

>> My name is Laura Campbell. I'm part of the Convergence Accelerator team. JP?

>> My name is JP White. I'm part of the Convergence Accelerator team.

>> And I'm Evan Heit from the Convergence Accelerator team.

>> So we're now going to go through the slides. The FAQs are already there for you. So we're going to have a very quick presentation of the slides. I think this will take about 15 minutes, and then we're going to do our best to answer every question. The slides have links and information from the last WebEx that we did, the last webinar for the invited proposals. Alright, so we're going to go through what's expected in your Phase I full proposal. Most importantly, how to submit to FASTLANE. What is expected in your Phase I full proposal? The key thing is to describe exactly how your idea matches a track described in the Dear Colleague letter, please make sure that you include deliverables. We expect that practical applications or other useful results should be produced by the end of Phase II. So, within the two years of Phase II, you need to produce something useful. Please describe your partnerships. There should be different kinds of organizations that are part of your team. And you need to explain what their roles are in developing and producing those deliverables. So, academic and non-academic organizations. And of course, convergence must be explained. You must describe how you've engaged different intellectually distinct disciplines, and how they're part of your team. And please provide a project personnel table as an Excel file that lists all of the PIs all the co-PI's, all the senior personnel, everybody who's interesting and relevant to your project as an Excel file. And the reason for this is so that we avoid in the review process, any conflicts of interest. So sorry, it's one more document, but that will make sure that we don't accidentally have somebody review your proposal who has a conflict with a person or an institution that's part of your activity.

All right, the RAISE requirements. We're using the RAISE mechanism for these proposals. And the RAISE mechanism requires that you have two letters that indicates that your proposal has been invited. You received an email that said that included two attachments. One was called something like, "Invitation Letter 1" or "First Invitation Letter," and then a second attachment that was something like, "Invite Letter 2" or "Second Invitation Letter." Please attach both of those. In addition, as mentioned before, you must discuss how your research approach is convergent and involves two or more intellectually distinct disciplines. I also want to mention here that we discourage collaborative proposals. So, of course, we are encouraging collaboration and partnership. But what I mean by collaborative proposals is that mechanism of support of submitting proposals that allows two different organizations to submit the same proposal at about the same time, but request separate budgets. We don't want that for two reasons. We want all of it flowing through one lead institution with one budget and several awards. And the two reasons for that, first of all, it will be faster. We'll be able to make awards more briskly if we don't have the coordination problem between two proposal numbers and

processes. But also, we think it will lead to better management and integration of your team if it's one award with sub awards.

All right, for the PAPPG, keep in mind the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, this is the controlling document for how all proposals are submitted to NSF. And there's of course a link to it within the materials that you have previously received and on our website. So the PAPPG requirements mean that you have to include a project summary. So that's described here. Intellectual merit and broader impacts must be discussed. Each as a separate section. So, then, in your project description, you must have a section described as intellectual merit. And another one that is broader impacts. These are the core review requirements. The merit review requirements are for all NSF proposals and you have to make sure that you state something about your proposal and its intellectual merits and its broader impacts in those two sections. All right. You can provide or propose a budget for up to a million dollars. It doesn't have to be a million dollars, it should be what is appropriate for the work that you plan to do in Phase I. If you need to have academic personnel who are working for more than two months, you can of course, propose to have them do so let us know so that we can make sure that there's a waiver for that. Of course, there's no summer time in the performance period for the Phase I activities. So you can still put in salaries for PIs and co-PIs to our academic personnel and then that money would probably be used as a course buyout. Just describe what you're doing with that in your budget justification. Participant support costs are indeed allowed, and if you plan to have meetings that involve flying a bunch of people to a place, you would probably want to use participant support to do that, and you should keep in mind that you need to note those separately in the budget because they do not bear overhead costs. So there's accounting there that matters. And of course, you have to include budget for three in-person trainings that will happen somewhere. Hopefully at least one of them will be in DC in September, but we don't know where the others will be. And so for now, \$2,000 per-person per-training should be adequate. And the spending timeline -- keep in mind, we're going to make awards in September. The phase -- the pitch competition will be in March of 2020. And the Phase II awards will be in May of 2020. PAPPG requires collaborators and other affiliations, documents, for all PIs, co-PIs and senior personnel. Letters of collaboration are allowed. And once again, provide us with the project personnel table in Excel format, please, so that we can machine read it.

