

Advanced Technologies and Instrumentation (ATI): Special Competition: Astronomical Applications with the Advanced Electro-Optical System (AEOS) of the United States Air Force (ATI/AEOS)

Program Solicitation

NSF 06-519

Replaces Document NSF 03-543



National Science Foundation
Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences
Division of Astronomical Sciences

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

March 20, 2006

REVISIONS AND UPDATES

This program solicitation is an update of [NSF 03-543](#) to reflect changes in deadline dates and budget information for FY2006.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Information

Program Title:

Advanced Technologies and Instrumentation (ATI): Special Competition: Astronomical Applications with the Advanced Electro-Optical System (AEOS) of the United States Air Force (ATI/AEOS)

Synopsis of Program:

This special competition is to enable access by the U.S. community to the 3.67-meter Advanced Electro-Optical System (AEOS) telescope with its sophisticated adaptive optics system for astronomical research. This telescope system is made available for approximately 90 hours for observation in calendar year 2006.

This special competition makes available to the U.S. astronomical community a 3.67-meter telescope with state-of-the-art passive adaptive optics for imaging through atmospheric turbulence. Seven fixed Coude rooms are available for astronomical observations with user-provided instrumentation. Alternatively, scientific observations can be made using the cameras and instruments provided on-site by the Air Force.

Cognizant Program Officer(s):

- Andrew W. Clegg, ATI Program Manager, Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences, Division of Astronomical Sciences, 1045 S, telephone: (703) 292-4892, fax: (703) 292-9034, email: aclegg@nsf.gov

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Eligibility Information

- **Organization Limit:** None Specified.
- **PI Eligibility Limit:** None Specified.
- **Limit on Number of Proposals:** None Specified.

Award Information

- **Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard Grant
- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 4 to 8 - NSF expects to fund approximately 4 to 8 standard grants for up to 3 years duration depending on the number and quality of proposals received.
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$820,000 Approximately \$820,000 is anticipated to be available for this competition in FY 2006, pending availability of funds.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** This solicitation contains information that supplements the standard Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is not required by NSF.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** Not Applicable.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Not Applicable.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Deadline Date(s)** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):
March 20, 2006

Proposal Review Information

- **Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria apply.

Award Administration Information

- **Award Conditions:** Additional award conditions apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Telescopes developed for the Air Force mission have application for astronomical research. The Astronomy Division of the National Science Foundation and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research announce a collaborative research initiative to apply the AEOS 3.67-meter telescope on Haleakala, Maui, Hawaii to astronomical research.

The goal is to provide access for the entire U.S. astronomical community to advanced science instrumentation and to an adaptive optics imaging telescope for merit reviewed science projects. The U.S. astronomical community includes scientists at universities and non-profit organizations as well as scientists at government mission agencies such as DOD, Air Force, Navy, Department of Energy and others.

The Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) will support telescope operations for this research activity for approximately 90 hours in calendar year 2006. No telescope time will be available after 2006, although awards may cover support for data analysis beyond 2006.

All proposals submitted to this joint NSF/AFOSR program will be evaluated using the standard NSF merit review criteria and review process. Telescope time and support to complete the scientific research process will be included.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The AEOS 3.67-meter telescope facility is a unique resource for the U.S. astronomical community. It is located on the top of 10,000-foot Mount Haleakala on the island of Maui in the state of Hawaii. At the latitude of Maui, much of the southern hemisphere is available to astronomers in addition to the more familiar northern hemisphere of stars. The altitude enables very good seeing in a dry cold environment, ideal for infrared astronomy.

The mountain-top facility has 40,000 square feet of laboratory space for seven Coude rooms fed by a vertical beam from the observing floor above. The entire sky is covered by an altitude-over-azimuth telescope mount.

The telescope truss structure is actively thermally controlled and there is a continuous thermal purge for the primary mirror wavefront sensor and the mirror face. There is a tertiary beam to feed the Nasmyth ports. The fields of view are 1000 microradians for the Nasmyth ports and 300 microradians for the Coude rooms. The two interchangeable secondaries change out in less than two hours. Switching time between Coude ports or between the Nasmyth ports is less than 3 minutes. The Adaptive Optics System is not available at the Nasmyth ports. It is available only at Coude.

The program will utilize instruments at the Nasmyth focus and at the Coude focus. The program will accept proposals to use either the set of instruments provided by the Air Force or guest investigator instruments provided by the Principal Investigator (PI). In all cases, it is a requirement that the need for the unique capabilities provided by the AEOS be clearly stated and documented.

