



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
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**NSF 20-094**

## Dear Colleague Letter: Special Guidelines for Submitting Collaborative Proposals under National Science Foundation (NSF) and US-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) Collaborative Research Opportunities

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June 10, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

### **SCOPE**

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The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and the US-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Research Cooperation. The MOU provides an overarching framework to encourage collaboration between U.S. and Israeli research communities and sets out the principles by which jointly supported activities might be developed. The MOU provides for an international collaboration arrangement whereby U.S. researchers may receive funding from the NSF and Israeli researchers may receive funding from the BSF.

The goal of this US-Israel collaborative research opportunity is to help reduce some of the current barriers to working internationally. Through a lead agency model, NSF and BSF will address these issues by allowing U.S. and Israeli researchers to submit a single collaborative proposal that will undergo a single review process at NSF, which will be the lead agency.

The collaborative opportunity described in this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) remains in effect until archived. This is not a single-year program.

**Collaborative research proposals will be accepted to the NSF programs listed on the [https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/NSF-BSF/participating\\_programs.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/NSF-BSF/participating_programs.jsp) webpage.** Note that deadlines and application windows vary by program.

**Israeli researchers are invited to read the [BSF solicitations](#).** The BSF website indicates the funding limits for the Israeli partners in an NSF-BSF collaborative proposal, as well as which Israeli institutions are eligible for support. BSF support for the Israelis will be for the

duration approved by the NSF for the U.S. grantee, and Israeli researchers may be part of only one NSF submission at any given time, or two if one of them is to a program without a deadline. An Israeli researcher may hold only one grant at any given time, or two if one of them is in a program without a deadline. Any limits for U.S. researchers on the number of proposals are described in the relevant [NSF-BSF Participating Programs](#) solicitation or program description (see also guideline 6 below for participating NSF programs).

Proposals are expected to adhere to the areas of science, funding limits, and grant durations for the NSF-participating programs (see website link above) and BSF program from which funding is sought. Proposals **must** represent an integrated collaborative effort. This document provides guidelines for the preparation, submission, review, and award of NSF-BSF collaborative research proposals.

Proposers are advised that all documents submitted to NSF or BSF may be shared with the other agency in order to implement the two-way agency activities.

## **PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION**

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Proposals will be submitted to NSF, with a separate copy submitted within one week of the NSF submission by the Israeli applicants to the BSF. The proposals will be reviewed in competition with other proposals received for the same funding round of the program to which the proposal is submitted by NSF using NSF's merit review process. BSF will check that the Israeli investigator has an active and appropriate role and confirm his/her eligibility at the onset of the process but will not conduct a parallel review and will not rank proposals. BSF intends to support the Israeli effort for those projects whose U.S. research partner is funded by NSF.

There are no separate NSF funds available for these efforts; proposals must compete with all other proposals submitted to the relevant NSF program for the competition to which the proposal is submitted and must succeed on the strengths of their intellectual merit and broader impacts.

## **DEADLINES**

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For programs with deadlines, proposals are due at NSF by the submission dates indicated in the program solicitation or program description provided on the [NSF-BSF Participating Programs](#) webpage.

For programs without target dates or deadlines for submission, proposals may be submitted at any time. Proposals submitted late in a given U.S. fiscal year may be held over for consideration in the following fiscal year. In general, proposal review is completed within six months of submission. Proposers may wish to consult a program director in the relevant program about timing of submission.

For programs without target dates or deadlines for submission, proposals may be submitted at any time. Proposals submitted late in a given U.S. fiscal year may be held over for consideration in the following fiscal year. In general, proposal review is completed within six months of submission. Proposers may wish to consult a program director in the relevant program about timing of submission.

In all cases, the same proposal must be provided to BSF within one week of the NSF submission.

## GUIDELINES

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1. The proposed work submitted under an NSF-BSF collaboration must represent an integrated collaborative effort. The project summary and project description of the proposal must include a description of the collaboration, including an explanation of the role(s) of the Israeli collaborator(s) and an explanation of how the team will work together.
2. The proposal must describe the intellectual merits of the proposed research, including the value of the international collaboration, and the anticipated societal benefits (broader impacts) of the effort. Broader impacts are an NSF review requirement, so the proposal should include societal benefits relevant to the U.S. and may also include benefits in Israel.
3. The proposal should describe the full proposed research program, including the total U.S. and Israeli resources that will be part of the project. NSF proposers should indicate only the U.S. expenses on the NSF budget form. BSF proposers should indicate only the Israeli research expenses on the BSF budget form. **The Israeli budget and budget justification** must be included in the NSF proposal as **a supplementary document**. The Budget Justification section of the NSF proposal should clearly differentiate the U.S. budget from any similar funds requested by the Israeli team and justify the full U.S. project budget. Proposals that request duplicative funding may be returned without review.
4. The proposal must be submitted to a participating NSF program by a U.S. institution, using the NSF FastLane system (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/>), Research.gov (<https://www.research.gov/>), or Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov/>). Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the standard requirements described in the NSF *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG)* and comply with requirements in the relevant programs solicitation or program description provided on the [NSF-BSF Participating Programs](#) webpage. Where programs have a solicitation, the requirements in the solicitation take precedence over those listed in the PAPPG. The Israeli institution **submits the same proposal** with any required additional information to the BSF via the [BSF submission system](#).
5. By submitting, PIs and their institutions agree that NSF may share reviews and other

documents pertaining to the review process with the BSF.