How to submit by FASTLANE? First thing you need to know is that you can't do this yet. I hope that maybe as soon as tomorrow, FASTLANE will have the links that you need so that you can actually log into FASTLANE and choose the correct place to submit your proposal, but it is not there yet. If you are planning to submit a proposal, and have been invited to submit, and your organization has never received NSF funding, please email us right away at C-accel@nsf.gov.

So, if you have received NSF funding, then the rest of this shouldn't be too startling. From the cover, choose the program announcement program description. You'll get to scroll for a link of

program descriptions, you should choose PD 19-096Y for the Convergence Accelerator. Then that should give you a fairly limited number of units of consideration. But the one that you want is the Office of Integrative Activities -- OIA -- and then within the program, there should be two tracks. One is Convergence Accelerator, harnessing the data revolution, and for tracks B1 and B2 its Convergence Accelerator, future of work at the human technology frontier, with a bunch of letters that you can figure it out. Then you'll click the Back button at the bottom of the screen and GO button for a remainder of the cover sheet, and then just make sure as you go through the remainder of the cover sheet near the bottom of that screen, you need to select the RAISE menu for the type of proposal. After you receive a PDF of your proposal from FASTLANE, then send us that number so that we make sure that we don't lose any proposals. So hopefully FASTLANE will send everything to the right program officers. But in addition, you can email your proposal number once has been generated, and that will give us a second layer of tracking. And in that email, give us the proposal number that was assigned by NSF on the PDFs, not some preliminary number, the one that came through on the PDF, the PI, the title and we'll make sure that we take care of it.

>> But one thing we will emphasize it's timely that we're showing you the tracks again. And each of you in being invited to submit a full proposal was provided to please read the track descriptions carefully. And we probably use language that said something like we will only fund projects that fit one of the tracks. So that is something that we would just want to emphasize. We're going to continue to pay close attention to throughout the rest of the review process -- how well proposals fit a specific track, as described in the DCL.

>> Great. And so now we're into the Q&A phase, so I'm just going to keep the different track slides as we answer questions, and I'll move back and forth between them. All right, so the first question: Are their eligibility restrictions on the number of proposals that a PI can be part of?

>> There are no restrictions. So you could be a principal investigator on one, and then a co-PI or senior personnel on another. We appreciate that there's a lot of overlap. We envision that there will be -- perhaps part of the Phase I activities will include some projects emerging as well as transforming. So of course, there's overlap. The thing that you need to be aware of you're preparing more than one proposal, being part of more than one proposal is how much time you really have to do this and make sure that you haven't actually budgeted 150% of your time.

>> The waiver for salary support. The criteria for NSF granting a waiver is that we document it in the recommendation for an award. Universities and other institutions may have their own requirements. And if so, that's on you.

>> So I would also recommend a close reading of the PAPPG. And what it says about this. It's a little bit dense, but I think there's a lot of information in there. So I'll just read this out loud. "As a general policy, NSF limits the salary compensation requested in the proposal budget for senior personnel to no more than two months of their regular salary in any one year." So one key phrase there is senior personnel and the PAPPG does define what senior press personnel means. So that that is the in the PAPPG. It's the organization's responsibility and to define and

consistently apply the term 'year' and to specify this definition in the budget justification, so we're going to look to organizations here to follow the rules and to be clear in the budget justification. "If anticipated, any compensation for such personnel in excess of two months must be disclosed in the proposal budget, justified in the budget justification and must be specifically approved by NSF and the award notice." So what would it mean to justify this in the budget justification? Well, for example, if this is a particularly intensive project, where someone is going to be putting in more than two months --

>> And full-time effort.

>> Full-time effort, they have course buyout or perhaps they don't have teaching responsibilities that require them to be doing something else during those two months because they might be funded some other way at their organization other than by teaching -- that would be part of the justification. You do not need to contact us in advance for a waiver. So if we make an award to you, it will be in the award and it will say that they have our okay to have more than two months effort.

>> Right. And then of course, if you are not an academic person, or if your budget includes academic personnel who are in the consultant line, consultants can work as many hours as are needed to work to get the job done.