The program is jointly managed by NSF and AFOSR. The merit-review selection process to identify the highest quality scientific proposals will be the process used by NSF. Successful proposals from mission agencies will receive only telescope time and telescope operations support from the Air Force.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Limitations on the categories of organizations that are eligible to submit proposals:

U.S. institutions that are eligible for awards from the National Science Foundation, including colleges, universities, and other nonprofit research institutions may submit proposals.

Proposals from scientists at Government mission agencies such as DoD, Air Force, Navy, Department of Energy and others will be accepted only if submitted through the NSF FastLane system and will be reviewed within the context of the standard NSF merit review criteria.

Limitation on eligible topics:

To be considered in this competition, proposals must make use of the unique capabilities of the 3.67-meter telescope and its instrumentation for astronomy. Eligible topics include instrument test beds that will utilize the AEOS adaptive optics system or have user-supplied adaptive optics systems. Astronomical observations (and their interpretation) that make use of the existing AEOS adaptive optics instrumentation are also eligible.

There is no limitation on the number of proposals that may be submitted by an organization.

IV. AWARD INFORMATION

Under this solicitation, proposals may be submitted for any funding amount for up to three years. Grants may be awarded in a wide variety of sizes and durations. NSF expects to fund approximately 4 to 8 standard grants depending on the number and size of requests and the quality of proposal. Pending the availability of funds approximately \$820,000 will be available for this activity in FY 2006.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

Full Proposal Instructions:

Proposals submitted in response to this program announcement/solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF Website at: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg. Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from pubs@nsf.gov.

Additional information about the 3.67-meter telescope and the available instrumentation is available at the URL listed below. Proposers must read the information about the telescope and the observatory facility at the web site:

<http://www.maui.afmc.af.mil>

before they contact any of the observatory staff for additional information.

Proposers should discuss their telescope time, telescope configuration and facility needs with either, Paul Kervin (paul.kervin@maui.afmc.af.mil) or Dr. John Africano (john.africano@sw.boeing.com, john.l.africano@boeing.com, john.africano@maui.afmc.af.mil), of the Air Force Maui Observatory facility prior to submitting their proposal to the National Science Foundation.

The project description should contain a research plan and schedule.

Research Plan:

This plan should cover the hardware, software and analysis research activities being proposed. Details should be provided for the scientific research problem that will be enabled by the use of the 3.67 meter AEOS adaptive optics telescope system. The research problem must be compelling science.

Proposers should include information on the means by which data will be made available to the research community. Proposals should take advantage of available opportunities for meaningful integration of research with education and outreach activities, and present these as an integral part of the research plan. The research plan must include a research timetable and a clear statement of goals and priorities.

Project description should:

- Clearly identify, and justify, within a scientific framework, the importance of making the proposed observations with the proposed instrument system or subsystem.
- Demonstrate the essential need for the unique capabilities of the 3.67-meter aperture AEOS telescope.
- Demonstrate that the proposed investigators have sufficient hardware, software, and observatory experience and understand the operations of mountaintop complex telescope systems.
- Clearly state at the start of the project description section, the number of required observing nights and desired dates and times during the calendar years 2006.

Cover Sheet (NSF Form 1207)

After selecting the appropriate program, begin the project title with:

NSF/AFOSR Astronomy:

Proposers are reminded to identify the program announcement/solicitation number (06-519) in the program announcement/solicitation block on the proposal Cover Sheet. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

B. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing:

Cost sharing is not required by NSF in proposals submitted under this Program Solicitation.

C. Due Dates

Proposals must be submitted by the following date(s):

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time):

March 20, 2006

D. FastLane Requirements

Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this announcement/solicitation through the FastLane system.

Detailed instructions for proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail fastlane@nsf.gov. The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program announcement/solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this announcement/solicitation.

Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Proposers are no longer required to provide a paper copy of the signed Proposal Cover Sheet to NSF. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. NSF Proposal Review Process

Reviews of proposals submitted to NSF are solicited from peers with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed research or education project. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. NSF invites the proposer to suggest, at the time of submission, the names of appropriate or inappropriate reviewers. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts with the proposer. Special efforts are made to recruit reviewers from non-academic institutions, minority-serving institutions, or adjacent disciplines to that principally addressed in the proposal.

The National Science Board approved revised criteria for evaluating proposals at its meeting on March 28, 1997 ([NSB 97-72](#)). All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two merit review criteria. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

On July 8, 2002, the NSF Director issued [Important Notice 127](#), Implementation of new Grant Proposal Guide Requirements Related to the Broader Impacts Criterion. This Important Notice reinforces the importance of addressing both criteria in the preparation and review of all proposals submitted to NSF. NSF continues to strengthen its internal processes to ensure that both of the merit review criteria are addressed when making funding decisions.

