



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 22-044

Dear Colleague Letter: Directorate of Geosciences-Veterans Education and Training Supplement (GEO-VETS) Opportunities

February 9, 2022

Dear Colleague:

Through this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), the National Science Foundation (NSF) seeks to encourage veterans' engagement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) research in the geosciences. NSF recognizes that veterans represent an underutilized workforce for U.S. STEM communities and that many of the skills veterans gain through military service can greatly benefit geoscience research programs. Through this initiative, NSF hopes to provide additional support to some of the many veterans transitioning from active military service to civilian careers and exploring education options through the [Post-9/11 GI Bill](#).

The Directorate of Geosciences seeks to engage veterans in geoscience research by providing supplements to active awards in the following Directorate for Geoscience (GEO) Divisions/Offices:

- Division of Atmospheric and Geospace Sciences (AGS);
- Division of Earth Sciences (EAR);
- Division of Ocean Science (OCE);
- Office of Polar Programs (OPP); and the
- Office of the Assistant Director (OAD).

GEO-VETS funding will offer U.S. veterans who are students, K-12 teachers, or 2-year college faculty an opportunity to work with active GEO grantees to conduct research and to be involved in fieldwork related to NSF-funded research programs. Veterans supported by GEO-VETS funding may participate in research activities associated with any active GEO award.

VETERAN ELIGIBILITY

Under Title 38 USC 101.Definitions:

Veteran means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

Eligibility to participate as recipients of GEO VETS will be limited to the following four groups:

1. Veteran full - or part-time STEM undergraduate students at U.S. 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education (IHEs);
2. Veteran full - or part-time STEM graduate students;
3. Veteran K-12 STEM teachers; or
4. Veteran 2-year college STEM faculty.

Eligibility: Principal Investigators (PIs) or Co-PIs on GEO awards may request GEO-VETS funding as a post-award supplement to an existing GEO award. Note: The grantee or PI may request GEO-VETS funds but cannot be the GEO-VETS participant. **Anticipated type of award:** Supplement to existing GEO awards.

Supplemental funding request preparation and submission instructions: The GEO-VETS funding will enable eligible U.S. veterans to participate in research and fieldwork related to active NSF/GEO grants. Note: This participation opportunity is not transferable to the dependents of the veterans. Veterans may complete the research experience at any time during the year.

A request for GEO-VETS funding may be submitted to any program in GEO as a post-award supplement to an existing GEO award after consultation with the cognizant program officer for the award that would be supplemented. If the cognizant program officer agrees to consider the supplement request, the supplemental funding request must be prepared and submitted via FastLane in accordance with the instructions in Chapter VI.E.5 of the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG).

GEO-VETS funding requests must include the following information:

1. summary of the proposed work (1 page);
2. justification of the need for the supplemental funds (no more than 3 pages);
3. mentoring plan for the GEO-VETS participant as a Supplementary Document (no more than 1 page);
4. research safety plan that includes plans for training the participant(s) in the prevention of and reporting of harassment as a Supplementary Document;
5. Biographical Sketch of the participant(s) as a Supplementary Document with no more than 2 pages/participant;
6. budget, and a budget justification.

High quality mentoring is important in any research experience, and investigators should plan to develop participants' research skills, involve them in the culture of research in the discipline, and connect their research experience with their overall course of study and future career plans. PIs requesting GEO-VETS funding must provide a Research Participant Mentoring Plan describing the mentoring activities that will be provided to the veteran participant supported by this supplement. Mentoring plans should identify the individual(s) who will serve as mentors, as well as describe their mentoring experience.

Safety in field and laboratory settings is critical, and all requests for supplements must include a research safety plan, including plans for training all participants in anti-discriminatory elements and the prevention of harassment, especially sexual harassment. Safety plans must include multiple options for reporting any harassment that is observed or experienced.

All GEO-VETS participants must be pre-selected, and PIs must include a Biographical Sketch for each participant as a Supplementary Document. Supplements may support up to three additional participants.

Anticipated funding amount and estimated number of supplements: Supplements under this DCL will be supported based on proposal quality, availability of funds, and the discretion of the cognizant Program Director for the award for which the supplemental funding is requested.

Budget Guidance: The budget justification must contain sufficient detail to explain the determined rate for participant support. General guidelines are provided below. Additional budget items may be appropriate, and levels of support are subject to approval by the cognizant Program Director.

Group 1. Veteran full - or part-time STEM undergraduate at U.S. 2- and 4-year IHEs: Please refer to the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Supplement guidelines provided in the most recent REU Solicitation which can be found here: https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5517.

Group 2. Veteran full - or part-time STEM graduate students: Please use guidance provided in the REU Solicitation (above), RET Solicitation (below), and the proposer's institutional policies regarding graduate student hourly rates to determine an appropriate budget.

Group 3. Veteran K-12 STEM teachers: Please refer to the RET Supplement guidelines provided in the most recent Geoscience Research Experiences for Teachers (RET) DCL which can be found here: [NSF 22-043](#).

Group 4. Veteran 2-year college STEM faculty: Please refer to the Research Opportunities Awards (ROA) Supplement guidelines provided in the most recent solicitation for Facilitating

Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI) which can be found here: [NSF 14-579](#).

Supplemental funding requests will be reviewed internally within NSF with emphasis on the following components: a clearly defined research project, identification of project deliverables and a project timeline, and an explanation of anticipated benefits to the veteran participant(s).

Results from any GEO-VETS activities must be included in the annual project report for the associated award.

Point of Contact: For questions regarding the VRS, please contact GEO-VETS@nsf.gov.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Isern
Assistant Director for Geosciences