

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230



October 31, 2000

OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
FOR ENGINEERING

SUBJECT: RESEARCH EXPERIENCE FOR TEACHERS (RET)
SUPPLEMENT TO CURRENT NSF AWARDS

Dear Colleague:

This letter is to call your attention to a new activity that will support active participation by K-12 teachers of science and mathematics in research and education projects funded by the Engineering Directorate at the National Science Foundation. The intent of this endeavor is to facilitate professional development of K-12 teachers through strengthened partnerships between institutions of higher education and local school districts. The Engineering Directorate strongly encourages all its grantees, including grantees from the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Research (STTR) programs, to make special efforts to identify talented teachers for participation in this RET-supplement opportunity.

Encouraging active participation of teachers in on-going NSF projects is an excellent way to reach broadly into the teacher talent pool of our nation. The goal of the RET-supplements is to help build long term collaborative relationships between K-12 teachers of science and mathematics and the NSF research community. The Directorate for Engineering at NSF is particularly interested in encouraging its researchers to build mutually rewarding partnerships with teachers at inner city schools and less well endowed school districts.

A request for funding of a RET-supplement should be made under an existing NSF award or within a proposal for a new or renewal NSF award. The description of the RET-supplement activity should clearly articulate in some detail the form and nature of the prospective teacher's involvement in the Principal Investigator's ongoing or proposed research. For example, the teacher may participate in the design of new experiments, modeling and analysis of experimental data, algorithm and software development, and other activities that will result in intellectual contributions to the project. Since it is expected that the RET-supplement experience will also lead to transfer of new knowledge to classroom activities, the Ret-supplement description should also indicate what sustained follow-up would be provided to help in translating the teacher's research

experience into classroom practice. A brief biographical sketch of the teacher should also be included.

The duration of the RET-supplement will be one year and the project may be carried out during summer months, during the academic year, or both. For guidance concerning the RET-supplement, including the application due date, the Principal Investigator should consult with the Program Director of his/her particular NSF award. Inquiries regarding possible conflict-of-interest situations and other questions should be addressed to the RET-supplement coordinator.

An application for the RET supplement to an existing NSF award should be submitted via the FastLane Notifications and Request module. The procedure is the same as described in the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) supplement (NSF 00-107). The Principal Investigator enters the description of the proposed RET-Supplement activity (limited to 3 pages), including a justification of the funds requested, and prepares a budget. The budget includes a teacher's stipend and up to \$ 1,000 for the cost of materials, equipment, software and other supplies for developing classroom instructions and experiments. An administrative allowance (limited to 25% of the teacher's stipend only) is allowed in lieu of indirect costs. The total cost of the supplement is limited to \$10,000 per teacher. Normally funds may be available for up to two teachers, but exceptions will be considered. Participation of teachers who are members of underrepresented groups (women, minorities, and persons with disabilities) is strongly encouraged. An award decision will be based on internal review by the Program Director and availability of funds in a particular program.

The National Science Foundation encourages you to visit K-12 teachers in your local school district and region, including those from NSF supported urban efforts, to make them aware of this RET-supplement opportunity as well as other NSF research and educational projects. Information on current NSF awards is readily available on www.nsf.gov/home/grants/grants_awards.htm. We trust that your time and efforts will open and facilitate new avenues for innovations in the teaching of mathematics, science and engineering and enhance the development of the U.S. science and engineering workforce.

Sincerely,

Louis A. Martin-Vega
Acting Assistant Director

Inquiries regarding the supplement should be directed to one of the following persons:

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