>> All right, to whom or what body should letters of collaboration and other supporting documents be addressed? The PAPPG has a template for letters of collaboration. And the letter of collaboration is usually addressed from the collaborating person or organization to the proposing person and organization. So it could be an email from a partner organization that comes to you as the PI, or to some other member of your team, or it can be a formal thing on letterhead with, you know, signatures in blue ink or whatever you want. You can deviate from the PAPPG format for letters of collaboration, but you should do so cautiously. So the reason for that template -- for letters of collaboration -- is because we don't want applicants to provide a letter of support instead, where they go on and on about how great this proposal, is how the team could not be better. And that kind of letter of endorsement is not appropriate. So we want to letter collaboration that merely says, "I, such as a person or organization, agree to do the following things as described in the proposal". But it shouldn't appear to be creating extra space for proposal content that you didn't already put in proposal.

>> Let me just say one other thing about that. We do get a lot of questions about this, because it takes a bit of time to find this in the PAPPG. And the section you want to look for is called "Unfunded Collaborations," which might be counterintuitive at first, but essentially, these are partners. These are people who might be working with you, but they're not necessarily drawing salary from the project. So if you search for unfunded collaborations, that's where you will find that the template that Laura's referring to.

>> You may deviate from that, but do so with caution.

>> It shouldn't turn into a letter of support, for example. It should be a letter of collaboration.

>> All right, so who are the appropriate people to attend the training activities, the three training activities that we mentioned, and how many people from each team seems appropriate? Well, it depends on your team and what you're doing. So, the training activities that we're envisioning will include activities that are about how to build and manage a better team, and will also include activities that are about refining and improving the ideation for your approach. So you need to have people who are part of both of those elements of your activity, both the sort of management, the envisioning of who should be additional partners, and how to make the activity better and more effectively managed, as well as the people who are really deeply in charge of the topical work. I would say that we don't want 10 people from every project, that would be too many, but three, or four or five or two, depending on what you're doing would be fine.

>> Okay, I'll take one. Is there an opportunity to meet with the program officers? We are trying to be consistent across projects, but because we invited so many projects and there's a relatively short period before they're due, we want to be fair to everybody and not advantage some projects over others by giving them personal meetings. So for that reason, we're trying to do as much as possible over email. We're pretty quick and pretty thorough in responding to email. We truly want people's best ideas. This is not a case where we're looking to shape your proposals with program officer input. We want your best ideas. We're really looking forward to that and we'll run the review process based on what we get from you.

>> And in addition, although we're using the RAISE mechanism, far more than just two people looked at your proposal and in many cases, three or four people endorsed the submission. So it's not as though they're just two people that you would reach out to and ask them how to refine your idea. What you get from us in these webinars and from emails to C-accel@nsf.gov really is the whole story.

>>All right, what is the performance period? We will be making awards in September and the next phase of awards, you know, should go out in May. So my counting is September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May -- that is nine months to me, through the end of May 2020. So, that's -- that is the anticipated period of performance.

>>Can key people be mentioned in the main proposal or in just the Excel table? Well, the Excel table really should include everyone so we avoid conflicts of interest. And you need to describe in the proposal, what the different partners will do. So that may be specific individuals who you call out by name and describe what their role, or it could be more general in terms of talking about the activities that would be undertaken at a particular partner organization without naming any one in particular. And then when we looked at the table, we would understand who those people are. So it's up to you. Provide as much detail in naming names as you think is appropriate for us to understand what you're going to do in half.

>> Okay, I'll take one. Do you want an explicit section within the project description, labeled 'deliverables' in the proposal? So in general, we're following the PAPPG and there are sections that are expected there, for example, intellectual merit and broader impacts. We're not

requiring a section that is labeled deliverables. With that said, the review process will very carefully look at what your intended deliverables will be. So please make your deliverables as explicit as possible. I can tell you for two-pagers that were not invited to go ahead and write full proposals, one of the main reasons was that it wasn't clear what the deliverables would be. So you should make it as explicit as possible what the deliverables will be. However, we're not going to tell you about formatting in your proposal, but we do recommend it's very clear.