In an effort to increase compliance with these requirements, the January 2002 issuance of the GPG incorporated revised proposal preparation guidelines relating to the development of the Project Summary and Project Description. Chapter II of the GPG specifies that Principal Investigators (PIs) must address both merit review criteria in separate statements within the one-page Project Summary. This chapter also reiterates that broader impacts resulting from the proposed project must be addressed in the Project Description and described as an integral part of the narrative.

Effective October 1, 2002, NSF will return without review proposals that do not separately address both merit review criteria within the Project Summary. It is believed that these changes to NSF proposal preparation and processing guidelines will more clearly articulate the importance of broader impacts to NSF-funded projects.

The two National Science Board approved merit review criteria are listed below (see the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) Chapter III.A for further information). The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which he/she is qualified to make judgments.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as

facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

NSF staff will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

Integration of Research and Education

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard

All proposals are carefully reviewed by at least three other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement/solicitation will be reviewed by Ad Hoc and/or panel review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Director. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

NSF is striving to be able to tell proposers whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the closing date of an announcement/solicitation, or the date of proposal receipt, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program Division administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See section VI.A. for additional information on the review process.)

B. Award Conditions

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the

proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (NSF-GC-1); * or Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Terms and Conditions * and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreement awards are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC). Electronic mail notification is the preferred way to transmit NSF awards to organizations that have electronic mail capabilities and have requested such notification from the Division of Grants and Agreements.

Consistent with the requirements of OMB Circular A-16, *Coordination of Geographic Information and Related Spatial Data Activities*, and the Federal Geographic Data Committee, all NSF awards that result in relevant geospatial data must be submitted to Geospatial One-Stop in accordance with the guidelines provided at: www.geodata.gov.

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions is contained in the NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpm. The GPM is also for sale through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC 20402. The telephone number at GPO for subscription information is (202) 512-1800. The GPM may be ordered through the GPO Website at <http://www.gpo.gov/>.

*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at <http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/>. Paper copies of these documents may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from pubs@nsf.gov.

Special Award Conditions:

Acknowledgement:

In addition, the following acknowledgement on publications resulting from the proposed research is recommended:

"The US Air Force provided the telescope time, on-site support and 80% of the research funds for this AFOSR and NSF jointly sponsored research under grant number NSF AST _____."

C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the PI must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period.

Within 90 days after the expiration of an award, the PI also is required to submit a final project report. Failure to provide final technical reports delays NSF review and processing of pending proposals for the PI and all Co-PIs. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project reporting system, available through FastLane, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. This system permits electronic submission and updating of project reports, including information on project participants (individual and organizational), activities and findings, publications, and other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system.

VIII. CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Andrew W. Clegg, ATI Program Manager, Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences, Division of Astronomical Sciences, 1045 S, telephone: (703) 292-4892, fax: (703) 292-9034, email: aclegg@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- Kim S. Elliott, Computer Specialist, Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences, Division of Astronomical Sciences, 1053 S, telephone: (703) 292-4894, email: kelliott@nsf.gov

IX. OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

The NSF *Guide to Programs* is a compilation of funding for research and education in science, mathematics, and engineering. The NSF *Guide to Programs* is available electronically at <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gp>. General descriptions of NSF programs, research areas, and eligibility information for proposal submission are provided in each chapter.

Many NSF programs offer announcements or solicitations concerning specific proposal requirements. To obtain additional information about these requirements, contact the appropriate NSF program offices. Any changes in NSF's fiscal year programs occurring after press time for the *Guide to Programs* will be announced in the NSF *E-Bulletin*, which is updated daily on the NSF Website at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/ebulletin>, and in individual program announcements/solicitations. Subscribers can also sign up for NSF's *MyNSF News Service* (<http://www.nsf.gov/mynsf/>) to be notified of new funding opportunities that become available.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Awardees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with Federal statutes, regulations and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF, although some programs may have special requirements that limit eligibility.

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the GPG Chapter II, Section D.2 for instructions regarding preparation of these types of proposals.

The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at <http://www.nsf.gov>

- **Location:** 4201 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA 22230

- **For General Information** (NSF Information Center): (703) 292-5111

- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired):** (703) 292-5090

- **To Order Publications or Forms:**
 - Send an e-mail to: pubs@nsf.gov
 - or telephone: (703) 292-7827

- **To Locate NSF Employees:** (703) 292-5111

PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, Division of Administrative Services, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230.

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