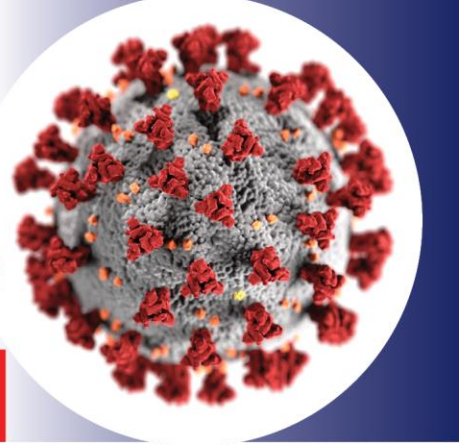
Taking Action: COVID-19 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Challenge

AN IDEAS CHALLENGE FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Informational Webinar

Sponsoring Programs:

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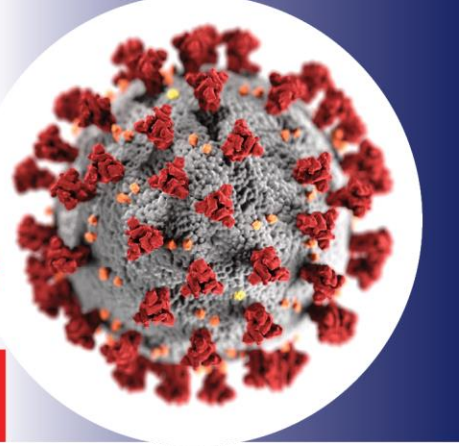

AN IDEAS CHALLENGE FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The National Science Foundation is excited to announce the **Taking Action: COVID-19 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Challenge!** NSF is calling on all colleges and universities to submit a 3-page written narrative of their actions or action plans to mitigate the long-term negative impacts of the pandemic on their diverse STEM populations.

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Challenge Definition of Diverse STEM Populations

Students, postdoctoral researchers and faculty of different races and ethnicities, genders, and abilities that have been underrepresented in STEM education and workforce and/or are more likely to experience disadvantage in their advancement in STEM education, careers, and academia, as well as in society.

Includes but not limited to:

- American Indians or Alaska Natives
- Asians
- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders,
- Hispanics or Latinos
- Women
- Persons with disability

Challenge Submission Categories

Submissions will be accepted in four population-focused categories.

CATEGORIES	
1 Undergraduate Students: 2-YR IHEs	3 Graduate Students / Postdoctoral Researchers
2 Undergraduate Students: 4-Yr IHEs	4 Faculty

Winners for Each Category	Prizes
1st	$25,000
2nd	$15,000
3rd	$10,000
Honorable mention	Up to 10 (no cash prize)

Winners will present their ideas in a national virtual meeting.

Challenge Submission Content

Submission Content:

1. Description of the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on diversity, equity and inclusion in STEM education and research within one of the four categories.
2. Description of the evidence-informed, institutional action(s) that the IHE has, or will implement to address the anticipated long-term negative impacts on diversity, equity and inclusion in STEM.

Submission Format:

- **3- page document**
- **References**
- **Optional Image**

Impact of Pandemic: Undergraduates at 2-and 4- year IHEs

- The recruitment, student learning outcomes, retention, and persistence of diverse STEM undergraduate students are not completely understood.
- Pandemic has revealed underlying equity gaps as well as strengths and weaknesses in virtual learning, specifically in STEM education
- Strategies to mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic on diverse STEM undergraduate students are needed to address immediate and long-term issues of access and equity.
- Metrics potentially impacted includes: time to first degree, student debt, persistence, and retention in STEM degree programs, especially for students in transitions during the pandemic and those with dependent care or other care-giving responsibilities.

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Guidance for Submission Content: Undergraduates at 2-and 4- year IHEs

- IHEs should include institutional actions such as new and revised policies and practices that IHEs have implemented or will implement to address the negative impacts of the pandemic.
- Systemic Changes can address various outcomes including:
  - Student Retention
  - Student Success
  - Advancement of diverse STEM undergraduate students.

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Impact of Pandemic: Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Researchers

- Some graduate STEM degree programs closed,
- Some institutions delayed graduate admissions decisions
- Graduate students and postdoctoral researchers have lost research results and/or lab time for conducting experiments.
- Doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers have reported increased stress and time commitments necessary to care for family members with COVID-19 or their children who are unable to go to school or child-care facilities.
- Doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers who are searching and interviewing for faculty positions are finding significant delays and decreases in STEM faculty hiring.