>> There's a question about the differentiation between PI, co-PI, and senior personnel. For our purposes, we are not distinguishing particularly between co-PI and senior personnel in terms of the roles that they play and describe what they do in the proposal. Your own institution, however, may have different rules -- have specific rules about who can be a co-PI, and who can be senior personnel on a proposal based on the connectivity between your institution and those other organizations via, you know, just subawards or memorandum of understanding or whatever. So we don't care and do it as you like.

>> One team has a European partner who they want to include. Yes, you can include non-US-based personnel as subcontractors or subawardees with a budget. However, there are additional requirements in the PAPPG that need to be met. So you have to explain why that person's role -- will have what their role is, and then why that role is crucial to the success of the project. Do they have unique expertise, access to unique resources, and then explain -- you need to also explain how they have a US-based person could not do the same thing. So if you have additional questions, feel free to email us but just explain what they're doing, why it's essential, and why it couldn't be done just as effectively by someone based in the US.

>> Okay, I'll take one. Track A1 has both vertical and horizontal proposals for the Open Knowledge Network. Is there an expectation that horizontal and vertical awardees will work together or at least be in contact? So I can say that the assumption here is correct that some proposals are probably looking more horizontal, some are looking more verticals, that there are probably some proposals that will be a mix of both and that is fine. During the upcoming year, we will have opportunities for awardees to work together, to interact. So yes, we're looking forward to that very much. But for immediate purposes where people are putting in their first proposals, it's fine to focus on a horizontal or vertical or, or possibly a bit of both. And that's fine for now.

>> And just keep in mind that we do hope that you'll collaborate more widely as Phase I to proceeds.

>> The particular requirement for the format and content of letters of support. So we just answered that about five minutes earlier. So have a look in the PAPPG under unfunded collaboration. It's in the PAPPG. There's also instructions of where to put that in the FASTLANE.

>> And you can deviate from that, but just don't make it into a letter support. Keep it as a letter of collaboration that's clear, short and explicit. All right, other significant contributors. I haven't heard that term before. Is there policy on individuals who commit to contribute to the

development and execution of projects that don't need any specific, measurable efforts? We absolutely want to hear about those people and their contribution to the effort. There is not a policy or requirement, but we expect that you're building a team that includes all kinds of partnerships, and some of those partners will be providing insights and connections that are practically invaluable, and therefore don't include a budget or measurable person months or person days. You should still describe them because we want to know all the ways in which you are working to ensure that your project will be effective in terms of developing a deliverable that is valuable to a set of people who would use it.

>> I'm not sure I totally understand the question, but let me just say that the section of the PAPPG that I mentioned earlier, on unfunded collaborations, would be relevant to that question.

>> All right. What if a partner is serving as a co-PI, but they don't have a FASTLANE ID? So because we are discouraging collaborative proposals, the only institution that has to have a fast lane ID is the proposing institution, then everyone else can be and should be a subwardee. And when you submit a person as -- when you put their name in as a co-PI or as senior personnel, FASTLANE will automatically require you to provide their collaborators and other affiliations, documents, which are kind of a hassle, their two-page bio sketch in the NSF format, and everything else. So you can name whoever you want as co-PI and senior personnel. They've followed your own institution's rules, if they have any about that, and you don't need a FASTLANE ID or any contact previously with NSF to do that.

>> And essentially, then the awardee institution is taking responsibility.

>> That is the thing to keep in mind and that's why your institution may not be comfortable with you willy nilly assigning, say, international colleagues as co-PIs, because the awardee institution is fiscally responsible for the spending of that budget, and so you're the submitting organization will need to have some control and familiarity with the organizations that are receiving a subaward.

>> I thought I did mention the track-specific part of the curriculum. So just briefly going back to describe what will happen in the training. So there will be training that will focus on building your team and communicating with different kinds of people and organizations and your team. And then part of it, of course, will be very much focused on building your idea, and how you can integrate that more effectively -- how you can make a better proposal and a better project. And so there'll be a lot on the ideation as well as some elements that are perhaps more focused on customer discovery depending on what your project is focused on. So there'll be a lot of very track specific, as well as some things that are general across tracks. So make sure that you plan to spend appropriate people to the training to cover all of that.

>> There will be content experts for each of the tracks that will be participating in the curriculum as well. So I just wanted to make sure people understood -- it's not just about management, it is also going to be a technical content.

