



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

NSF 12-088

Dear Colleague Letter - Materials Research Encourages Proposals to the Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Program

DATE: June 11, 2012

The NSF Division of Materials Research (DMR) would like to call to your attention the Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) program ([NSF 12-554](#)). AGEP is committed to the national goal of increasing the numbers of under-represented minorities (URMs), including African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, as well as URMs with disabilities in the science and engineering workforce. In particular, the AGEP program focuses on graduate education and postdoctoral training.

We are bringing this program to your attention now because AGEP allows alliances to be built around a single science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) discipline area or a subset of STEM disciplines and interdisciplinary areas, such as materials research. Additionally, alliance partners can now include other entities besides institutions of higher education, such as industry, professional societies, non-profit organizations, national labs, and research centers.

Increased URM participation in advanced STEM education and training is critical for supporting the development of a diverse professional STEM workforce, especially a diverse STEM faculty who serve as the intellectual, professional, personal, and organizational role models that shape the expectations of future scientists and engineers. To achieve this long-term goal, the AGEP program will support the development, implementation, study, and dissemination of innovative models and standards of graduate education and postdoctoral training that are designed to improve URM participation, preparation, and success in STEM career paths.

AGEP intends to support the following types of projects:

- AGEP-Transformation - Strategic alliances of institutions and organizations to develop, implement, and study innovative evidence-based models and standards for STEM graduate education, postdoctoral training, and academic STEM career preparation that eliminate or mitigate negative factors and promote positive practices for URMs.
- AGEP-Knowledge Adoption and Translation (AGEP-KAT) - Projects to expand the adoption (or adaptation) of research findings and evidence-based strategies and practices related to the participation and success of URMs in STEM graduate education, postdoctoral training, and academic STEM careers at institutions of higher education.
- AGEP-Broadening Participation Research in STEM Education (AGEP-BPR) - Investigator-initiated empirical research projects that seek to create and study new theory-driven models and innovations related to the participation and success of URMs in STEM graduate education, postdoctoral training, and academic STEM careers at institutions of higher education.

We envision, for example, an AGEP-Transformation project that would help catalyze the development of innovative alliances among DMR grantees, including centers, facilities, and research groups, to improve graduate education and postdoctoral training.

The AGEP proposals are due October 30, 2012. For further information, please see the following links.

AGEP Program Page: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5474&org=HRD&from=home

AGEP Solicitation (12-554): http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf12554

Frequently Asked Questions for AGEP Solicitation (12-071):

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2012/nsf12071/nsf12071.pdf>

In order to familiarize you with this solicitation, we invite you to a webinar on June 18, 2012 from 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time co-hosted by the Division of Materials Research (DMR) and the Division of Human Resource Development (HRD). The webinar will consist of three parts:

- An introduction by Ian Robertson, Division Director, DMR
- An overview of the AGEP program by Jessie DeAro, AGEP Program Director, HRD
- Audience question and answer session

The webinar will be hosted using WebEx online meeting software. Please note that the webinar audio will be recorded and made available for subsequent listening.

Topic: DMR-AGEP - June 18 Webinar

Date: Monday, June 18, 2012

Time: 3:00 pm, Eastern Daylight Time (New York, GMT-05:00)

To register for this meeting

1. Go to https://mmancusa.webex.com/mw03061c/mywebex/default.do?service=1&siteurl=mmancusa&nomenu=true&main_url=%2Fmc08051c%2Ffe.do%3Fsiteurl%3Dmmancusa%26AT%3DMI%26EventID%3D183436097%26UID%3D1280494732%26Host%3Dafbf127d073c3f071f5e44%26RG%3D1%26FrameSet%3D2

2. Register for the meeting.

Please be advised that you will use the web link for the video and you will need a land phone line for the audio.; You will receive instructions for making the phone connection at the time that you log on to the meeting. For your information, you will dial 1-866-844-9416 (toll free) or 1-203-369-5026 to be connected with the audio. You will need to state the participant passcode "AGEP2012" and tell the operator your name and organization. You will be joined to the meeting in listen-only mode until the Q&A session is announced.

To view in other time zones or languages, please click the link:

<https://mmancusa.webex.com/mmancusa/j.php?ED=183436097&UID=1282469072&PW=NZmQwNWI5NmFk&ORT=MiMxMQ%3D%3D>

For assistance

1. Go to <https://mmancusa.webex.com/mmancusa/mc>
2. On the left navigation bar, click "Support".

We thank you in advance for your interest in this program.

Sincerely,
Ian Robertson

Director, Division of Materials Research
U.S. National Science Foundation