



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 23-083

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

April 3, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Directorate for STEM Education (EDU) recognizes the importance of undergraduate research experiences, especially for individuals from groups underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), first-generation college students, and students at under-resourced institutions interested in attaining STEM degrees beyond an Associate degree and/or entering the STEM workforce. Undergraduate research experiences, such as computational, laboratory-based research, for example, are often the most meaningful way for students to gain exposure to various STEM disciplines, successfully matriculate in STEM programs, attain baccalaureate and graduate STEM degrees or begin a career in the STEM workforce.

The LSAMP program¹ is managed within the NSF Division of Equity for Excellence in STEM (EES). 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 LSAMP populations: Blacks and African Americans, Alaska Natives, American Indians, Hispanic and Latino Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Native Pacific Islanders.

DESCRIPTION OF THE OPPORTUNITY

This Post-Associate and Post-Baccalaureate Research Experiences for LSAMP Students (PRELS) Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) encourages requests for supplemental funding to existing Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) projects to support additional and innovative research experiences or training opportunities in STEM fields for students that have attained an Associate's or baccalaureate degree in a STEM field. PRELS supplemental funding requests support research training of post-Associate and post-

baccalaureate students.

To receive consideration for FY2023, PRELS supplemental funding requests should be submitted by **May 15, 2023**. Supplemental funding requests submitted after that date may be considered contingent on the availability of funds.

For the purposes of this DCL, post-Associate students are defined as LSAMP participants who:

- were active and in good standing as Level I or Level II participants in LSAMP B2B or alliance community college programs as undergraduates,
- earned an Associate's 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 STEM baccalaureate degree STEM programs or jobs in the STEM workforce during or immediately following completion of participation in PRELS.

Post-baccalaureate students are defined as LSAMP participants who:

- were active and in good standing as Level I or Level II 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 STEM graduate programs or jobs in the STEM workforce during or immediately following completion of participation in PRELS.

Requests in response to this DCL 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 transfer into a STEM baccalaureate degree-granting program, or entry into STEM graduate programs or the STEM workforce. Research mentors are encouraged to design a program that aims to develop further the participants' competency as research scholars (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 projects.

Although PRELS research scholars are expected to do full-time research, sufficient time should be allowed for PRELS research scholars to participate in educational and professional development activities desired by four-year institutions, graduate programs, and STEM employers. 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 a four-year institution or 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 student-related participant support on active LSAMP-supported grants; awards nearing expiration are ineligible for PRELS support.

A stipend of up to \$31,200 per PRELS research scholar may be requested and should be included 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 for participant travel and materials/supplies per PRELS research scholar, may be requested and should be included on lines F2 and G1, respectively, in the budget. The funds should be used for materials and supplies solely dedicated to the post-Associate/postbaccalaureate research project and travel for the PRELS research scholar to attend professional conferences, symposiums, seminars, and workshops. Up to \$5,000 may be requested in support of each faculty mentor. Fringe benefits and indirect costs may be requested in addition to the \$5,000. All costs should be clearly explained in the budget justification. Participants receiving stipend support must be U. S. citizens, U.S. nationals or permanent residents.

Requests in response to this DCL may not exceed \$500,000. Supplemental funding requests are limited to two (2) per alliance. **Note:** STEM Pathways Implementation-Only (SPIOs) and STEM Pathways Research (SPRA) alliances with community college partners must submit separate requests for post-Associate PRELS or post-baccalaureate PRELS. Requests for PRELS supplemental support for alliance partner institutions must be submitted through the lead alliance institution as a subaward and should focus on research-based inquiry projects that include analytical and technical training and professional development opportunities.

The supplemental funding request must be submitted in Research.gov in accordance with the guidelines found in Chapter VI.E of the [*NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide*](#) (PAPPG). Additional guidance is provided below.

- 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," address the intellectual merit and

broader impacts of the project, 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. Evaluation and dissemination plans must be addressed.

- Letters of collaboration should be included with the supplemental request when extramural research experiences are involved in the students' learning experience.
- Individuals accepted into or already participating in baccalaureate degree or graduate programs are not eligible.
- Participants may be supported only for 12 months.
- Alliances with current PRELS support may submit for Post-Associate PRELS supplemental funding only under this DCL.

To receive consideration for FY2023, PRELS supplemental funding requests should be submitted by **May 15, 2023**. Supplemental funding requests submitted after that date may be considered contingent on the availability of funds.

Please direct any questions pertaining to this DCL to:

- Martha James, Lead Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-7772, email: mjames@nsf.gov
- LeRoy Jones II, Program Director, telephone: (703) 292-4684, email: ljones@nsf.gov
- Sonja Montas-Hunter, Program Director, telephone (703) 292-7404, email: smontash@nsf.gov
- Elsa Gonzalez, Program Director, telephone (703) 292-4690, email: elgonzal@nsf.gov
- Joyce Belcher, Program Director, telephone (703) 292-8221, email: jbelcher@nsf.gov
- Cynthia R. Douglas, Program Specialist, telephone: (703) 292-5175, email: cdouglas@nsf.gov

Sincerely,

James Moore III
Assistant Director
Directorate for STEM Education

REFERENCES

¹ For additional information on the LSAMP program, see <https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/louis-stokes-alliances-minority-participation>.