



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

NSF 17-129

Dear Colleague Letter: Support for Engaging Students and the Public in Polar Research

September 6, 2017

Dear Colleagues:

The Geosciences and Education and Human Resources Directorates are partnering to advance and develop understanding of learning environments that build upon the rich interdisciplinary resources emerging from polar investments. To that end, the Office of Polar Programs (OPP), the Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) and the Division of Research on Learning (DRL) encourage proposals that will leverage the extensive National Science Foundation (NSF) investment in polar sciences and infrastructure, and STEM education research and development, to promote an informed citizenry and the next generation of polar scientists. In order to advance polar science educational opportunities, OPP, DUE and DRL will accept and review proposals for research and development projects **that facilitate access to polar research efforts in (1) undergraduate education, (2) informal science education or (3) formal PK-12 science or math education**. Proposals in response to this Dear Colleague Letter must be submitted to either the Improving Undergraduate Science Education: Education and Human Resources (IUSE: EHR) solicitation, the Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) solicitation, or the Discovery Research PreK-12 (DRK-12) solicitation.

The [integration of research and education](#) is essential to NSF's mission. In addition, NSF strives to broaden participation in science and to make the results of research projects widely accessible to students and the public. Specifically, OPP seeks to meet these objectives by supporting the engagement of students, educators, and the public in polar research projects. While participation of educators and students in both Arctic and Antarctic research projects is encouraged, logistics are often difficult and expensive. Therefore, OPP, DUE, and DRL encourage education research and development proposals that make use of innovative technologies and pedagogies to give large groups of students, educators and the public access to polar research efforts in the polar regions without requiring all participants to travel there. Proposals that engage audiences with long-term investments in polar research and logistics (e.g., the Arctic or Antarctic science stations), with databases that have extended lifespans, (e.g., data from the Arctic Observing Network), or with public participation in scientific research, such as crowdsourcing or citizen science related to the Arctic or Antarctic, are particularly encouraged.

1. [Improving Undergraduate Science Education: Education and Human Resources \(IUSE:EHR\)](#) deadline of December 12, 2017.
2. [Advancing Informal STEM Learning \(AISL\)](#) deadline of November 6, 2017.
3. [Discovery Research K-12 \(DRK-12\)](#) deadline of November 14, 2017.

Proposals submitted in response to this letter must be identified by starting the proposal title with the term: "EHR-Polar DCL 2017: *(Insert Project Title Here)*" If travel to the polar regions is included in the project, PIs are strongly encouraged to call the program officer to discuss logistics and related documentation that must be included in the proposal.

Those considering submitting a proposal in response to this opportunity are strongly encouraged to contact [Lisa Rom](#); 703-292-7709, the cognizant program officer who can answer questions and provide further guidance.

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