



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
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**NSF 21-064**

## Dear Colleague Letter: Supporting Use of Existing Data and Samples in Atmospheric Sciences Research and Education

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April 2, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

Through this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), the [Atmosphere Section Programs](#) and [Education Program](#) in the Atmospheric and Geospace Sciences (AGS) Division aim to enhance the utilization of NSF's previous investments in observational data and sample collections. Use of these assets is encouraged, especially by atmospheric scientists who may not have access to or don't typically participate in field or laboratory work.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption to our research community especially for conducting field campaigns and laboratory experiments. While field-based research is and will continue to be a critical element of atmospheric sciences, it is only one component of much broader research activities supported by our programs. With this DCL, the atmospheric science and education programs are highlighting interest in and encourage the submission of proposals that leverage existing data and physical samples in alignment with the goals of our programs. To further broaden participation, proposals are welcomed particularly from groups underrepresented in the geosciences and Minority Serving Institutions.

Categories of research in response to this DCL include:

- Analysis of existing field or laboratory data, or physical samples.
- Data curation and rescue.
- Data integration and synthesis.
- Development of new research avenues and methodologies for analyzing existing data and physical samples.
- Development of educational curriculum that uses data sets obtained through field campaigns, laboratory experiments, physical samples, or other unique data sets.

Access to atmospheric science data and/or samples is available from NSF-supported data

bases and other publicly available repositories. Data are encouraged to be made as fully compliant as possible with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) and [CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance](#).

Proposals submitted to the [Atmosphere Section Programs](#) and [Education Program](#) in response to this DCL will be evaluated by NSF standard review criteria and need to address intellectual merit and broader impacts. Principal Investigators are strongly encouraged to contact relevant Program Officer(s) to discuss the scope and size of proposals.

Sincerely,

William E. Easterling  
Assistant Director for Geosciences