



**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314**

NSF 21-111

Dear Colleague Letter: Special Guidelines for Submitting Collaborative Proposals under the National Science Foundation and Czech Science Foundation Collaborative Research Opportunities

August 6, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Czech Science Foundation (GACR) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Research Cooperation. The MOU provides a framework to encourage collaboration between U.S. and Czech 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 NSF and Czech researchers may receive funding from GACR. Through a "lead agency model," NSF and GACR will allow proposers from both countries to collaborate to write a single proposal that will undergo a single review process at NSF.

This NSF-GACR collaborative research opportunity focuses on discoveries and innovations in the areas of artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, and plasma science. Proposals will be accepted for collaborative research in these areas at the intersection of GACR's Call for Proposals and participating NSF programs. Specific participating NSF programs are listed on the NSF Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE) website at <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/IntlCollaborations/CzechRepublic.jsp>. Proposals are expected to adhere to the research areas, funding limits, and grant durations for these participating NSF programs and for the GACR programs from which funding is sought. As details vary by NSF program, U.S. Principal Investigators (PI) are encouraged to contact program directors of pertinent NSF programs for specific guidance.

Proposals must represent an integrated collaborative effort between the U.S. and Czech researchers and be submitted to NSF by an eligible U.S. organization. Limits for U.S. researchers on the number of proposal submissions can be found for each participating

program through the OISE link above.

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

The collaborative opportunity described in this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) remains in effect until archived.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

The U.S. PI will submit the proposal to NSF. NSF will review proposals in competition with other proposals received for the same funding round of the program to which the proposal is submitted, using NSF's merit review process. GACR will check that the Czech investigator has an active and appropriate role and confirm their eligibility at the onset of the process but will not conduct a parallel review and will not rank proposals. GACR intends to support the Czech effort for those projects for which the U.S. research component is funded by NSF.

There are no separate NSF funds available for this effort; proposals will compete with all other proposals submitted to participating programs and will be evaluated on the strengths of the proposed intellectual merit, broader impacts, and any solicitation-specific review criteria that may apply.

DEADLINES

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines of the participating NSF programs (see OISE link above).

GUIDELINES

Expression of Interest

For full proposals to be considered, the project team should submit an Expression of Interest to nsf-gacr@nsf.gov that includes the following information:

- Proposed Project Title.
- Names, email addresses, and departmental and institutional affiliations of the U.S. and Czech researchers.
- Bottom line estimates of total funding (including indirect costs) and duration to be requested from NSF and GACR in appropriate monetary units (USD for US budget and Czech Koruna for Czech budget).
- Estimated number of postdocs (U.S.), estimated number of students supported (U.S.) and estimated number of salary months requested (U.S.).
- Clear indication of the NSF target program. This may not be the only NSF program that will consider the Expression of Interest, but identification of the target program allows for

faster consideration.

- Summary of the proposed research outlining specific objectives and main research challenges. The U.S. portion of the work should fall within the scope of one or more participating programs as noted above. The Czech portion of the work should fall within the scope of the GACR Call for Proposals.
- Clear breakdown of the individual U.S. and Czech contributions for each objective.

Use the Expression of Interest form found here:

<https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/IntlCollaborations/CzechRepublic.jsp>.

For NSF programs that have deadlines, the project team should submit the Expression of Interest at least 45 days in advance of the NSF full proposal submission deadline.

For NSF programs without a proposal submission deadline, project teams should submit the Expression of Interest by one of the following deadlines: 1st of February, 1st of June and 1st of October.

For GACR and the NSF Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) Expressions of Interest are for awareness and tracking purposes. For the remaining participating NSF Directorates, the Expressions of Interest will be considered for alignment of the proposed research and budget with the scientific scope of the target program. Within 21 days of receipt of the Expression of Interest, NSF intends to notify the U.S. PI on the project team regarding moving ahead with submission of a proposal. For participating CISE programs, the U.S. PI may submit a full proposal without notification from NSF.

It is expected that full proposals will be submitted within 12 months of EOI acceptance. If more time is needed for proposal preparation, an additional EOI may be required.

Full Proposals

Eligibility of PIs to submit proposals is subject to each Participant's respective eligibility rules and policies, as spelled out in the [NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#) and/or the NSF solicitation to which a proposal will be submitted, and GACR's Lead Agency Rules.

Proposers from both countries will collaborate to write a single proposal. It is the responsibility of the U.S. PI to submit the proposal to the appropriate NSF program for review by the program deadline. Proposers should comply with the proposal preparation requirements outlined in NSF's PAPPG and submit the proposal through NSF's FastLane system (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/>), Research.gov (<https://www.research.gov/research-web/>), or Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov/>). Proposers should follow all requirements outlined in this DCL as well as the specific funding opportunity to which the proposal is submitted.

