



**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**  
2415 Eisenhower Avenue  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

**NSF 18-050**

**Dear Colleague Letter: Consultation Regarding Future Continued Operations and Management of Green Bank Observatory**

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March 5, 2018

Dear Colleagues:

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is exploring the continued operation of the Green Bank Observatory (GBO) with other funding partners and under conditions of a markedly reduced funding commitment from NSF. NSF is currently in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and has initiated a consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to evaluate the potential effects of proposed operational changes due to funding constraints for GBO. NSF is also considering a possible competition for the management and operation of GBO. A solicitation would request the submission of full proposals and run concurrently with NSF's compliance with NEPA, NHPA, and ESA, to inform the decision-making process for the future operations of GBO. The purpose of this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) is to alert the community of the opportunity to provide expressions of interest in providing funding support and in management and operation of GBO. A solicitation would be anticipated to be issued during Fiscal Year 2018.

GBO is a scientific research and education facility located in Green Bank, West Virginia, and owned by NSF. Associated Universities, Inc. (AUI), operates GBO under a cooperative agreement with NSF which currently ends on September 30, 2018. GBO is located on approximately 2,200 acres and anchors and administrates the 13,000-square-mile National Radio Quiet Zone (NRQZ), where all radio transmissions are limited. The primary GBO facility is the 100-meter Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope, the largest fully steerable radio telescope in the world, with receivers operating at frequencies from 0.1-115 GHz. Other GBO facilities include engineering laboratories and fabrication shops; a popular visitor and education center; the 43-meter Telescope; the Green Bank Solar Radio Burst Spectrometer; the 20-meter Geodetic Telescope; the 40-foot Telescope; the Interferometer Range; on-site accommodation for visiting researchers, educators and students; and previously operational telescopes. More information is available at <http://www.GreenBankObservatory.org/>. The scope of expressions of interest, and of competition proposals, may be very broad including, for example, science-focused operation of existing facilities, science- and education-focused operations of a reduced set of facilities, or operation as a technology and education park.

NSF invites requests for individual meetings with NSF from organizations interested in contributing funding, in the management and operation of GBO, and in the possible competition. At meetings,

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organizations may request clarification of general aspects of GBO management and operation and competition or identify to NSF any information needed for proposal preparation. Requests for meetings should be submitted via email to the Primary Contacts no later than March 26, 2018. This notice does not constitute a solicitation; therefore, no award of any kind will result from this notice.

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Sincerely,

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