



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 19-049

Dear Colleague Letters: Disrupting Operations of Illicit Supply Networks

March 7, 2019

Dear Colleague:

Illicit supply networks pose profound threats to the health, prosperity, and security of our Nation. These technologically sophisticated networks traffic enslaved people, illegal weapons, drugs (including opioids), looted antiquities, exotic animals, counterfeit and illegally sourced products, and other contraband. Making use of the same communications, logistics, and financial infrastructure as commercial supply chains, illicit supply networks are unencumbered by national boundaries and regulations. They abuse vulnerable populations and fuel transnational criminal organizations, with grave consequences for national and international security.

With this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), the National Science Foundation (NSF) invites proposals to the Operations Engineering program into operational methods to discover, disrupt and disable illicit supply networks. Projects must focus on fundamental research that advances the scientific understanding of the operations of illicit supply networks and methods for their disruption. While proposals must be responsive to the [Operations Engineering program description](#), the complexity of illicit supply networks requires a systems approach, and submissions from transdisciplinary teams are strongly encouraged. Proposed work must be framed in the context of one or more distinct illicit trafficking environment(s) and must demonstrate domain knowledge of the chosen setting. Teams should include strong operations research expertise as well as domain-specific expertise in other relevant fields, such as social science, data and computational science, economics, criminal justice, and public health. The benefits and skillsets of the proposed teams, including how they will collaborate, should be articulated.

To be considered for FY 2019 funding, proposals must be submitted by May 15, 2019, to allow adequate time for external peer review. Titles for proposals responding to this DCL should be prefixed with "ISN2:". Collaborative projects must be submitted as a single proposal from a lead organization, with subawards to the collaborating organizations.

Interested PIs may contact one of the program officers listed below for further information:

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Sincerely,

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