NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

NSF 17-131

Dear Colleague Letter: Seeking Community Input for Topic Ideas to Accelerate Research Through International Network-to-Network Collaboration

September 14, 2017

Dear Colleague:

This Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) invites individuals or groups of individuals from the U.S. research community to submit **White Papers** on topics in science, engineering, and/or STEM education that are ripe for international network-to-network collaboration. Topics should hold the potential to accelerate discovery and advance research outcomes.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE) will use the white papers to inform OISE planning, including the potential need for a future program or program emphasis.

The deadline for white paper submission is: **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time November 30, 2017.**

BACKGROUND

The Office of International Science and Engineering supports U.S. participation in strategic international research collaborations. Increasing investment in science, engineering, and STEM education by other nations creates new communities of research excellence. OISE seeks input from the U.S. research community to identify respective networks in the U.S. and abroad that could be better connected to leverage expertise, data, facilities, and/or other resources to stimulate critical research advances through networks of networks.

Research areas with sufficient maturity to have a nascent, but not well-established, network of researchers in the U.S. and abroad are of particular interest. Interdisciplinary research ideas are encouraged, though ideas are welcome in any area funded by NSF where strategic bridges between U.S. and international networks would create mutual benefit. There should be potential to link multiple networks, leading to a network of networks. In keeping with NSF's experience with research coordination networks, for the purposes of this call networks will involve groups of investigators who communicate and coordinate their research and educational activities across organizational and international boundaries. The properties of networks include multi-institutional collaborations involving diverse teams of investigators focused on community-identified questions

or needs. Thus, the envisioned networks of networks should go beyond existing or emerging concentrations of expertise and should strengthen community linkages across boundaries. Topic areas may span the range of science, engineering, and STEM education fields. Activities should be open to a wide range of U.S. institutions in the topic area. The size and participants of the network of networks will vary depending on the community-identified question and current connectivity between U.S. and foreign networks. Responses should address research areas where enhanced international cooperation between U.S. and foreign networks would strengthen the U.S. research community and offer mutual benefit to accelerate discoveries.

Submit Your White Paper at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OISE-ACCELNET_Topic_Ideas_2018.

NSF invites both individuals and groups of individuals from U.S. institutions to submit white papers. International researchers are welcome to be part of the white paper team, but the submission must be made by U.S.-based researchers.

Submit your ideas by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on November 30, 2017.** Include the following:

- Name, affiliation, and valid email contact information for submitter(s).
- List up to three terms that represent keywords of your submission (This may be made public in aggregate with other submissions).
- What current or emerging research areas would benefit from increased cooperation between networks of researchers in the U.S. and networks in one or more countries outside the U.S.?
- What is the value added of international network-to-network collaboration for the U.S. research community in the research area(s)?
- What other relevant aspects should NSF consider to strengthen international research networks in the research area(s)?

White papers are limited to **2,000 words maximum**.

This DCL is not a call for research proposals. Rather, it is an information-gathering effort to inform OISE of the potential need for a future program or program emphasis. No funding is associated with this call for white papers. Responses to this DCL do not constitute any commitment on behalf of the submitters or their institutions to submit a proposal or carry out an international network-to-network project.

After the submission period ends, and the white paper information is analyzed, NSF will announce the high-level insights drawn from the analysis of keyword terms on the OISE website.

Inquiries may be directed to oise-accelnet@nsf.gov.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Keiser
Head
Office of International Science and Engineering