



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

**NSF 19-038**

## Dear Colleague Letter: Supporting the Re-Entry of Women and Women Veterans in the STEM Workforce through NSF INCLUDES

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February 8, 2019

Dear Colleague:

NSF will consider supplemental funding requests for traineeships and conference proposals that support efforts aimed at enhancing the science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) knowledge base, skillset, leadership and management capacities, and/or contributions to the STEM enterprise of women following a career break. Women veterans' entry or re-entry into the STEM workforce is of particular interest. NSF invites submission of supplemental funding requests to current [NSF INCLUDES](#) awards or other NSF-funded awards in the programs described below to support traineeships for undergraduate and graduate students after a career break. Supplements to support traineeships for women who are veterans and women who have interrupted their studies at the undergraduate level and want to enter or re-enter a STEM career are especially encouraged. Conference proposals should address research to enhance understanding of the process of entry and re-entry in STEM after a career break (e.g., factors associated with access, retention and inclusion) as well as related barriers and opportunities women face entering and re-entering the STEM workforce, especially in the technical fields.

In this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), a career break is defined as a period of at least one year resulting in the need for an individual to gain skills and experience to enter or re-enter the STEM workforce. Circumstances that may necessitate a career break include (but are not limited to): family care, military service, professional volunteerism (e.g., Teach for America), or child rearing. For traineeships, the onus will be on the proposer to justify the need for the traineeship.

To address the underrepresentation of women in STEM technical fields, traineeships in the applied sciences, skilled trades, and modern technologies are of particular interest. Applicable fields might include but are not limited to, advanced manufacturing, agriculture,

computer and information science, energy, engineering, geospatial sciences, micro- and nano-technology, and safety and security. This DCL will not support traineeships for individuals who wish to pursue careers as health, veterinary, or medical technicians.

Collaborations with professional societies, national laboratories, field stations, NSF- funded centers, informal science centers and organizations, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations and academic partners (especially community and technical colleges and minority-serving institutions) are encouraged.

The overarching goal of NSF INCLUDES is to achieve significant impact at scale in transforming STEM education and workforce development by educating a diverse, STEM-capable workforce that includes talented individuals from all sectors of the Nation's population. This DCL seeks innovative approaches to better understand women's engagement in STEM by focusing on women's experience with re-entry to the STEM workforce. This DCL leverages the NSF INCLUDES National Network to expand the ranks of women in STEM, as well as research capacity and understanding of women's re-entry into the STEM workforce.

*This special funding opportunity is partially funded by a generous gift from The Boeing Company as part of its Women Make Us Better and Women in Leadership Initiatives. Awards may also be co-funded by other NSF programs.*

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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This DCL encourages submission of (1) traineeship supplemental funding requests and (2) conference proposals that are aligned with the tenets described above as well as the broader vision of [NSF INCLUDES](#).

1. **Traineeship Supplements** - The purpose of traineeships is to develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies required to pursue and succeed in a STEM career. Special emphasis should be placed on training and professional development, including significant mentorship and leadership development. Direct support could include tuition and fees for classes to support skillset development, and internships and research experiences designed to provide rigorous training. Women who are veterans and women who have interrupted their studies at the undergraduate or graduate level and want to enter or re-enter a STEM career are encouraged to apply.

Recipients of traineeships must be U.S. citizens or nationals, or permanent residents.

2. **Conferences** - Proposals for conferences or special convenings that lead to a better understanding of issues involving the entry or re-entry of women, in particular women veterans, to STEM careers after a break will be considered for support. Conferences could explore and discuss issues such as the current knowledge base about the

experience of re-entry into STEM among women in general and women veterans in particular; how women veterans navigate STEM pathways to enter or re-enter the STEM workforce; and/or the unique challenges to working in STEM fields for women who have experienced a break in their career. Conferences and convenings should be outcomes-based, and a final report should include recommendations and a statement of the impacts of the event. Awardees should plan to publish conference proceedings, and otherwise widely disseminate the discussion and outcomes. Proposals that include participation by organizations involved in the NSF INCLUDES National Network are especially encouraged.

