



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 22-079

Dear Colleague Letter: Post-Baccalaureate Research Experiences for LSAMP Students (PRELS) Supplemental Funding Opportunity

April 28, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) recognizes the importance of undergraduate research experiences, especially for individuals from underrepresented populations entering graduate school or contemplating a career in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce. During the pandemic this type of research experience was limited due to health concerns, so many students in programs supported by the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation Program (LSAMP) did not have access. Undergraduate research experiences are often the most meaningful way that LSAMP participants have exposure to the kinds of field-, computational- and/or laboratory-based research that will engage and inspire them to enter a STEM graduate program or career. This Post-Baccalaureate Research Experiences for LSAMP Students (PRELS) Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) encourages requests for supplemental funding to existing LSAMP alliances for the purpose of supporting additional research experiences or training opportunities in STEM fields.

DESCRIPTION OF THE OPPORTUNITY

The LSAMP program, managed in the Division of Human Resource Development (HRD), invites active alliance grantees to submit a PRELS supplemental funding request to support the research training of post-baccalaureate students (post-bacs). Requests for PRELS supplemental support for alliance partner institutions must be submitted through the lead alliance institution as a subaward.

The overall goal of the LSAMP program is to assist universities and colleges in diversifying the nation's STEM workforce by increasing the number of STEM baccalaureate and graduate degrees awarded to populations underrepresented in STEM disciplines: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Native Pacific Islanders. For the purposes of this DCL, post-bacs are defined as LSAMP students who:

- were active and in good standing as participants in LSAMP programs as undergraduates,
- earned a baccalaureate degree in STEM awarded no more than 24 months prior to being selected for this funding opportunity,
- are not currently enrolled in another degree program, and
- intend to apply to graduate programs or jobs in the STEM workforce during or immediately following completion of participation in PRELS.

Principal investigators (PIs) must identify intramural and/or extramural research mentors who will provide PRELS research scholars with an independent but guided research project and professional development to better prepare them for graduate education or entry into the STEM workforce. Research mentors are encouraged to use the resources available at their own organizations to design a program that aims to develop further the participants' competency as a research scholar (e.g., training in ethics and the responsible conduct of research and to inform participants of institutional policies or code of conduct on sexual harassment). Ideally, PRELS research scholars will be involved in the development of their research project. PIs should also offer professional development and are encouraged to integrate PRELS research scholars into other student training programs and activities that offer professional development opportunities at the organization as appropriate. Professional development for PRELS research scholars seeking to matriculate into graduate study may include existing courses, workshops, seminars, supplemental instruction, or lectures that will enhance the technical, critical/analytical thinking, and professional skills of the participants. In addition to the former, engagement opportunities for PRELS research scholars seeking to enter the STEM workforce may include existing job fairs and related interactions with employers seeking STEM-capable employees. PIs should monitor and report PRELS participants' engagement and progress in their annual and final project reports.

NSF will consider supplemental funding requests for up to 12 months of student-related participant support on active LSAMP-supported grants. PIs with awards nearing expiration should contact the cognizant LSAMP program director. Although PRELS research scholars are expected to conduct full time research, sufficient time should be allowed for PRELS research scholars to participate in educational and professional development activities desired by graduate programs and STEM employers.

A stipend of up to \$25,000 per PRELS research scholar, for a 12-month supplement, may be requested and should be included under the Participant Support costs category on line F1 in the budget. The stipend is intended to sufficiently address the financial need of PRELS research scholars and effectively eliminate their need for employment, allowing them to fully dedicate themselves to this PRELS opportunity. Up to \$5,000, including both materials and supplies and travel, per PRELS research scholar may be requested and should be included on line G1 and F2, respectively, in the budget. The materials and supplies should be solely

dedicated to the post-bac research project and travel to attend professional conferences, symposiums, seminars, and workshops. Up to \$5,000 may be requested in support of each faculty mentor and, as appropriate, fringe benefits. All costs should be clearly explained in the budget justification. Where feasible, more than one student can be supported such that students will be able to engage in this experience as a cohort. Requests for more than one student should be justified.

Total supplemental requests are limited to one (1) per alliance and should be less than 20% of the existing award.

The supplemental funding request should be submitted in FastLane in accordance with the guidelines found in the [PAPPG](#). The guidance below may be helpful in preparing the request.

- In the section entitled "Summary of Proposed Work," state that this is a PRELS request and provide brief information on the number of participants, the mentor names and potential projects, and professional development and engagement activities that will be part of the program. This section should not exceed one page.
- In the section entitled "Justification for Supplement," describe in detail the participants' involvement in the research project, a description of the potential project, the mentoring plan for the participant including any professional development and engagement activities, mentor biographical sketches, and information on the recruitment plan, selection criteria and how eligibility will be determined. Describe how the proposed program would contribute to the participants' long-term career goals and how the supplemental funding will serve to broaden participation.
- Letters of collaboration should be included with the supplemental request when extramural research experiences are involved in the students' learning experience.

PRELS supplemental funding requests will be reviewed for funding consideration upon receipt. To receive full funding consideration for FY2022, requests should be submitted by **May 31, 2022**. Supplemental funding requests submitted after that date will be considered if funds are available.

Please direct any questions pertaining to this DCL to:

- Martha James, Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-7772, email: mjames@nsf.gov
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Sincerely,

Sylvia Butterfield
Acting Assistant Director
Directorate for Education & Human Resources