>> Okay, thanks. Okay, the next question. Is there a rate limit for a consultant? I'm not aware of a specific dollar amount stated by NSF. We want you to put reasonable figures in your budgets. And by all means, we will review budgets internally for what a fair and reasonable cost will be on all elements of the budgets, including consultants. And let me move to the next one. So to clarify, it was asking about salary support as a researcher, as a small business, not as a university. So is there no salary limit for a small business? The salary should be reasonable but in justifying how someone might have more than two months of support, you could say that this person doesn't have teaching responsibilities or other responsibilities, they would be working on this full-time. And that would be part of the reason and your budget justification for why someone would have more than two months' support. This is what they would be doing full time for several months.

>> And we completely anticipate that there will be people working full-time without taking time out to teach classes. I mean, there's a lot of work involved in the technical ideation portion of developing your Phase I -- you're developing your project and Phase I. So that's going to take a lot of brainpower.

>> All right, can we say a bit more about the intent and desire for industry involvement in the context of track A1. Industry could mean a lot of things. What we mostly want to make sure that you're doing is working with non-academic organizations, so academic and non-academic organizations. So, for instance, if you're proposing a knowledge network that deals with census data, well, then you -- there might be for-profit organizations that are very interested in the applications of that. But you know, to deal with census data, you should probably be working with Census. So that would be a non-academic partner. Basically, we want you to identify the partners that are most appropriate for the deliverable that you hope to create. Here, if you're dealing primarily with health data, then maybe you'd be interested in working with hospitals, or maybe you'd be interested in working with communities. And of course, you'd probably want to be able to get access to different kinds of health data from different kinds of public and private sector organizations.

>> The way I would think about this is that there's a minimum. Proposals have to have a minimum of at least two different kinds of organizations. And beyond that, we are looking for proposals that will build strong partnerships that are appropriate to what they're proposing. As Laura said, many of them will have industry but there could be other kinds of partners. We think that having these partnerships is closely connected to the idea of having deliverables. So these partners, potentially could be users or they potentially can help bring something to market or they will potentially just have some expertise that won't be captured within say, a traditional academic organization. So having deliverables and having partners are closely linked. With that said, we're very happy to say that the Convergence Accelerator is a pilot right now. And we're looking for the creativity and great ideas of all of the proposers, figuring out ways to involve industry and other partners in their projects. So we're not going to tell you too much about how to involve industry or other partners. We all -- we want to see your best ideas.

>> If awards are made in September, then wouldn't project actually started in October. Oh, no. As soon as we've decided to recommend you for an award, we're going to tell you and so even though the money may not hit your organization until September 5, I hope, we have training planned in September that we expect you to attend. So, no, you'll be doing stuff in September if you are recommended for an award. And, you know, the good news is there's pre-award spending is allowed. We'll tell you more about that if you're recommended, and I'll type an answer to this question.

>> Yeah. Okay, so we have another question. If we request summer salary for Phase I, which ends around May, can we use the money to pay for faculty salary during June and July if we decide not to buy out courses? My guess is that your university would not allow you to do that. In other words, you can't spend money or plan to spend money after the grant is over. So we would like to see in the budget how you would spend money during the course of the project. It might entail seeking course buyout, it might entail bringing in other personnel if the PI can't take off months during the academic year at the university. But ultimately this is going to be a question for your university if you're coming from university, how to put your budget together that fits what they're comfortable with. But I wouldn't assume you're going to be spending money outside of the time span of your project.

>> Letters of collaboration from funded collaborators. So the letter of collaboration format is the same, whether they are funded collaborators or not. It's just that the part of the PAPPG where the template lives, happens to be under unfunded collaborations. But if you -- if you just open up the PDF form of the PAPPG or even HTML form, and look up collaboration letters, you'll eventually find it. So you should -- there is a template that is used for any letter of collaboration, and you should look at it. Once again, you can deviate from that format, but please don't turn it into a letter of support that goes on and on and on about how great this proposal is and essential -- and it becomes actually just extra pages in the proposal. So keep it brief. Keep it explicit and use the template if you can.

>> Does the \$1 million budget include institutional indirect cost? Yes. I believe we've been asked this question before. The budget includes indirect costs, the total dollar amount requested from NSF, including indirect costs.

