

IUPAC International Pilot Call in Polymer Chemistry

Recognizing the global nature of the field of chemistry and the need for international collaborations to address complex problems in chemistry, the NSF Division of Chemistry (NSF/CHE) launched the International Collaboration in Chemistry (ICC) program five years ago. The ICC program is based on bi-lateral agreements between NSF/CHE and foreign funding agencies to support bi-lateral collaborative research between U.S. investigators and their counterparts abroad. Occasionally, there is a need for higher order collaboratives, which are not accommodated by the ICC program at this time. To address this issue, NSF/CHE has partnered with six other funding agencies from Germany (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG), France (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, CNRS), Spain (Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación, MICINN), Brazil (Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo, FAPESP), Ireland (Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology, IRCSET) and Portugal (Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, FCT) to enable investigators from multiple countries to submit collaborative proposals for consideration by the agencies. The group of agencies has reached an agreement with the International Union for Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) for IUPAC to run a pilot program in **polymer chemistry**. According to the agreement, IUPAC will organize the submission and review of letters of intent and proposals by groups consisting of investigators from any three countries participating in this initiative. The proposal submission and review process will be closely monitored by the participating agencies but will be run by IUPAC. According to the agreement, IUPAC will adhere to strict conflict of interest and reviewer confidentiality policies, which are similar to NSF policies in these areas and are appended to the IUPAC Call for Proposals.

At the conclusion of the review process, the funding recommendations will be forwarded to the participating agencies, including NSF/CHE. NSF/CHE will evaluate the panel recommendations and decide whether to fund the U.S. side of the collaboration of proposals recommended for funding according to normal NSF/CHE procedures. In making the funding decision, NSF/CHE will evaluate whether the proposal adequately addressed the NSF review criteria of intellectual merit and broader impact and demonstrated a clear need for the proposed international collaboration to realize the project goals. NSF/CHE will also evaluate whether U.S. students and postdoctoral fellows, including under represented groups, are meaningfully involved in the proposed project. U.S. investigators who request support for a postdoctoral research associate must include a postdoctoral mentoring plan (up to 1 page) in the proposal documents. As stated in the IUPAC solicitation, the one page postdoctoral mentoring plan will not count against the 10-page limit of the proposal project description. Projects will only be funded if all three agencies involved in a proposal recommended for funding agree to fund their side of the project. If a decision to make an award is made, the U.S. investigator will be asked to submit the IUPAC proposal to NSF/CHE through Fastlane. NSF will then process an award to the U.S. investigator's institution in accordance with the NSF award processing procedures. NSF/CHE anticipates funding the U.S. side of the collaboration at a level of individual investigator awards at NSF/CHE, which currently averages \$140,000/yr for three years. The exact funding level will be determined by the managing NSF/CHE program based on the quality of the project, project needs and availability of funds. The U.S. investigator and his/her institution will follow normal NSF post award procedures including reporting requirements as described in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), available at http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg.

This pilot program is limited to polymer chemistry. The program calls for visionary experimental and theoretical studies, which focus on novel polymer syntheses, new supramolecular polymer assemblies and light harvesting and light emitting polymers. We expect that if the pilot program is successful, the scope of the program will be expanded to include additional topics and additional countries.

Letter of intent and proposal preparation instructions can be found in the IUPAC Polymer Division website at: www.iupac.org/polyedu/DivIVCall.

Inquiries about the pilot program proposal submission and review procedures should be referred to the IUPAC Call Secretariat, Dr. John Jost at: secretariat@iupac.org.

Inquiries about NSF issues related to the program should be referred to the NSF/CHE Program Director, Dr. Zeev Rosenzweig at: zrosenzw@nsf.gov.