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Guidance for Submission Content: Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Researchers

- Actions by IHES can include New and revised policies and practices that IHES have implemented or will implement to address the long-term negative impacts of the pandemic including on:
  - Participation of Graduate Student and/or Postdoc Graduate Student and/or Postdoc Retention
  - Success of Graduate Student and/or Postdoc Success
  - Advancement of diverse STEM graduate students and postdoctoral researchers

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Impact of Pandemic Content: Faculty

- The long-term impacts of the pandemic on faculty are not completely understood, but early research on the impacts of COVID-19 on STEM faculty have found the following:
  - Increased workload for teaching, mentoring, and service during the pandemic;
  - Impacts on the work-life balance of faculty, especially those with dependent care giving responsibilities;
  - Research and teaching lab closures;
  - Reduced research time and/or funding for students and postdoctoral researchers;
  - Lay-offs or reductions in full-time status of non-tenure track and tenure track faculty;
  - Reduced collaborative work due to national and international travel restrictions for faculty, students and postdoctoral researchers.

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Guidance for Submission Content: Faculty

- IHEs should submit new or revised policies and practices that address the possible long-term impacts of the pandemic on the diversity, equity, and inclusion of the current STEM faculty and the future STEM faculty in both tenured and tenure track positions as well as non-tenure track positions
- Submissions should describe actions that the IHE has implemented or will implement to mitigate negative long-term impacts of the pandemic on faculty DEI such as:
  - Recruitment
  - Hiring
  - Retention
  - Success
  - Advancement of the diverse STEM faculty and/or the recruitment

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Who Can Participate in the Challenge?

- The challenge is open to accredited Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) located in the U.S and its territories.
  - IHEs can be public or private,
  - non-profit,
  - two- and four-year IHEs (including community and technical colleges)
- Each campus that is part of a system may be considered a separate institution for submission purposes if the campus is geographically separate from the other campus(es), and if the campus has its own chief academic officer.
- Submissions from Individuals will not be accepted.
- IHEs do not need to have a grant from NSF.

Who Can Submit on Behalf of IHEs?

- Submissions must be made by an institution-wide administrator.
- For the purpose of this challenge, institution-wide administrators are defined as the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Academic Officer.
- IHEs may only submit one proposal per category but are welcomed to submit to more than one category, if eligible.

Judging Criteria

- **Screening for Eligibility**
- **Panel Judging Criteria (100 pts):**
  - (20 pts) How thoughtfully and carefully does the submission explain one or more anticipated significant, long-term, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM for [undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, or faculty] at their institution?
  - (40 pts) How thoroughly and effectively will the institutional action(s) that have been, or will be, implemented by the IHE result in systemic solutions to address the anticipated long-term impacts of the COVD-19 pandemic on DEI in STEM that were identified by the IHE?
  - How likely are the institutional actions described in the submission to be:
    (20 pts) Easily adapted and reproduced by other IHEs?
    (20 pts) Sustainable by the IHE and by other IHEs that potentially adapt them?

Recommend the submission for honorable mention if it is not selected for a cash prize.

Why Enter

- To widely share your IHE's plans to mitigate the long-term impacts of the pandemic on DEI in STEM at your institution.
- For the opportunity to have your idea included in the Taking Action: COVID-19 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Challenge winning ideas repository that will be archived and shared broadly.
- For national recognition of your ideas to address COVID-19 long-term impacts on diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM.
- For the potential of your idea to be widely adopted and implemented by other IHEs, increasing the impact of your solutions.
- For an opportunity to win one of the 3 cash prizes for your institution or to be among those receiving honorable mentions for their ideas.
- For an opportunity to present your idea at an NSF organized event and be recognized for your positive contribution to DEI work in STEM to the STEM education and research communities.

How To Enter

The submission portal can be accessed by visiting www.nsf.gov/takingaction

DEADLINE EXTENDED TO

01/30/2022

Submissions will be accepted until 11:59 PM EST ~~12/30/2021~~

Timeline

Taking Action: COVID-19 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Challenge Stages	Key Dates
Challenge Submissions accepted – challenge promotion and outreach	October 14, 2021 - ~~December 30, 2021~~ Extended to January 30, 2022
Challenge Submissions screened for eligibility by NSF and judged	February 2022
Challenge Submissions Judged By External Judges	March 2022
NSF Reviews the Judges Recommendations and approves winners and honorable mentions	April 2022
Winners and Honorable Mentions announced	April 2022
Presentations by winners and selected honorable mention designees (hosted by NSF, cash prizes awarded by NSF)	May 2022
Winning entries and link to recorded presentations Posted	May 2022

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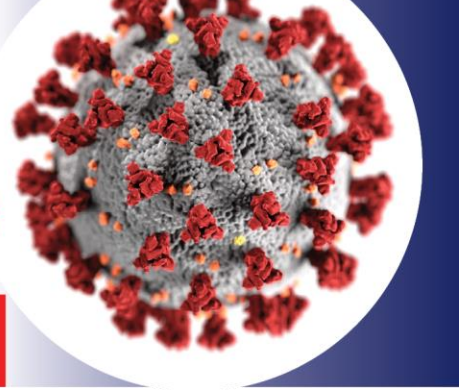

Q&A

Email any additional questions to: COVIDChallengeTeam@nsf.gov
Visit www.nsf.gov/takingaction for additional details and resources.

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Thank You!

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