>> So a question is: We expect to onboard new for-profit collaborators following proposal submission and to fund support their activity through subawards. Will this be possible to include to be determined subordinates in the budget justification? Wow, that is a really great question. We certainly want you to be building collaboration during Phase I, but we're also kind of hesitant to give money away without knowing actually what it would be for.

>> The way I could put it is that you should justify your budget based on what you plan to do. And if there's just some TBD, in the budget, we're unlikely to award money just for something to be determined later that isn't spelled out. With that said, it's possible to, what once you've been given an NSF award, to modify your spending plan. That has to be done according to the policies of your home organization. If it's substantial changes to the budget, you're going to

want to check in with NSF. So we expect and hope that people will find new partners over the course of six to nine months. Many of those won't have any financial implications in the sense that you'll be just talking with them, or you'll be inviting them to meetings. And that might be under participant costs. But if you're going to substantially modify the budget -- there may be possibility to do that working with your organization and with NSF, but I would just not put a lot of blank checks in your proposed budget.

>> Yeah, I think we'd be hesitant about that. But \if you have quite a bit of information but don't yet have just a formal engagement, then that could go into the budget. But we want to know more and we can probably work it out after award if necessary.

>>So who exactly do you need to have letters of collaboration from? You don't -- I don't think that you need letters collaboration from co-PIs or senior personnel, because you've already named them in the budget. And especially if you're giving them a subaward, they clearly committed to something. I think the letters of collaboration are more urgently needed from those who are outside of the core personnel already described in the proposal and might not be getting budget. So if people are providing other insights and value as a previous question asked, but are not actually getting a subaward, you would really want to have some sort of letter of collaboration from those organizations. Certainly, senior personnel and co-PIs -- we welcome brief letters of collaboration from them. It makes it clear that they're really on board. But anyone who's getting a subaward is probably pretty clearly participating.

>> Let me add that in looking at the two pages the research concept outlines, those, of course, were in very early stages where people talked about potential partners, notional partners we would like to involve businesses, such as dot, dot, dot -- there were various potential partners listed or various government agencies, and so on. By providing these letters of collaboration they're a way to strengthen your proposal that it shows that it's more than -- we are talking to folks at Google. Yes, we might be just talking to folks at Google, as opposed to having some formal commitment to collaborate with someone from Google or some other company or some government organization. So it's a way for you to strengthen your proposal.

>> Yeah, and especially government organizations that of course, wouldn't be receiving funding. You should have some sort of letter from them and from other organizations indicating that they really are on board.

>> Have we said how many awards we plan to make? I think we said 40 to 50 in previous documents. Yeah, I think we did. I think that was published

>> So, another question. To what extent should we have the team formed? Prior to submitting the proposal? I think Evan really just described that pretty effectively. We expect Phase I to involve a lot of additional team formation and a lot of refining of the idea. So if you're just an academic group that has some goals, in terms of other organizations that you want to engage, that's probably not going to be enough at the proposal submission level. And I think your proposal will review more strongly if you actually have engaged the kinds of organizations that

will help you actually deliver a deliverable to a group of people who want and need it. So lots of team formation will happen during Phase I. But if you haven't started interacting with the kinds of organizations that can help you not just create a deliverable, but put it into use, then you may be a little behind the curve.

>> How explicit do we need to be about deliverables at the end of Phase II? Would it be in terms of products that we would sell a license for, or more in terms of resources, resources that would be developed and freely available to anyone? Those would both be awesome deliverables. So we don't expect deliverables to necessarily be a product that sold for money. We do expect it to be something that is useful to people widely.

>> So let me add that ultimately what you're writing now is a proposal for Phase I. You're going to have to give a detailed justification of what you would do during Phase I and what budget you would need for Phase I. As we've been saying, we don't actually expect deliverables at the end of Phase I. It's more about team member identification and formation, and putting together a plan. So there needs to be a balance in proposals between focusing on Phase I and what you're actually seeking money for from NSF versus giving an idea of the big picture -- where this is going to lead to, what the deliverables might be at the end of Phase II. And just as I was saying earlier, we're not going to be able to fund projects that don't fit a track. Likewise, we're not going to be able to fund projects that don't have the potential for deliverables at the end of Phase II. And somehow your proposal is going to need to have a balance of fairly detailed information of what you will do during Phase I -- but expressing what the potential would be for deliverables at the end of Phase II. There are also more examples of deliverables in the FAQs or the Dear Colleague letter.

