



**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 15-104

Dear Colleague Letter: Special Guidelines for Submitting Collaborative Proposals in Renewable Energy under the NSF/CBET - U.S.-Israel BSF International Opportunity

August 28, 2015

Dear Colleague:

SCOPE

The United States National Science Foundation (NSF) and the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Research Cooperation. The MOU provides an overarching framework to encourage collaboration between U.S. and Israeli research communities and sets out the principles by which jointly supported activities might be developed. The MOU provides for an international collaboration arrangement whereby U.S. researchers may receive funding from the NSF and Israeli researchers may receive funding from the BSF.

The Division of Chemical, Bioengineering, Environmental, and Transport (CBET) Division within the Engineering Directorate of the National Science Foundation and the U.S.-Israel Binational Science Foundation are pleased to announce a U.S.-Israel collaborative research opportunity in renewable energy production and storage. The goal is to help reduce some of the current barriers to working internationally. NSF/CBET and BSF will address these issues by allowing U.S. and Israeli researchers to submit a single collaborative proposal that will undergo a single review process.

Proposals will be accepted for collaborative, fundamental scientific research on selected renewable energy topics defined by the Energy for Sustainability Program (PD 7644) within CBET and by the BSF Solicitation Call for Proposals in Energy for Sustainability. The goal of the CBET Energy for Sustainability program is to support fundamental research and education that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources.

Proposals are expected to adhere to the funding limit and grant duration for the NSF/CBET [Energy for Sustainability Program](#) and BSF program from which the funding is sought and must represent an integrated collaborative effort. This document provides guidelines for the preparation, submission, review, and award of NSF/CBET-BSF collaborative proposals. During an initial two-year phase (2016-2017), both agencies will evaluate the interest and success of the activities. No additional NSF funds are expected to be made available to support NSF/CBET-BSF collaborative proposals submitted to the CBET Energy for Sustainability Program.

Proposers are advised that all documents submitted to NSF or BSF may be shared with the other agency in order to implement the two-way agency activities.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

1. Proposers must submit proposals in accordance with the NSF/CBET Energy for Sustainability Program requirements and in keeping with the published submission window of October 1-20. Proposals must address one of the three current topic areas of the NSF/CBET Energy for Sustainability Program: 1) Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy; 2) Photovoltaic Solar Energy; 3) Advanced Batteries for Transportation and Renewable Energy Storage. NSF/CBET-BSF collaborative proposals on renewable energy topics outside the scope of these three topics of interest will be considered unresponsive and will be returned without review.
2. NSF accepts proposals only from U.S. institutions. Proposals submitted to the NSF should be made by the U.S. institution only (the Israeli collaborator does not appear as a formal co-PI on the proposal). However, in the proposal, the nature of the collaboration and the role of the Israeli partner(s) must be described.
3. The U.S. institution will submit to the relevant CBET program according to NSF policies and procedures, using the NSF Fastlane system (<http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>) or Grants.gov. Israeli proposers should follow directions set out by BSF and submit the proposal via the BSF system (<http://www.bsf.org.il/ElectronicSubmission/GatewayFormsAndGuidelines.aspx>).
4. The full proposal should indicate that it is to be considered under the collaborative activities by prefacing the title with "NSF/CBET-BSF:"
5. Biographical sketches of all senior personnel (including U.S. and Israeli partners) should be prepared in accordance with the NSF standard biographical sketch format.
6. NSF proposers should only indicate the U.S. expenses on the NSF budget form. The budget for the Israeli partner will be provided as a Supplementary Document.
7. NSF proposers should include a letter of collaboration from their Israeli partners as a Supplementary Document. The letter should describe the roles and activities of the Israeli team in the collaborative project.
8. For projects involving human subjects/participants or vertebrate animals, proposers should consult official guidelines and both NSF and BSF policies.
9. The proposal should be submitted by the established target date of submission as determined for NSF's participating program.

PEER REVIEW

1. NSF/CBET-BSF collaborative proposals will be reviewed alongside all other standard proposals received in the same funding round or call and will not undergo a separate or special review process.
2. Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with NSF's review criteria; reviewers are asked to evaluate the proposed project on both its intellectual merit and broader impacts. The review panel will be carried out using NSF procedures. A description of the NSF merit review process is provided on the NSF merit review website at: http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/.
3. NSF will be responsible for implementing the peer merit review process. BSF will be given the opportunity to suggest names of qualified reviewers and possible panelists.
4. BSF will not conduct a parallel review and will not rank the proposals. BSF is likely to fund any Israeli whose partner in this program is funded by NSF.

FUNDING DECISION

1. The funding recommendations will be discussed with the partner agency. Funding decisions may be subject to the availability of funds.
2. If a proposal is recommended for funding, the U.S. organization(s) will be supported by NSF and the Israeli organization(s) will be supported by BSF.
3. All proposers will be advised whether their proposals have been recommended for funding or for

declination. Proposers will receive copies of the reviewers' unattributed comments and, where applicable, a panel summary. Should a proposal be declined for funding, proposers should refer to the respective agency resubmission policies.

4. Because the participating organizations have different funding cycles, it is possible that some projects will have delayed start dates in order to wait until funds become available.

POST AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

1. Awardees will be expected to comply with the award conditions and reporting requirements of the agencies from which they receive funding.
2. Awardees will be required to acknowledge both NSF and BSF in any reports or publications arising from the grant.
3. Extension and supplement requests will be considered by participating agencies using standard procedures. Requests for changes to awards pertaining to changes in scope in research or changes or delays to the research will be discussed with other involved funding agencies before a mutual decision is reached.

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