



**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
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NSF 16-014

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

SCOPE

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and the U.S.-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 Earth Sciences (EAR) in the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) 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. Through a lead agency model, NSF/GEO/EAR 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 research in areas at the intersection of NSF/GEO/EAR and BSF as set out below:

NSF/GEO/EAR

Division of Earth Sciences Core Programs:

- Geophysics (NSF 12-598, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13682&org=EAR&from=home),
- Petrology and Geochemistry (NSF 15-557, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13683&org=EAR&from=home),
- Tectonics (NSF 14-609, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13673&org=EAR&from=home),
- Geobiology and Low-Temperature Geochemistry (NSF 15-559, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13689&org=EAR&from=home),
- Geomorphology and Land Use Dynamics (NSF 15-560, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13690&org=EAR&from=home),
- Hydrologic Sciences (NSF 15-558, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13684&org=EAR&from=home),
- Sedimentary Geology and Paleobiology (NSF 15-561, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13691&org=EAR&from=home)

BSF SOLICITATION

Call for proposals in the BSF-NSF program in areas of Earth Sciences
<http://www.bsf.org.il/ElectronicSubmission/GatewayFormsAndGuidelines.aspx>.

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

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.

Proposals will be submitted to NSF, with a separate copy submitted immediately afterwards to the BSF. The proposals will be reviewed in competition with other proposals received for the same funding round by NSF using NSF's merit review process. It is important to note that there are no separate NSF funds available for these efforts; proposals must compete with all other proposals within the NSF program and must succeed on the strengths of their intellectual merit and broader impact. BSF will check the role of the Israeli scientist and his/her eligibility at the onset of the process, but will not conduct a parallel review and will not rank proposals; BSF is likely to be favorably inclined to support any Israeli whose research partner is funded by NSF.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

1. Prior to submission, NSF proposers may contact the relevant EAR program officer to discuss the research focus of the international project.
2. Proposers must submit proposals in accordance with the EAR core program requirements and in keeping with EAR program guidance on submission target dates or deadlines. For those proposals to programs without submission target dates or deadlines, proposals involving international research collaboration with an Israeli partner should be received at NSF by 1 February.
3. The NSF proposal must be submitted to a participating NSF/GEO/EAR program by a U.S. institution. The Israeli institution submits a parallel proposal to the BSF via the BSF submission system.
4. Proposals to NSF 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](#).
5. The proposal title should be prefaced with "NSF/EAR-BSF:"
6. The project description must describe the nature of the collaboration and the role of the Israeli partners.
7. Israeli investigators should not be listed as co-PIs on the NSF cover sheet. The NSF proposal should include biographical sketches of all senior personnel, including Israeli partners, in accordance with the NSF standard biographical sketch format.
8. The budget forms submitted to NSF should only indicate the amount requested by the U.S. 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>).

9. The NSF budget justification must clearly differentiate between the U.S. and Israeli project budgets; proposals that request duplicative funding may be returned without review.

PEER REVIEW

1. NSF/GEO/EAR-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. A description of the NSF merit review process is provided on the NSF merit review website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/meritreview/>.
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, and is likely to fund Israeli researchers whose partner in this program is funded by NSF. Unattributed reviews may be shared with BSF.

FUNDING DECISION

1. The funding recommendations will be discussed with the partner agency. Each agency will use its usual internal procedures to determine whether a proposal will be awarded or declined. Funding decisions may be 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 declined. 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 CONSIDERATION

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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