



**National Science Foundation**

4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22230

Dear Colleague,

The Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) of the Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) is preparing a competition that is expected to lead to the award of a single cooperative agreement for the future operation of a managing entity (ME) for the National Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education Digital Library (NSDL).

This notice does not constitute a solicitation; and no award of any kind will result from this notice. NSF anticipates issuance of a program solicitation in June, 2007.

#### **ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

The competition for the operation of the managing entity for NSDL (NSDL-ME) will be open to U.S.-based universities or consortia of universities, other non-profit (non-academic) organizations, and any business or industrial firm operating as an autonomous organization or as an identifiable separate operating unit of a parent organization.

The NSDL-ME operations must be conducted in the public interest with objectivity and independence, free from organizational conflicts of interest, and with full disclosure of its affairs to NSF. NSF will have overall responsibility for award oversight, including technical, programmatic, and financial and administrative performance.

#### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

NSDL was established by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2000 as an online library, which directs users to exemplary resources for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and research. NSDL provides an organized point of access to STEM content that is aggregated from a variety of other digital libraries, NSF-funded projects, and NSDL-reviewed web sites. NSDL also provides access to services and tools that enhance the use of this content in a variety of contexts.

NSDL serves as a nexus for educators, researchers, policy makers and the public by building bridges:

- Between private sector and public interests by providing access to resources such as publishers' journal articles, teacher-created lesson plans and real-time data sets from scientists
- Between the scientific, research and educational communities by applying advanced technologies to stimulate new ways for educators and learners to access and use scientific information
- Between teachers and learners at all levels, in all locations by supplying content and tools in open-access, non-proprietary formats in an easily accessible online environment.

Currently a core integration activity provides technical and organizational services that connect the many distributed NSDL collections and services to its distributed users. To date the budget for the core integration activity has been approximately \$6M/year. The annual budget for the NSDL-ME is expected to support the continued execution of the core integration activity plus provision of expanded services and capabilities outlined below.

## NSF'S CONCEPT OF NSDL-ME OPERATIONS

The recipient of the NSDL-ME award (hereinafter referred to as the "Awardee") shall oversee a number of key functions that include: i) providing central digital library services; ii) coordinating and integrating the work of extant NSDL projects, including implementation of Webmetrics to capture and analyze usage and user behavior; iii) developing partnerships and collaborations with projects beyond just those supported by NSF; iv) promoting outreach and marketing efforts to grow the NSDL user base; and v) engaging the breadth of the STEM education user community in the identification, creation, and deployment of new services. Through these high-level capabilities the NSDL-ME will provide support and technical personnel to manage the overall NSDL enterprise.

The NSDL-ME will act as a strategic partner of NSF, and will plan and execute a broad education program consistent with the objectives and priorities of NSF and the STEM education and research community. Although NSF is the sponsoring agency, the STEM education and research community is NSDL's primary customer; therefore, a significant portion of the NSDL-ME activity will be carried out in collaboration with that community. NSDL will enhance the ability of the STEM educators and learners to collectively participate in community building around, and sharing of, digital content. In so doing NSDL will leverage an integrated support network of both institutional repositories and individual sources of expertise that could not be contained within a single organization.

## ANTICIPATED COMPETITION SCHEDULE

This notice does not constitute a solicitation; therefore, no award of any kind will result from this notice. Although the competition is still in planning stage, NSF anticipates that a program solicitation will be issued on or about June 1, 2007.

## SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

\* National Science Foundation, Division of Undergraduate Education:

<http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=DUE>

\* NSDL: <http://www.nsdl.org/>

Primary Contact: Lee Zia, [due-nsdl-program@nsf.gov](mailto:due-nsdl-program@nsf.gov); (703) 292-8670.

Sincerely,

Linda L. Slakey  
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