



National Science Foundation
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NSF 13-116

Dear Colleague Letter: Belmont Forum - FACCE-JPI Multilateral International Opportunities Fund Initiative

Date: August 5, 2013

The Directorate for Geosciences announces a new Multilateral Research Funding Initiative between the Belmont Forum[1] and Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE-JPI)[2]. This partnership will provide international collaborative research opportunities that address the Belmont Challenge: “To deliver knowledge needed for action to mitigate and adapt to detrimental environmental change and extreme hazardous events”. This call of the *International Opportunities Fund* will focus on addressing issues “Food Security and Land Use Change that are best addressed through a coupled interdisciplinary and multinational approach.

The Belmont Forum and FACCE-JPI will support on a competitive basis, collaborative, research projects co-designed by teams of researchers from at least three participating countries. These interdisciplinary teams will bring together natural scientists, social/economic scientists and research users, such as policy makers, regulators, NGOs and industry. Proposals will be jointly reviewed by the participating funding organizations and successful projects are expected to demonstrate added value through multilateral collaboration. Support for U.S.-based researchers will be provided through awards made by the National Science Foundation.

Recognizing that there is a need for adequate interdisciplinarity and end user community engagement, the call intends to promote the building of communities/networks that effectively engage relevant stakeholder groups. Interdisciplinarity and stakeholder engagement is likely to be fostered within community building projects. Conversely, it is recognized that there may be networks established from previous initiatives, which are ready to embark on larger scale projects.

Thus, this call offers two types of project:

- **Type 1/Community building projects (12 to 18 months for up to \$300K).** These short-term exploratory projects seek to build communities that bring on board various disciplines and stakeholder groups around a common object of research. The focus should be on networking, capacity building, co-design of research questions and co-building of methodologies for integrated research, spatial scale interaction analysis, knowledge appropriation by key users, etc.
- **Type 2/Medium- to long-term integrated projects (3 to 5 years up to \$3M).** These projects will seek to address the key research questions in an integrated manner, with emphasis on a multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach in co-design and co-implementation. Proposals should seek to enhance fundamental understanding of the complex interactions between and within natural and human systems specifically in relation to food security and land use. The proposals must include stakeholder involvement from the outset and must have a clear plan for how the results would be used.

Proposals may address one two or three of the topics identified within the scientific theme:

- TOPIC 1: Land use change impacts on food systems;
- TOPIC 2: Food systems dynamics as driver of land use changes; and
- TOPIC 3: Feedback loop interactions between land use change and food security dynamics.

All proposals for this call will be submitted to the central International Opportunities Fund website found at [Belmont Forum International Opportunities Fund](#). Type 1 projects will be selected with a one-step procedure (full proposal) and Type 2 projects will be selected with a two steps procedure with pre-proposals and full proposals. The São Paulo Research Foundation of Brazil will serve as the Program Office for the call and will maintain the official webpage. Information specific to U.S. researchers will be posted at [U.S. National Annex](#).

SCHEDULE

All proposals for this call will be submitted to the central International Opportunities Fund website found at [Belmont Forum International Opportunities Fund](#).

Submission Date for Type 1 Full Proposals (Community building projects): **September 30, 2013**

Submission Date for Type 2 Pre-proposals (3-5 yr. research projects): **September 30, 2013**

Notification of Awards for Type 1 Proposals: December 2013 - January 2014

Notification for Submission of Full Proposals for Type 2: November 2013

Submission Date for Full Proposals for Type 2 (3-5 yr. research projects): **February 28, 2014**

ELIGIBILITY

Each consortium must include partners from at least three participating countries. Moreover, so as to benefit from the additional geographic breadth brought by the link between the Belmont Forum and European FACCE-JPI, all proposals including FACCE-JPI countries should also include at least one Belmont Forum country, which is not a member country of FACCE-JPI. Each consortium must show clear links through to users and include collaboration between natural and social/economic sciences, and other sciences where relevant. Researchers from countries not represented by any of the partner-countries can participate in the research project at their own expense.

Consortium partners should identify a Leading Principal Investigator (LPI) for each proposal for application, management and communication purposes. The LPI is officially responsible for all communications with the Program Office, including the submission of the proposal. In the case of Type 2 projects, the LPI is responsible for submitting the Preliminary Proposal and, if invited to do so, submission of the Full Proposal.

U.S. investigators may only be **part of one consortium**. Accordingly, U.S. investigators may be listed as either Lead PI, Co-PI (Partner PI) or Senior Personnel on **only one proposal** for either a Type 1 or Type 2 project.

A Panel of Experts will review the Type 1 proposals and Type 2 pre-proposals based on the selection criteria. The Panel will invite a pool high-quality applications from the Type 2 pre-proposals to submit Full Proposals. The Full proposals will be reviewed based on the selection criteria by both *ad hoc* peer review and a Panel of Experts.

FUNDING PRINCIPLES

Within each selected consortium, funding of the participating researchers is provided by their respective

national funding organization in accordance with their standard award terms and conditions. Funding is meant for community building (Type 1 projects) and collaborative research (Type 2 projects). A consortium agreement (including International Property Rights) will need to be developed between the participating researchers should their application be successful, and shared with the relevant Partner Organizations. All projects have to include a budget for participation in synthesis meetings that will be held back-to-back with a scientifically relevant international conference or event.

The total budget for this call is approximately 10 million Euros. NSF anticipates that a total of 8-10 research consortia will be supported for Type 1 projects and between one and three Type 2 projects. Maximum funding levels for *both types of projects* is anticipated at approximately \$100,000 to \$150,000 per award, per year for the total US consortia, pending the availability of funds.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION CONTACTS

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¹ The Belmont Forum is a high level group of the world's major and emerging funders of global environmental change research and international science councils. It aims to accelerate delivery of the international environmental research most urgently needed to remove critical barriers to sustainability by aligning and mobilizing international resources. Current members of the Belmont Forum are: Australia, Department of Climate Change; Austria, Ministry for Education, Science and Research; Brazil, FAPESP; Canada, NSERC and CFCAS; France, ANR; European Commission, DG Research; Germany, BMBF and DFG; Japan, MEXT; India, MoES; Norway, The Research Council of Norway; South Africa, NRF; UK, NERC; USA, NSF; International Council for Science (ICSU); and International Social Sciences Council (ISSC).

² The Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE-JPI) is a European initiative, which gathers 21 countries to align national programs on agriculture, food security and climate change. FACCE-JPI has developed a Strategic Research Agenda with strategic priorities for trans-disciplinary and innovative European research. It provides a framework for the alignment of existing national programs and joint research efforts to achieve the twin objectives of food security and combating climate change. Countries participating in this call from FACCE-JPI are Cyprus, France, Ireland, Israel, Netherlands, Romania, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.