Planning Proposals for Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST Canters) in Chemistry Research

NSF CHE –EES Office Hour, February 9, 2024

https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2024/nsf24029/nsf24029.jsp

NSF 24-029. Dear Colleague Letter: Planning Proposals for CREST-CHE

- Consistent with the National Science Foundation's (NSF) efforts to increase diversity in the STEM workforce, the Division of Equity for Excellence in STEM (EES) and the Division of Chemistry (CHE) jointly encourage the submission of **planning proposals for a future CREST center proposal with a focus on chemistry research**.

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The CREST Program

- Supports the creation of research centers that will lead to strong societal impacts through **5-year awards**. The projects focus on the enhancement of the research capabilities of **Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs)** through the establishment of centers that effectively integrate education and research.
- **CREST** Center awards promote the development of new knowledge, the increase in the research productivity of individual faculty, and the expanded engagement of students from backgrounds historically underrepresented in STEM disciplines.
- **CREST** Centers are expected to enable full participation of groups underrepresented in STEM at all levels – students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty in a nationally competitive research enterprise.
- Submission of a preliminary proposal is required (December 2025).
- Full proposals are submitted (December 2026) only when invited by NSF in response to a successful preliminary proposal.

This DCL encourages the submission of planning proposals for CREST centers with a focus on Chemistry research to help mitigate potential barriers to the preparation of competitive CREST proposals.

A Planning Award could be used to support initial concepts and design of collaborative activities to facilitate the formulation of new and coherent plans for future submission of a CREST center proposal.

Planning Activities could include visits/meetings within the institution and with partnering institutions to discuss potential collaborations, exchanges to launch/initiate scientific collaboration, strategic planning (including the development of a collaborative research plan), training efforts and infrastructure needs to enable coordination of collaborative efforts, and development of evaluation strategies.

Preparation of CREST Center Planning Proposals

- **1.** The proposal must include a clear statement as to **why this project is appropriate for a planning proposal, including how the funds will be used to formulate a sound approach for future submission of a CREST center proposal.**

- **2.** The proposal must explain **how a competitive research center will be created and sustained.**

- **3. The proposed research should be aligned with research supported by the Division of Chemistry**. The PIs are encouraged to outline a vision that simultaneously promotes inclusiveness and research excellence in Chemistry.

Disciplinary Research Programs

- Chemical Catalysis (**CAT**)
- Chemical Synthesis (**SYN**)
- Chemical Measurement and Imaging (**CMI**)
- Chemical Structure, Dynamics and Mechanism A (**CSDM-A**)
- Chemical Structure, Dynamics and Mechanism B (**CSDM-B**)
- Chemical Theory, Models, and Computational Methods (**CTMC**)
- Chemistry of Life Processes (**CLP**)
- Macromolecular, Supramolecular, and Nanochemistry (**MSN**)
- Environmental Chemical Science (**ECS**)

Preparation of CREST Center Planning Proposals

- **4. Proposals may only be submitted by minority-serving Institutions that award degrees in Chemistry and that have enrollments of 50% or more students** (based on total student enrollment) who are members of groups underrepresented among those holding advanced degrees in science and engineering fields: Alaska Natives, African Americans and Blacks, American Indians, Hispanic or Latin Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Native Pacific Islanders.

- **5. The budget may be up to $100,000/year** (including indirect costs) and up to two years in duration.

Planning Proposals Deadlines

Proposals must be prepared in accordance with the guidance for Planning Proposals specified in Chapter II.F.1 of the *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (**PAPPG**) and submitted through **Research.gov**

Proposers should select the current PAPPG as the funding opportunity and direct proposals to **EDU/EES/Centers for Rsch Excell in S&T**.

Prospective PIs must send an initial concept outline one page by email no later than March 1, 2024, to verify that the proposal topic fits with the research areas in the Division of Chemistry.

An Invitation from one NSF Program Officer to submit a full planning proposal must be uploaded by the PI in the "Program Officer Concurrence Email" section in research.gov.

Deadline for submitting Planning Proposals is May 1, 2024.

Contact Program Officers for CREST-CHE DCL

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Next Chemistry Office Hour
February 23rd at 3:00 pm(EST)

The Chemical Synthesis (SYN) Program

Dr. George Richter-Addo and the SYN team

The office hour will feature a discussion of the program scope, funding priorities, program portfolio, and recent research highlights, followed by a Q&A session.

Registration is required. To register please click here:

https://nsf.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIscOqsqTsoHmn2FkiHTZ8qNv1tPxO0pF4