



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 15-105

Dear Colleague Letter: Special Guidelines for Submitting Collaborative Proposals under the US NSF/BIO/MCB - US-Israel BSF International Opportunity

August 19, 2015

Dear Colleague:

SCOPE

The US National Science Foundation (NSF) and the US-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 US 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 US researchers may receive funding from the NSF and Israeli researchers may receive funding from the BSF.

The Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB) the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) of the National Science Foundation and the US-Israel Binational Science Foundation are pleased to announce a US-Israel collaborative research opportunity. The goal is to help reduce some of the current barriers to working internationally. NSF/BIO/MCB and BSF will address these issues by allowing US and Israeli researchers to submit a single collaborative proposal that will undergo a single review process.

Proposals will be accepted for collaborative research in areas at the intersection of NSF/BIO/MCB and BSF as set out below:

NSF/BIO/Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (NSF 13-510):

Genetic Mechanisms
Cellular Dynamics and Function
Molecular Biophysics
Systems and Synthetic Biology
(http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=503626)

BSF SOLICITATION

Call for Proposals in the BSF-NSF program in areas of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences.

Proposals are expected to adhere to the funding limit and grant duration for the NSF/BIO/MCB 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/BIO/MCB-BSF collaborative proposals. During an initial two-year phase (2016-2017), both agencies will evaluate the interest and success of the activities.

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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. The NSF proposal must be submitted to a participating NSF/BIO/MCB program by a US institution. The Israeli institution submits a parallel proposal to BSF via the BSF submission system.
2. Proposals must be submitted via FastLane in accordance with proposal preparation guidelines in the [NSF Grants Proposal Guide](#) or via Grants.gov in accordance with proposal preparation guidelines in the [NSF Grants.gov Application Guide](#).
3. The proposal title should be prefaced with "NSF/MCB-BSF:"
4. The project description must describe the nature of the collaboration and the role of the Israeli partners.
5. Israeli investigators should not be listed as Co-PIs on the Cover Sheet. The NSF proposal should include biographical sketches of all senior personnel, including Israeli partners.
6. The budget forms submitted to NSF should only indicate the amount requested by the US institution. The NSF proposal should also include a PDF of the BSF budget form as a supplementary document. The parallel proposal submitted to BSF indicates the amount requested from BSF for the Israeli side of the collaboration. 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>).
7. The NSF budget justification must clearly differentiate between the US and Israeli project budgets; proposals that request duplicative funding may be returned without review.

PEER REVIEW

1. NSF/MCB-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 at NSF.
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 are subject to the availability of funds.
2. If a proposal is recommended for funding, the US institution(s) will be supported by NSF and the Israeli institution(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 agencies 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

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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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Directorate for Biological Sciences