>> Another question about deliverables. A few more words are requested because in some ways of thinking, everyone will have the same deliverables from the Phase I project, which is to write a successful Phase II proposal. We completely agree. And, you know, the tragedy is that we won't be able to fund all of you for a successful Phase II activity. So you're not going to produce any deliverables in Phase I. Your deliverable for Phase I is building the team and refining the idea so that Phase II will be successful. But if at Phase I, you don't have any idea what your deliverable would be in Phase II, then you will have a hard time being effective in Phase I. So you need to have a vision for what you're going to produce by the end of Phase II. And be ready to start working on refining that so that you find the additional team members, you identify the additional intellectual and other resources, and you know all of the milestones that you need to meet in Phase II in order to actually make that deliverable. So you're going to be doing a lot of refining of your idea, focusing, broadening -- depending on what your proposal involves -- and then developing the milestones and the explicit goals for Phase II. So if you have no goal for what you're going to deliver, then, then I don't think we've even invited your proposal.

>> So another deliverable question. Can the deliverable be a tangible product addressing a specific problem related to worker performance? Basically, the research and development plan

will be to develop and test this technology in its intended setting. So I would say in broad terms that that's possible and sounds like this person is looking to submit something to track B1 or B2 and there are more examples of possible deliverables in the FAQs.

>> Is there any geography that would be considered of high risk or not allowed? Let me say, first of all, that we all need to follow the rules and organizations that receive funding from NSF have to follow the rules. For example, if it's a lab-based project or a field-based project, assurances of looking after safety of the participants. I'm not sure if that's what you mean by high risk. If you're referring to other risks -- you know, intellectual property or international collaboration, again, awarded organizations will have to give assurances to NSF that they're following the rules. I'll finally add -- I'm not sure if this question is about international or not -- we welcome international collaborations. At the same time, the Dear Colleague letter sets out the notion that these are challenges of national importance. And part of these tracks are, for example, what this is going to do on a national basis. We're going to be looking for a contribution at the national level, but we do we welcome international collaboration.

>> Exactly. I think you covered it very nicely Evan. So as far as I know, there are no geographies that are forbidden, but you need to keep in mind that, for instance, if you're developing intellectual property, you want to make sure that you've ensured a way that the intellectual property is protected. And that's true, whether all of your partners are domestic or international.

>> Is it possible to extend the due date?

>> We've contacted people and unless there's some error on our part, we're expecting people out of fairness to follow the due date without extensions. We're being as consistent as we possibly can. So simply saying we would like more time to because then we put in a better proposal, that wouldn't be a reason for us to give an extension.

>> Yeah. There's a few cases where we were egregiously slow in responding. You can send an email to C-accel@nsf.gov to discuss extenuating circumstances that you may have, but we really need to be fair to everyone. So the deadline date is June 3. And the reason for that is that we are making awards this fiscal year. We're accelerating everything. And so if we don't have your proposals by June 3, then it's hard to get them reviewed in time to actually give you the money.

>> Some collaborators have difficulty providing a letter by the deadline since it needs approval. Is a collaboration letter required or can the name of the collaborator be mentioned without a letter? To my knowledge, a letter of collaboration is not required. It strengthens the proposal.

>> Yeah, so saying we've been talking to Google is different than saying here's a letter from Google, but it's not a requirement.

>> It's not a requirement, just icing. All right. Well, another question. To what extent do we want Phase II aims included in the Phase I proposal? We absolutely want your overarching aims -- to be in your Phase I proposal because they are the foundational, they are the essence of

what you're doing in Phase I. It's trying to develop and refine a deliverable of some sort that comes out of Phase II. So we don't expect that you'll have individual, week-by-week or month-by-month milestones for what you will do in Phase II. But we absolutely expect that you'll have goals mentioned in your Phase I proposal about what you're going to accomplish in Phase II, so that we can understand why should be funded to develop that activity.

>> For track A1, can we bring in some data from companies who are willing to make these data public?

>> That would be fantastic.

>> That would be fantastic. In the Dear Colleague letter, we do emphasize US government data, but we don't limit it to that. I could imagine that a lot of strong proposals will have mixtures of different kinds of data from different kinds of sources.