6. For those programs with limits on the number of proposals that an individual may submit in a year, involvement in a joint international proposal will count towards the limit on number of submissions in which an individual may participate as a PI, Co-PI, or senior lead investigator of a sub-award.
7. The title of the proposal should be prefixed with "NSF-BSF:" to indicate that the document is to be considered by both NSF and BSF.
8. If the proposal is submitted as part of a set of collaborative proposals, the title of the proposal should begin with "Collaborative Research:" followed by "NSF-BSF". Title instructions in the relevant solicitation or program description on the [NSF-BSF Participating Programs](#) webpage take precedence over this DCL, including the following guidance: Within some NSF programs it may be commonplace for teams of U.S. researchers at the same institution to submit a single proposal requesting funding for a slate of inter-related research projects, only some of which might be appropriate for NSF-BSF collaboration. In such instances, with the prior approval of the relevant NSF Program Director, it may be possible to designate only a portion of the proposal to be considered under the NSF-BSF umbrella. In such cases, the NSF-BSF portion of the proposal must be clearly delineated with its own section and section heading, with a minimum length to be determined in advance by the relevant NSF Program Director. This portion should also include its own discussion of both Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. In a similar fashion, the NSF-BSF portion of the U.S. budget must also be clearly delineated within the Budget Justification. For such proposals, the title of the relevant NSF-BSF subsection (rather than that of the full proposal) must begin with the "NSF-BSF:" prefix. All other expectations outlined in this DCL will continue to apply for such proposals. After submitting the entire proposal to NSF, PIs will also submit the entire proposal to BSF. NSF will review the NSF-BSF portion of the proposal along with the entire proposal and may choose whether to fund this portion independently of its decision whether to fund the entire proposal. NSF's decision regarding whether to fund the NSF-BSF portion will then be communicated to BSF to form the basis of a subsequent BSF funding decision.
9. Do **NOT** check "collaborative" proposal **unless** more than one US-based institution will be submitting the same proposal for separate funding (i.e. the "collaborative" check box only applies if there is more than one collaborating institution on the U.S. side, each submitting the same proposal).
10. Israeli investigators should **NOT** be listed as co-PIs on the NSF Cover Sheet. Israeli personnel should instead be listed as other **Senior Personnel**. Listing Israeli partners as Senior Personnel will help ensure that NSF systems automatically request additional documents that are required. Information on "current and pending support" is required for all personnel listed as "senior personnel".
11. Biographical sketches should be provided for Israeli partners and for the U.S. investigators and should be prepared in accordance with the standard biographical

sketch format described in the [PAPPG](#).

12. For projects involving human subjects/participants or vertebrate animals, proposers should follow both NSF and BSF policies, submitting documentation to each as appropriate.

## ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

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The NSF proposal must include the documents requested in the solicitation or program description to which the proposal will be submitted on the [NSF-BSF Participating Programs](#) webpage and as described in the [PAPPG](#).

In addition, the following documents must be included in NSF-BSF proposals:

1. Provide as a **Supplementary Document** a copy of the **proposed Israeli budget** requested from BSF in English using U.S. Dollars, and a budget justification that explains the request.
2. Provide a list, as a **Single Copy Document**, of **collaborators and other affiliations** for each Senior Personnel included in a proposal, **including Israeli partners**. This list of persons with whom there is an affiliation is required for Israeli and U.S. partners to assist in the selection of reviewers. See [PAPPG](#) Chapter II.C.1.e.
3. Letters of collaboration or support may be included, however they **must** comply with the requirements in [PAPPG](#) Chapter II.C.2.j.

## POST AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

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Awardees will be required to acknowledge both NSF and BSF in any reports or publications resulting from the award. Requests for changes in awards (for example, for changes in scope) will be discussed by NSF and BSF before a joint decision is made.

[NSF-BSF Participating Programs](https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/NSF-BSF/participating_programs.jsp) webpage: [https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/NSF-BSF/participating\\_programs.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/NSF-BSF/participating_programs.jsp).

### Office of International Science and Engineering (OD/OISE)

OISE helps to coordinate the overall engagement between NSF and BSF.

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