EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Program (RII) Track-2: Focused EPSCoR Collaborations

(RII Track-2 FEC)
NSF 17-503

November 2016
Webinar Purpose

• Inform the community about the recently released FY 2017 EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) Track-2 Focused EPSCoR Collaborations (FEC)

• NSF 17-503 released October 12, 2016


• **NOT** a substitute for reading the solicitation

• There are differences between 17-503 and prior year RII Track-2 solicitations
EPSCoR Overview

- **Established by National Science Board Resolution in 1978**

- **Science-Driven, State-based, NSF program**
  - Building sustainable research capacity of academic institutions in EPSCoR jurisdictions
  - Developing pathways for increased success in competitive programs at NSF and other research programs

- **EPSCoR jurisdictions**
  - States, Commonwealths, and Territories that receive \( \leq 0.75\% \) of NSF research support funding averaged over most recent 3 years
  - Eligibility table updated annually
EPSCoR states and other U.S. jurisdictions eligible for EPSCoR RII during FY 2017. This includes twenty-four states, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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<th>States</th>
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EPSCoR Strategic Goals

• Enhance *research capabilities* and creation of new knowledge contributing to discovery, innovation, learning, and *knowledge-based prosperity*.

• Advance *STEM education*, training, and workforce development.

• *Broaden STEM participation* of diverse individuals and institutions.

• Effect *engagement* of participants, partners, and general public through broad-based communication.

• Impact *research, education, and economic development* at academic, government, and private sector levels.
NSF EPSCoR Investment Strategies

• **Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII)** (79% of EPSCoR budget)
  Awards to support physical, human, and cyber infrastructure.

  • **RII Track-1**: Jurisdiction-based awards. Research areas selected by jurisdiction’s EPSCoR steering committee.

  • **RII Track-2**: Focused EPSCoR Collaborations

  • **RII Track-3**: Building Diverse Communities *i.e.*, Broadening Participation in STEM fields.

  • **RII Track-4**: EPSCoR Research Fellows. New for FY17. Solicitation 17-509. Webinars November 29 and 30 – link to login instructions are on the NSF EPSCoR home page.
NSF EPSCoR Investment Strategies (cont.)

- **Co-Funding with NSF Directorates and Offices** (20% of EPSCoR budget)
- **Outreach and Workshops** (1% of EPSCoR budget)
RII Track-2: Focused EPSCoR Collaborations

• Response to reports from National Academy of Sciences, and the workshops *EPSCoR 2020* and *EPSCoR 2030* that called for mechanism(s) to facilitate multi-jurisdictional collaborations.

• Combining expertise distributed in different EPSCoR jurisdictions into a “critical mass” capable of competing for large scale competitions at NSF or other agencies.

• Promoting productive, balanced collaborations that are capable of sustained activities beyond the award period.

• Additional priorities:
  – Development of diverse early-career faculty
  – Building capacity in NSF-wide priority areas
NSF EPSCoR RII Track-2 History

• Originally run in FY09 - FY11 with a focus on supporting cyber-enabled science and engineering projects of regional, thematic, or technological importance.

• FY13 and FY14 competitions were open to any field of science and engineering supported by the Foundation.

• In FY15, competition was opened to one submission (as lead) per institution, rather than per jurisdiction. Collaborating partners funded as sub-awards, not through separately submitted collaborative proposals.

• FY15 and FY16 had two focus areas: Understanding the Brain, and the Food-Energy-Water Nexus.
FY 17 RII Track-2 Focus: Genome to Phenome

• Aligned with international efforts to understand how genotype elicits phenotype.

• Implications for medicine, agriculture, biotechnology, ecology, evolution, etc.

• Seeking innovative, inter-disciplinary approaches toward quantitative, predictive understanding of the complex interactions between genome and environment that generate variable phenotypic traits.

• Proposals may use any combination of experimental, computational, and/or theoretical approaches with any appropriate model system(s).

• Proposals that do not align with the focus area will be returned without review!
• Letters of Intent are REQUIRED: due January 10, 2017
• Full proposals: due February 10, 2017
• Estimated number of awards: 5
• Number of proposals per institution: 1
• Number of proposals per PI: 1
• Up to 4 years of funding may be requested.
• If institutions from two jurisdictions participate, award may not exceed $1M/year; if three or more jurisdictions, $1.5M/year.
• PIs/Co-PIs of existing RII Track-1/Track-2 awards with end dates after October 31, 2017 may not submit proposals.

• Investigators cannot be PI or co-PI on more than one proposal. It is allowable to be a participant on >1 proposal.
Letters of Intent submitted through Fastlane

- REQUIRED: due January 10, 2017 (5 PM submitter’s local time)
- Only 1 LOI permitted per institution
- **MUST** be submitted by organization’s Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). Previously, LOIs were submitted by the Sponsored Projects Office.
- "Synopsis" and "Other Comments" text fields, each limited to 2,500 characters. Be concise.
- Used solely for the purpose of merit review process preparation
  - Will not be seen by reviewers or panelists or used to judge merit
- Indicate which EPSCoR jurisdictions are participating.
- Required: list of science/research keywords
Track-2 Proposals: see Solicitation Section V.A

• **Project Description** (20 pages maximum. NOTE: Proposals that use the maximum number of pages in each subsection of the Project Description will not be in compliance with the 20 page limit.)
  
  – Status and Overview (2 pages maximum)
  
  – Results from Relevant Prior Support (2 pages maximum)
  
  – Research, Collaboration and Workforce Development (18 pages maximum)
    
    o Research and Education Goals and Activities
    
    o Inter-jurisdictional Collaborations and Partnerships
    
    o Workforce Development
• **Evaluation and Assessment Plan** (2 pages maximum)
  – See solicitation for specific metrics.

• **Sustainability Plan** (2 pages maximum)
  – See solicitation for specifics.

• **Supplementary Documentation (in addition to those required by the PAPPG)**
  – List of senior-level participants
  – List of institutions and companies involved in the project
  – No Letters of Collaboration from participants should be included.
  – Up to a maximum of five Letters of Support from partnering institutions/organizations **may** be included.
Merit Review Criteria

• Proposals received will be reviewed by *ad hoc* review and/or Panel review

• NSB Required Criteria:
  – Intellectual Merit
  – Broader Impacts

• Additional NSF 17-503-Specific Review Criteria
  – Research Capacity
  – Inter-jurisdictional Collaborations
  – Workforce Development
  – Jurisdictional Impacts
  – Integration of Program Elements
Post-Award Assessment

• Annual project reports.

• There may also be a Reverse Site Visit at NSF headquarters in year 2. Sufficient travel funds should be reserved for up to six participants to attend this panel meeting.

• In addition to the project-specific evaluation plan, there is a required, centralized, output data collection activity coordinated by NSF EPSCoR.
  
  – $12,500 per year must be budgeted for this data collection effort. This can be listed on Budget Line G.3: “Consultant Services”.


Summary

• **READ** EPSCoR’s NSF 17-503 for detailed, accurate, specific, information:
  

• LOIs are **required** for each proposal (1 maximum per institution) and are due: January 10, 2017.

• Full proposals due: February 10, 2017

• RII Track-2 has only a single topic in FY17: Genome to Phenome.

• Contact EPSCoR program officers if you have questions.
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Note: the information above was current as of the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.
Thank you!