



**National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22230**

**NSF 11-074**

**Dear Colleague Letter: Collaborative Opportunity for Research Between I/UCRCs (CORBI)**

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To: NSF Industry/ University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRCs)

From: Dr. Kesh Narayanan, Deputy Assistant Director

Directorate for Engineering

Dr. C. Suzanne Iacono, Deputy Assistant Director

Directorate for Computer & Information Science & Engineering

Re: Collaborative Opportunity for Research Between I/UCRCs (CORBI)

The National Science Foundation (NSF) invites supplemental requests for cooperative research projects between NSF Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRC). This opportunity provides the means for I/UCRCs to collaborate on projects of mutual interest that benefit the research portfolios of multiple centers. Ideally, projects proposed under this opportunity will have industrial significance and be endorsed with a portion of industry funds at centers directed to the collaboration by the Industry Advisory Boards (IAB) of each center. The proposed research should also provide the potential for transformative research that contributes to the innovative capacity of the United States.

Previously, NSF's I/UCRC program accepted unsolicited TIE proposals which served to "tie" centers together by offering grants for collaborative research efforts. CORBI formalizes this funding mechanism so as to provide all I/UCRCs with the information needed to apply for this type of opportunity. Industry Advisory Board (IAB) approval of the CORBI project is required, and a letter from the IAB chair supporting their approval must be submitted with the proposal.

**Supplemental Funding Request Due Dates:** February 3, 2012 by 5:00 PM, submitter's local time and first Friday in February, annually thereafter.

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*Number of awards:* Four or more anticipated supplements, pending the availability of funds.

**Maximum Award Request**

- Up to \$100,000 for a two center project with up to \$50,000 per center.
- The NSF I/UCRC supplemental funding requested by each Center from NSF must be matched by an Industry Advisory Board (IAB) commitment. The IAB (of each Center) must use funds already collected by the center through its memberships as this opportunity represents a choice that it can make in selecting center projects.

With respect to this opportunity, note that the IAB uses center membership fees for their matching IAB commitment. For an illustration of how a CORBI supplement might work, consider that Center A applies for \$50,000 from NSF with a matching IAB commitment from Center A for \$50,000. The collaboration for this project takes place with Center B who requests \$30,000 from NSF with a matching IAB commitment of \$30,000. In this example, NSF provides \$80,000 total funding (\$50,000 to Center A, and \$30,000 to Center B) while the IABs together provide \$80,000 in funding for a combined research project effort of \$160,000.

**Project Duration:** May be requested for a one or two year duration, concurrent with the award.

**Limit on the number of supplemental funding requests:** None, however each university's efforts in the project must be clearly delineated for each submitted CORBI project. The total supplemental funding request for all site submissions from a center cannot exceed the maximum award per center.

**Eligibility based on center performance:** CORBI supplements are available for existing I/UCRCs who continue to meet the criteria as outlined in the current *Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers Program (I/UCRC)* solicitation. This opportunity requires that centers submitting supplement requests have met the following conditions for eligibility:

- Maintained sufficient industrial memberships to meet program requirements; and
- Disseminated current and accurate information to the public about their center via the NSF web site. NSF directory listings must be current and accurate by the supplement deadline date. Updates can be sent to the I/UCRC program director if needed.

**Supplement Preparation Instructions:** I/UCRCs may want to submit separate supplement requests. Care must be taken to ensure that the maximum award is not exceeded. Proposals submitted by each institution must clearly state the I/UCRC Center and site with whom they are collaborating and be accompanied by a letter from the participating center's IAB as to their willingness to engage in a joint cooperative research project.

CORBI supplement requests must be well planned with professional project management principles applied to help assure project success. Supplement requests must detail the project plan, schedule, milestones, budget, and other factors similar to the Project Proposal Form that the center should be using in its IAB meetings (Gray and Walters, *Managing the Industry/University Cooperative Research Center: A Guide for Directors and Other Stakeholders*, p. 181, 1998). As such, the second page of the supplement request must use the CORBI Project Proposal Form shown in [Appendix A](#) to be considered as responsive to this solicitation. All fields of this form *must* be completed to meet this supplement eligibility requirement.

Requests must clearly indicate the intended outcomes (deliverables) from the collaborative project, and describe what short-term and long-term value they bring to the collaborating centers.

Supplemental funding must be submitted through FastLane. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov). The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. When contacting FastLane, inform the technician that you are required to apply for this opportunity as a supplement.

**Review process:** All supplementals submitted to this opportunity are reviewed by a panel of external experts.

**Additional Information:** Please contact one of the following program officials if you have questions about the I/UCRC Fundamental Research Supplement opportunity.

- **Rathindra DasGupta (Babu)**, I/UCRC Program Director, 585 N, telephone: (703) 292-8383, email: [rdasgupt@nsf.gov](mailto:rdasgupt@nsf.gov)
- **Larry Hornak**, I/UCRC Fundamental Research Program Director, 505 N, telephone: (703) 292-2678, email: [lhornak@nsf.gov](mailto:lhornak@nsf.gov)
- **Rita Rodriguez**, CISE Program Director, 1175N, telephone: (703) 292-8950, email: [rrodrigu@nsf.gov](mailto:rrodrigu@nsf.gov)

**[Appendix A](#) - One page overall summary**