



**National Science Foundation**  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22230

**NSF 16-019**

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

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November 16, 2015

**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

**PROCESS SUMMARY**

As described in detail below, this program is intended to encourage collaborations by US and Israeli researchers focused on foundational research in all areas of cybersecurity that is likely to have impacts on the security and trustworthiness of cyberspace in the long term. NSF will fund the US researchers and BSF will fund the Israeli researchers. Proposals must be responsive to the Small category (up to \$500,000 over 3 years for the NSF-funded portion) and the Trustworthy Computing (TWC) perspective specified in the NSF Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) solicitation. US researchers should obtain pre-approval from NSF before submission. US and Israeli collaborative researchers must each submit the identical research description to NSF and BSF (respectively), with each budgeting for their own participants, and including a copy of the budget for the counterparts. US participants must include a supplementary document consenting to the release of their NSF proposal and unattributed NSF reviews to BSF. All proposals will be reviewed by NSF; those selected for funding will have separate agreements with NSF (for US researchers) and BSF (for Israeli researchers).

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

**NSF Solicitation**

Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) [NSF 15-575](#)

**BSF Solicitation**

Call for Proposals in the BSF-NSF program in Cybersecurity

Any topic within scope for the Trustworthy Computing (TWC) perspective of the NSF SaTC solicitation is within scope for funding through this collaborative research opportunity. Topics of particular interest include cyber-physical systems security, privacy, secure software, and cryptography. Abstracts for projects funded in FY15 may be accessed by going to [www.nsf.gov/awardsearch](http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch) and entering "NSFSaTC-BSF". Proposals are expected to adhere to the remit, funding limits, and grant durations for the BSF and NSF programs 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-BSF collaborative proposals.

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. Prior to submission, NSF proposers should contact NSFSaTC-BSF@nsf.gov to discuss the research focus of the international project.
2. Proposers should submit a **research proposal** in accordance with the proposal preparation requirements of both agencies. The proposal should include a description of the proposed research program, research team, and the total resources for the joint project (that is, the funds requested from both the NSF and BSF).

NSF proposers must comply with the proposal preparation requirements outlined in NSF's Grant Proposal Guide as well as any programmatic requirements stipulated by the Small proposal competition of the Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) program. The proposal must be submitted through NSF's FastLane system (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>) or Grants.gov (<http://grants.gov>) to the SaTC program.

Both Israeli and US collaborators on a proposing team should follow directions specified by BSF and submit their joint proposal via the BSF system (<http://www.bsf.org.il/ElectronicSubmission/GatewayFormsAndGuidelines.aspx?PageId=7&innerTextID=0>).

3. **The budget forms submitted to each agency should only indicate the amount requested from that agency.** NSF proposers should only indicate the US expenses on the NSF budget form. BSF proposers should indicate only the Israeli research expenses on the BSF budget form. A copy of the proposed requested budget of the other agency should be included as part of the full proposal (i.e., copies of the BSF budget should be included as a supplemental document in the NSF submission, while copies of the NSF budget should be included in the BSF submission). The Budget Justification section of the full proposal should address the full US and Israeli project budgets, and these must be clearly differentiated in the proposal. Proposals that request duplicative funding may be returned without review.
4. In the case of NSF, the following documents must be provided as Supplementary Documents to the full proposal submission:
  - o Institutional endorsement: An institutional acknowledgment of the submission must be a signed letter from an authorized institutional representative from the Israeli institution with the following text: "I confirm on behalf of [insert name of Israeli institution] that the US-Israel Collaborative proposal between [insert name of US PI and his/her institution] and [insert name of Israeli PI and his/her institution] is endorsed and has been submitted by [name of Israeli university's research office], and that BSF has acknowledged the proposed collaboration."
  - o Funding requested from BSF: A detailed breakdown of funding requested from BSF should be included, typically in the form of a spreadsheet.
  - o Consent: Written consent by the PIs that the proposals and unattributed reviews will be shared with the partner agency, BSF. This consent may be in the form of a signed letter from the PI stating, "I confirm on behalf of [insert name of US institution] that proposals and unattributed reviews will be shared with BSF."
  - o The list of participants required as a supplemental document by the SaTC solicitation must include both US and Israeli participants. The list of collaborators required as a supplemental document by the SaTC solicitation must include collaborators of both the US and Israeli

participants. These lists are used to avoid conflicts of interest in assigning reviewers, so including the collaborators of the Israeli participants is important.

- A Collaboration Plan (up to two pages) describing the collaboration between US and Israeli investigators is encouraged, and may be submitted as a supplemental document. This plan does not count against the 15-page limit for the basic proposal, as described in the solicitation.
5. The following guidance pertains to the NSF submission:
    - Israeli PIs should NOT be listed as co-PIs on the NSF cover sheet.
    - Biographical sketches for Israeli PIs should be included as supplementary documents, not along with the biographical sketches for the US participants.
    - Current and pending awards lists are NOT required for Israeli participants.
    - If only one US institution is involved, the NSF standard of including the word “collaboration” in the title should NOT be followed, as that is an indication that more than one US institution is involved.
    - US PIs are limited to not more than three submissions to the SaTC solicitation, of which no more than two may be to the Small, Medium, or Large categories. Submission of a Small proposal pursuant to this Dear Colleague Letter is included in that limit (i.e., if submitting in response to this US-Israel collaborative research opportunity, only one additional Small/Medium/Large may be submitted).
  6. For projects involving human subjects/participants, proposers should consult both NSF and BSF policies.
  7. The full proposal should indicate the proposal is to be considered under the lead agency activities by prefacing the title with “NSFSaTC-BSF:”. This prefix should be placed before all other codes as described in the SaTC solicitation. For example, the full title for a submission to NSF under this DCL could be “NSFSaTC-BSF: TWC: Small: Title”.
  8. The full proposal should be submitted by the established closing date of submission as determined by the lead agency. For NSF, this is the NSF SaTC Small proposal deadline in November 2015. For BSF, this is the date published on the BSF website and written in the submission instructions for the program.
  9. The number of proposals that may be submitted in response to this DCL is limited by the underlying NSF and BSF programs; there are no additional limits imposed by this international opportunity.

## **PEER REVIEW**

NSF-BSF collaborative proposals will be reviewed alongside all other unsolicited or standard proposals received in the same funding round or call and will not undergo a separate or special review process.

Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with NSF's review criteria; reviewers are asked to evaluate research on both its intellectual merit and broader impacts.

## **FUNDING DECISIONS**

The funding recommendations will be discussed with the partner agency (BSF). The lead agency (NSF) 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.

All proposers will be advised whether their proposal has been recommended for funding or will be 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.

Award letters will identify that the award for joint international research is made in collaboration between NSF and BSF.

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**

Awardees will be expected to comply with the award conditions and reporting requirements of the agencies from which they receive funding.

Awardees will be required to acknowledge both NSF and BSF in any reports or publications arising from the grant.

Extensions and supplements 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.