## **SUBMISSION AND REVIEW**

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**Supplemental funding requests and conference proposals must be received by 5 p.m., submitter's local time, on April 15, 2019.**

### **1. Traineeship Supplements**

Funds may be used for salary or stipend, travel (relocation costs), tuition and fees, health insurance, and materials and supplies to support the trainee. The grantee is permitted to request indirect costs in accordance with the negotiated rate in effect at the time of the award. If requesting support for more than one trainee, the individual requests may be combined into one supplemental funding request.

Each supplemental funding request must include "NSF INCLUDES DCL" in the first sentence of the summary section of the request for supplemental funding along with the following components for each trainee:

- A. A two-page summary that describes the traineeship. The request must include a concise statement describing how the activities will prepare the trainee to enter or re-enter the STEM workforce.
- B. A resume of the proposed trainee (up to two pages) that contains (but not limited to) the following information:
  - i. educational preparation;
  - ii. professional employment history; and
  - iii. other information relevant to the proposed traineeship.
- C. A letter from the proposed mentor describing the mentoring and training that will be provided to the trainee during the period of support.
- D. A budget and budget justification.

The amount requested for supplemental support must be less than 20% of the original award amount, with total costs not to exceed \$150,000. Funding is dependent on the availability of funds. Supplemental funding requests should be

prepared and submitted in accordance with the guidance in the [NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#), Chapter VI.E.4.

Principal Investigators with **current NSF INCLUDES awards** or **current awards in the programs listed below** are eligible to apply for traineeship supplements through this DCL:

- [Engineering Research Centers \(ERCs/ENG-EEC\)](#)
- [Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research \(EPSCOR\)](#)
- [Historically Black Colleges and University-Undergraduate Program \(HBCU-UP/EHR-HRD\)](#)
- [IUCRC: Industry-University Cooperative Research Centers \(IUCRC/END-IIP\)](#)
- [Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation \(LSAMP \(EHR-HRD\)](#)
- [Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers \(MRSEC\)](#)
- [NSF Innovation Corps: I-Corps Nodes](#)
- [NSF Innovation Corps: I-Corps Sites](#)
- [NSF Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics \(S-STEM/EHR-DUE\)](#)
- [NSF Small Business Innovation Research Program \(SBIR\)](#)
- [NSF Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\)](#)
- [Partnerships in Innovation \(PFI\)](#)
- [Science Technology Centers \(STCs/OIA\)](#)

For more information about the programs listed above, please consult with the point of contact for the program of interest denoted on the program webpage.

Eligible Principal Investigator(s) of NSF awards should **contact their cognizant Program Director(s) AND NSF INCLUDES via email at [nsfincludes@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfincludes@nsf.gov)** to discuss their request for supplemental support by March 29, 2019.

The proposals will be reviewed internally by NSF Program Officers. All supplements are subject to (a) the availability of funds, and (b) review of the quality of the supplemental funding request.

## 2. **Conferences**

**Conference proposals are new proposals and not requests for supplemental funding to existing NSF awards.**

Conference proposals will be funded for up to 2 years and a \$250,000 maximum.

They should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the guidance in [PAPPG Chapter II.E.7](#), designating HRD -NSF INCLUDES (032Y) as the cognizant program.

The "Conference" proposal type should be selected in the proposal preparation module in FastLane or Grants.gov and include "NSF INCLUDES DCL" in the title and first sentence of the project summary of the proposal.

Conference proposals will be reviewed by a panel of external experts and are subject to the availability of funds.

The NSF [Advanced Technological Education Program \(ATE\)](#) is especially interested in providing partial support for strong, innovative conference proposals submitted to NSF INCLUDES through this DCL that align with the goals of the ATE program and the tenets of this DCL.

Interested proposers should **contact NSF INCLUDES via email at [nsfincludes@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfincludes@nsf.gov)** by March 29, 2019 to discuss their conference idea.