?**

All questions about the DCL should be directed either to a program officer managing an NSF program with which the research would be aligned or to rapid-covid19@nsf.gov. Prospective Principal Investigators (PIs) may contact program officers or this email address anytime. There is no deadline for responding to this DCL, however NSF is seeking to support research that will address the immediate public health threat of COVID-19. NSF will respond to inquiries received as promptly as possible. Given the volume, prospective Principal Investigators are strongly encouraged to limit their submissions to a single inquiry.

3. **Will NSF help me gain access to foreign locales, secure visas, or assist in providing logistical support?**

No, NSF will not be able to help with access to foreign locales, visas, or logistical support for funded projects.

4. **My research requires me to travel to a country with a high volume of COVID-19 cases, but I see the U.S. Department of State has issued a travel advisory to that destination. Can I still submit a proposal?**

Prospective PIs are directed to consult with their sponsored projects offices and the State Department’s Travel Advisories website for guidance about foreign travel prior to
formulating a research plan and submitting a proposal to NSF. You may submit a proposal, however you should be aware that successful execution may be impacted by applicable travel restrictions, including the decisions of foreign governments.

5. Are there any special considerations I should account for when considering research that requires me to engage with foreign counterparts where COVID-19 is, or has been, prevalent?

Given that businesses and universities are closed in certain parts of the world as a result of COVID-19, it may be more challenging to engage with foreign counterparts. PIs are encouraged to consider, as they develop research plans, that individuals may be directly affected by COVID-19.

6. Will NSF support research that involves gain-of-function in COVID-19?

No, NSF does not fund research that would be considered to lead to a gain of function of agents associated with the U.S. Government’s policy on dual use research of concern. While COVID-19 is not one of the recognized agents of concern, for purposes of the DCL and RAPID research, NSF will not consider requests for gain-of-function research.

7. The DCL encourages RAPID proposals that address the immediate impacts of COVID-19. My concept is to instead address a longer-term or more general issue and seeks to understand conditions caused by the outbreak. Is this concept acceptable?

Yes, NSF will consider such concepts, but not as a RAPID. Prospective PIs are encouraged to contact a program officer managing an NSF program that most closely aligns with the research.

8. How can I submit my invited RAPID proposal?

Proposers must submit to NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 19-1), select the program that invited the proposal, and indicate that the proposal type is a RAPID. Note that this cannot be done in Research.gov; you have to use either Fastlane or Grants.gov.