



National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

NSF 12-075

Dear Colleague Letter: Research Experience for Teachers (RET): Funding Opportunity in the Biological Sciences

This letter is to call your attention to a long-standing opportunity that enables K-12 science educators to participate in projects funded by the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) at the National Science Foundation (NSF). The goal of the Research Experiences for Teachers (RET) activity is to enhance the professional development of K-12 science educators through research experience at the emerging frontiers of science in order to bring new knowledge into the classroom. BIO strongly encourages all its grantees to make special efforts to identify talented teachers who can participate in this RET activity to integrate research and education. This special opportunity is the same as mentioned in the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) solicitation http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5517&org=BIO&sel_org=BIO&from=fund.

We believe that encouraging active participation of teachers in on-going NSF projects is an excellent way to strengthen the science expertise of our nation's teachers. Another goal of the RET supplement activity is to build collaborative relationships between K-12 science educators and the NSF research community. BIO is particularly interested in encouraging its researchers to build mutually rewarding partnerships with teachers at urban or rural schools and those at less well-endowed school districts.

Before submitting an RET request (as part of a new or renewal NSF proposal or as a supplement to an existing NSF award), we strongly encourage the Principal Investigator to initiate a conversation via email or phone with the Program Director of his/her particular NSF award, or the cognizant Program Director for the program solicitation to which s/he is submitting a proposal.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

See **BIO Organizations websites** at www.nsf.gov/bio for deadlines dates.

NEW OR RENEWAL PROPOSALS

For **new or renewal proposals** that include a RET component, the Project Description should include relevant information about the broader impacts of the activity (e.g. the form and nature of the teacher's involvement in the PI's NSF research project). Budgets for RET activities are generally under \$15,000 per teacher. All expenses associated with RET should be entered in "Participant Support Costs" in the budget and explained in the budget justification.

SUPPLEMENTS

Requests submitted as a supplement to an active BIO award must be prepared and submitted through FastLane according to the instructions for submitting supplemental funding requests in the Award and Administration Guide http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag

Reminder: the supplemental funds must be expended by the expiration date of the original award.

The request must include the following components:

- A specific statement in the summary of proposed work that this is a request for an RET supplement
- In the Justification for Supplement include a description of the proposed RET (not to exceed 3 pages, single spaced) that includes:
 - the form and nature of the teacher's involvement in the PI's NSF research. For example, the teacher may participate in the design of new experiments, modeling or analysis of experimental data or other activities that will result in intellectual contributions to the project.
 - plans for follow-up to insure translation of the teacher's research experience into classroom practice
 - the selection criteria of the teacher participant
 - a brief description of the PI's experience with involving teachers in research, including prior RET supplements, if applicable
- Year-1 and summary budget pages. Budgets for RET activities are generally under \$15,000 per teacher. All expenses associated with RET should be entered in "Participant Support Costs" in the budget and explained in the budget justification.
- The desired start date and duration of the supplement (normally a summer experience), but may be carried out during summer months, during the academic year, or both.
- A 2-page biographical sketch of the teacher (submitted in the Supplementary Docs section).

Normally funds may be available for up to two teachers, but exceptions will be considered. Participation of science educators who are members of underrepresented groups (underrepresented minorities and persons with disabilities) is strongly encouraged. The decision to award a supplement will be based on internal review by the Program Director and availability of funds in a particular program.

NSF encourages you to visit K-12 educators in your local school district and region, including those participating in NSF-supported activities [see awards list for the Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings (DRL)] , as well as other NSF research and educational projects to help identify participants for this RET supplement opportunity. We trust that your time and efforts will strengthen the teaching of science, mathematics, and engineering and enhance the development of the U.S. science and engineering workforce.

Sincerely,
 Dr. John C. Wingfield
 Assistant Director
 Directorate for Biological Sciences