



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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AST 15-001

Dear Colleague Letter: Division of Astronomical Sciences (AST) Employment Opportunities for Program Director (Open Until Filled)

April 30, 2015

Dear Colleague:

The Division of Astronomical Sciences (AST), within the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) at the National Science Foundation (NSF), announces a nationwide search for multiple scientists in relevant research disciplines to fill the following positions:

NSF Program Directors bear the primary responsibility for carrying out the Agency's overall mission. To discharge this responsibility requires not only knowledge in the appropriate disciplines, but also a commitment to high standards, a considerable breadth of interest and receptivity to new ideas, a strong sense of fairness, good judgment, and a high degree of personal integrity.

The Division supports research in all areas of astronomy and astrophysics and related multidisciplinary studies. Modes of support include single-investigator and collaborative awards, as well as funding for acquisition and development of astronomical instrumentation, technology development for future ground-based facilities, and educational projects that leverage the Division's research investments to build research and workforce capacity and to increase scientific literacy. Through the national observatories and international partnerships, the Division provides support for a system of multi-aperture, research-class telescopes as well as frontier facilities that enable transformational capabilities in both radio and optical/infrared astronomy. There are also opportunities to participate in Divisional strategic and implementation planning in response to community advice such as the recently released National Research Council (NRC) report "Optimizing the U.S. Ground-Based Optical and Infrared Astronomy System," the upcoming NRC "Review of Progress Toward the Decadal Survey Vision in *New Worlds, New Horizons in Astronomy and Astrophysics*" study, and the annual reports of the Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee.

Qualification requirements include a Ph.D. or equivalent professional experience in one of the relevant scientific disciplinary areas of the Division of Astronomical Science, plus after the award of the Ph.D., six or more years of successful research, research administration and/or substantial managerial experience in academe, industry, or government. Also desirable are knowledge of the general scientific community, skill in written communication and preparation of technical reports, and an ability to communicate orally. All appointees are expected to function effectively both within specific programs and in a team mode, contributing to and coordinating with organizations in the Directorate, across the Foundation, and with other Federal and State government agencies and private-sector organizations as necessary.

Program Director positions recruited under this announcement may be filled under one of the following appointment options:

Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Assignment: Individuals eligible for an IPA assignment with a Federal agency include employees of State and local government agencies or institutions of higher education, Indian tribal governments, and other eligible organizations in instances where such assignments would be of mutual benefit to the organizations involved. Initial assignments under IPA provisions may be made for a period up to two years, with a possible extension for up to an additional two-year period. The individual remains an employee of the home institution and NSF provides the negotiated funding toward the assignee's salary and benefits. Initial IPA assignments are made for a one-year period and may be extended by mutual agreement.

Visiting Scientist Appointment: Appointment to this position will be made under the Excepted Authority of the NSF Act. Visiting Scientists are on non-paid leave status from their home institution and placed on the NSF payroll. NSF withholds Social Security taxes and pays the home institution's contributions to maintain retirement and fringe benefits (i.e., health benefits and life insurance), either directly to the home institution or to the carrier. Appointments are usually made for a one-year period and may be extended for an additional year by mutual agreement.

Temporary Excepted Service Appointment: Appointment to this position will be made under the Excepted Authority of the NSF Act. Candidates who do not have civil service or reinstatement eligibility will not obtain civil service status if selected. Candidates currently in the competitive service will be required to waive competitive civil service rights if selected. Usual civil service benefits (retirement, health benefits, and life insurance) are applicable for appointments of more than one year. Temporary appointments may not exceed three years.

For additional information on NSF's rotational programs, please see "Programs for Scientists, Engineers, and Educators" on the NSF website at: http://www.nsf.gov/about/career_ops/rotators/.

Applications will be accepted from US Citizens. Recent changes in Federal Appropriations Law require Non-Citizens to meet certain eligibility criteria to be considered. Therefore, Non-Citizens must certify eligibility by signing and attaching this [Citizenship Affidavit](#) to their application. Non-citizens who do not provide the affidavit at the time of application will be considered as an IPA only.

Formal consideration of interested applications will begin on **June 15, 2015** and will continue until selections are made.

For additional information about AST research areas and programs, please see <http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=ast>.

Should you or your colleagues be interested in this position, please email a current CV accompanied by a cover letter that highlights the background that specifically relates to the program objectives to: ast-ipa@nsf.gov.

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A HIGHLY QUALIFIED STAFF THAT REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF OUR NATION.**