

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Human and Social Dynamics (HSD) (NSF 04-537)

Human and Social Dynamics Frequently Asked Questions - Financial/Budget

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Question: How will the HSD funds be divided across the directorates, different emphasis areas, and different activity types mentioned in the solicitation?

Answer: We do not make *a priori* funding decisions across the areas even though each Directorate knows (once we get our budget from Congress) how much it can spend on new HSD awards this year. That is because HSD is an interdisciplinary, Foundation-wide activity and many awards receive funds from several Directorates. Decisions about funding are made after the proposals are reviewed, and after all Directorates have a chance to determine which proposals are the most interesting and promising to them. If the proposals in some particular area are of unusually high quality, that area may attract more money than if the money were allocated in advance. Approximately \$5,000,000 has been reserved for infrastructure-focused projects, subject to the receipt of meritorious projects in this area.

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Question: May teaching faculty request academic year salary in addition to or instead of summer salary?

Answer: Academic year salary for teaching faculty may only be requested in exceptional circumstances. Each proposal will be evaluated individually to see if there are exceptional

circumstances. A request by the university administration to ask for academic year salary does not constitute exceptional circumstances. On the other hand, some directorates will allow course buyouts for faculty at teaching colleges. The rationale is that individuals teaching four or five courses a semester have little time to carry out research and NSF wants to encourage research at all US universities and colleges. If you think you might qualify for an exception, please check with the HSD Program Officer representing your emphasis area to see what is allowable.

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Question: What kinds of administrative costs may be included in the budget?

Answer: Many universities and colleges consider certain kinds of administrative costs, such as lab space and secretary salary, to be included in the indirect cost portion of the budget. Thus, they typically cannot be included as direct costs. If you have a question about what is allowable at your university or college, please check with your Sponsored Research Office. They are best situated to answer this question.

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Question: May HSD proposal budgets include equipment?

Answer: Yes. The resource-related emphasis area “Instrumentation and Data Resource Development” and the “Infrastructure-focused project” activity both specifically target the provision of critical resources for human and social dynamics research and education. In an HSD budget focusing on emphasis areas other than “Instrumentation and Data Resource Develop” or focusing on activities other than “Infrastructure,” only money for equipment that is necessary to carry out that proposed project should be requested.

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Question: How might the requested budget affect chances of success? Are there budgets that would be inappropriate because they are too large or too small?

Answer: HSD is an interdisciplinary, Foundation-wide activity. A high-quality, innovative proposal that addresses the substance of the HSD solicitation and has high societal value or impact has the best chance of being funded. Proposers should request the funding amounts that are necessary to carry out the work. Please refer to “Section I. Introduction” of the solicitation NSF 04-537, which provides expected ranges for total awards based on type of

project activity.

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Question: My question is not in this list and is not answered in the solicitation. What should I do?

Answer: Send email to <mailto:hsd@nsf.gov>.

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