>> And there could also be, for instance, data that includes personally -- personal identifiable information that therefore, you can't just share that all willy nilly. That would be wrong. But the proposal in track A1 that includes ways of dealing and anonymizing some data, while still allowing it to be publicly accessible and manipulable.

>> What dates in September are planned for training? So people can put a hold on their calendars. I love this the optimism of that question. I don't think that we have a date.

>> Okay. The next question is, do you want us to budget to pay for NSF trainings and pitch, even if cost for travel to DC would not be that expensive? Yes, you should budget to pay. We expect that the September meeting will be in DC or near DC. But it's possible that the other meetings will be elsewhere in the US. So you should -- you should not assume that the future meetings will be in DC.

>> It's the week of September 9-13 or 16-20.

>> So there's a question. NSF funding goes towards for-profits? Yes. For-profits can be part of your partnership. Absolutely. However, no NSF funding can go to fee for profit as budget line items for a for-profit organization. So you can pay for services, you can pay for staff time, you can pay for other resources. But for instance, if a for-profit is providing a spectrum of activities, you cannot have profit as a line in the budget. It can cover staff time, you can cover services you can cover, paying for use of a piece of equipment, but you cannot have profit and you cannot have -- cannot include fees.

>> Can researchers from National Labs receive funding?

>> I think the answer is yes. As a sub awardee? Yes. I believe so.

>> I would add, though, that we would be very comfortable with partners at National Labs who do not receive funding. So if you have -- this is the unfunded collaboration that we've been referring to. So, if someone at a National Lab has 12 months of salary funding, and they're going to be unfunded collaborators, that that's also acceptable.

>> Indeed, and the key, once again, in -- it comes down to the NSF rules, and so if funds flow to another federal agency, we have to make sure that the doesn't appear that we're trying to bypass the budgets that Congress approves for each agency. However, limited spending to support the specific and urgent activities of a single individual could be possible. It's easier to pay for travel, it's easier to pay for travel them for staff time. If you have deeper questions that might work, that warrants an email -- at C-accel@nsf.gov.

>> Can we have Phase I deliverables and improve them in Phase II? So, again, to be clear, we're not requiring deliverables at the end of Phase I. We would certainly welcome them and whether or not you have deliverables at the end of Phase I, because there's up to \$5 million as funding available in Phase II, we would expect considerable improvement or progress in deliverables in Phase II.

>> Is an appendix allowed in the proposal? So, you have a 15 page limit and there are a few required sections. If you want some of that to be graphic material, a table or something like that something that looks appendix-like, I think that that's fine, but it's going to count against your 15 pages.

>> So it's not allowed as a supplemental document, but it could absolutely be included within your 15 pages.

>> Yes, and that NSF is pretty careful about compliance checking. We now have automated compliance checking for many of the requirements in the PAPPG. And something like page limits is something that that we check for automatically and if someone has a 15 page project description and a five page appendix, it would be sent back.

>> Can Phase I budget include equipment to test out some ideas for a prototype that would then be further developed in Phase II? Yes, you can include budget in your Phase I for equipment, for other things that you might need as you're refining your work on Phase II.

>> Will there be another opportunity to put in a new RCO proposal next year?

>> What a great question. We are piloting the NSF Convergence Accelerator now and we expect that the program is going to continue in the future. We're still indeed looking for ideas for future tracks of the NSF Convergence Accelerator. So we also have a request for information from the field, where we're looking for ideas for future track. So we indeed expect to be in business and working with the field in the future.

>> We don't know for certain, however, if this if these tracks will also be available next time.

>> Can you please clarify what the maximum amount of funding for Phase II will be? So I assume that's at the level of an individual project. And what we're saying now is up to \$5 billion. The next time that there will be more definitive information about this will be when we actually put out the solicitation for Phase II. So that will be the definitive legal announcement. But what we've been saying consistently, up until now is up to \$5 million.

>> That was a great --

>> Thank you all very much. You've -- you've asked some great questions. I hope that our answers have clarified for you. Please feel free to email us at C-accel@nsf.gov. Now that we have invited all the proposals that we're going to invite, we're ready just to answer your questions. So we are looking forward to your full proposals. It's going to be fun.

>> Thank you, everybody.

>> Thank you.