The Czech researchers taking part in the joint research project will submit a proposal

separately to GACR within 7 days of submission of the proposal to NSF in accordance with the guidelines and procedures provided in GACR's Lead Agency Rules funding opportunities.

The proposal submitted to NSF is required to be included as an attachment to the proposal submitted to GACR. The U.S. and Czech collaborating researchers are responsible for coordinating to meet this requirement.

For proposals submitted to NSF:

1. The proposal should describe the full proposed research program, including the total U.S. and Czech resources that will be part of the project. The Project Summary and Project Description must include a description of the collaboration, including an explanation of the role(s) of the Czech 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 broader impacts (including societal benefits) of the effort.
3. The proposal should only indicate the U.S. expenses on the NSF Budget. A detailed breakdown of funding requested from GACR should be added to the proposal as a Supplementary Document. This document will be shared with GACR to verify eligibility of costs requested. The Budget Justification section of the proposal should address the full project budget (that is, both the NSF and GACR funding items). Proposals that request duplicative funding may be returned without review.
4. The title of the proposal should be prefixed with "NSF-GACR:" to indicate that the document is to be considered by both NSF and GACR.
5. If the proposal is arranged as separate submissions from multiple U.S. organizations, the title of the proposal should begin with "Collaborative Research:" followed by "NSF-GACR". Do not check "collaborative" proposal unless more than one U.S.-based organization will be submitting the same proposal for separate funding (i.e., the "collaborative" check box should only be checked if there is more than one collaborating organization on the U.S. side, each submitting the same proposal).
6. For proposals submitted to NSF, Czech personnel should be listed as "non-NSF funded collaborators." This listing is for administrative purposes and is not intended to characterize the level or value of the contribution of Czech personnel to the project. Guidance on information to provide for "non-NSF funded collaborators" is below.
 - o Biographical Sketch - Required. The biographical information must be clearly identified as "non-NSF funded collaborators" biographical information and uploaded as a single PDF file in the Other Supplementary Documents section of the proposal. Use of a specific format is not required.
 - o Collaborators and Other Affiliations (COA) Information - Optional but requested. The COA information should be provided through the use of the COA template, identified as "non-NSF funded collaborators" information, and uploaded as a PDF

file in the Single Copy Documents section of the proposal.

- o Current and Pending Support - Not required.
 - o Results from Prior NSF Support - Not required.
7. For projects involving human subjects or vertebrate animals, proposers should follow both NSF and GACR policies, submitting documentation to each as appropriate.
 8. By submitting, PIs and their organizations agree that NSF may share unattributed reviews and summaries and information pertaining to the review process with GACR.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Proposers should provide all of the documentation outlined in this DCL as well as the documents required by the specific funding opportunity to which the proposal is submitted. Unless stated otherwise in the funding opportunity, letters of collaboration may be included. They must comply with the requirements in [PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.j](#).

MERIT REVIEW

Proposals will be reviewed alongside all other unsolicited or standard research proposals received in the same funding round and will not undergo a special or separate review process. Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the standard NSF merit review criteria of intellectual merit and broader impacts of the proposed effort, along with any additional solicitation-specific review criteria contained in the participating program solicitation.

FUNDING DECISIONS

Funding decisions may be subject to budget limits.

The U.S. PI will be advised whether the proposal has been recommended for funding or will be declined. U.S. PIs will receive copies of the reviewers' unattributed comments and, where applicable, a panel summary.

If the U.S. PI is notified that the proposal is being recommended for award, the Czech collaborators associated with the project must submit a copy of the proposal to GACR so that each agency has complete documentation of the overall proposed research project.

NSF and GACR will coordinate the U.S. and Czech award timing as much as possible. Because of potential differences in funding cycles, it is possible that some projects will have delayed start dates to allow time for funds to become available and/or all pre-award requirements to be met. Wherever possible, NSF and GACR will endeavor to hold to standard turnaround times for each participating agency, but in exceptional circumstances outcomes could be delayed.

The number of U.S.-Czech projects selected for funding and the total amount to be allocated will depend on the number and quality of the submitted projects and the available funding for each funding agency.

POST-AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

Awardees will be expected to comply with the award conditions and reporting requirements of the agencies from which they receive funding.

Awardees will be required to acknowledge both NSF and GACR in any reports or publications resulting from the award.

NSF and GACR will discuss requests for changes in awards (for example, changes in objectives or scope) before a joint decision is made.

NSF will consider requests for no-cost extensions using standard procedures. Please be aware that GACR does not allow extensions.

Resubmission of EOIs that do not align with this opportunity or declined full proposals should follow guidance from the program to which the original EOI or proposal was submitted.

In accordance with NSF and GACR standard procedures, awards will be publicly announced.

Questions about this DCL may be directed to nsf-gacr@nsf.gov. Additionally, OISE helps to coordinate the overall engagement between NSF and GACR. The current OISE program manager for the Czech Republic is listed at <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/country-list.jsp>.

Sincerely,

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