

**This message is for faculty contemplating applying for funding under the
NSF Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI).**

The Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI) serves to increase access to shared scientific and engineering instruments for research and research training in our Nation's institutions of higher education, and not-for-profit museums, science centers and scientific/engineering research organizations. The program provides organizations with opportunities to acquire major instrumentation that supports the research and research training goals of the organization and that may be used by other researchers regionally or nationally.

Each MRI proposal may request support for the acquisition (Track 1) or development (Track 2) of a single research instrument for shared inter- and/or intra-organizational use; development efforts that leverage the strengths of private sector partners to build instrument development capacity at MRI submission-eligible organizations are encouraged.

The MRI program assists with the acquisition or development of a shared research instrument that is, in general, too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs. The program does not fund research projects or provide ongoing support for operating or maintaining facilities or centers.

The instrument acquired or developed is expected to be operational for regular research use by the end of the award period. For the purposes of the MRI program, a proposal must be for *either* acquisition (Track 1) *or* development (Track 2) of a single, well-integrated instrument. The MRI program does not support the acquisition or development of a suite of instruments to outfit research laboratories or facilities, or that can be used to conduct independent research activities simultaneously.

Instrument acquisition or development proposals that request funds from NSF in the range \$100,000-\$4 million may be accepted from any MRI-eligible organization. Proposals that request funds from NSF less than \$100,000 may also be accepted from any MRI-eligible organization for the disciplines of mathematics or social, behavioral and economic sciences and from non-Ph.D.-granting institutions of higher education for all NSF-supported disciplines.

Cost-sharing of precisely 30% of the total project cost is required for Ph.D.-granting institutions of higher education and for non-degree-granting organizations.***

POTENTIAL APPLICANTS SHOULD SPEAK WITH HIS/HER COLLEGE DEAN AND/OR THE PROVOST REGARDING COST SHARE NEEDS PRIOR TO DEVELOPING THE PROJECT ABSTRACT AND BUDGET FOR CONSIDERATION. ALSO, SEE BELOW FOR DETAILS REGARDING COST SHARE OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE STATE OF OHIO'S ACTION FUND.

LIMIT ON NUMBER OF PROPOSALS PER ORGANIZATION:

Three (3) as described below.

1. To ensure a balanced instrumentation award portfolio at diverse organizations, across varied research topics, and in support of a broadly inclusive science and engineering workforce across the entire Nation, the MRI program requires that an MRI-eligible organization may, as a performing organization, submit or be included as a significantly funded subawardee in no more than three MRI proposals. No more than two proposal submissions may be for instrument acquisition.
2. To promote instrumentation development, the program requires that if an organization submits or is included as a significantly funded subawardee* in three MRI proposals, at least one of the three proposals must be for instrument development (Track 2). NSF reserves the right to carefully examine development proposals to ensure that they meet the requirements for this proposal type (see Section II of the program announcement), and that submission limits have not been exceeded. If a proposal submitted as development is deemed to be an acquisition proposal either before or during the review, the proposal is subject to return without review or declined.

Note: For the purposes of the MRI Program, proposals must be for either acquisition or development.

*An unfunded collaboration does not count against the submission limit.

This year's deadline for the MRI competition is January 10, 2018. Because of the above restrictions, Research and Sponsored Programs is requesting that all those interested in applying for this program submit an abstract for their project to Deborah Lundin by **Friday, December 1, 2017**, noting whether the proposal is for instrument acquisition or development. This will enable us to ensure that the university does not submit more than the allotted amount of proposals for our institution. If the number of abstracts we receive exceeds the number of proposals we are allowed to submit, we will advise the relevant faculty on how a nomination selection will be determined and how to proceed with the submission of the proposal.

Your abstract should contain at least the following elements:

1. A description of the proposed equipment purchase
2. How the proposed equipment would benefit the applicant's research
3. How the proposed equipment would benefit the research of other faculty
4. A summary of the cost share discussions
5. A budget estimate

You may download the complete program description and application guidelines at http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5260&org=NSF&sel_org=NSF&from=fund. If you have any questions about the program or nominating procedure, you may contact our office at ext. 2425.

*****FOR THOSE APPLICANTS SEEKING TO IDENTIFY COST SHARE FOR THEIR PROPOSALS, PLEASE CONSIDER EXPLORING THE OHIO ACTION FUND.** The Action Fund allows Ohio's universities to compete more effectively for federal or other peer-reviewed research support by providing matching funds for university research proposals that include capital equipment or facilities. Action Fund requests can be forwarded to the Ohio Department of Higher Education by the university's designated Research Officer throughout the year as opportunities arise. The requests must be made prior to the submission of the external proposal; requests made after the submission are not considered. All requests for required-match, peer reviewed grants shall be received by the Board of Regents no later than 10 working days before the sponsoring agency's published deadline for receipt of proposals. Proposals will be accepted up to three working days before the agencies' deadlines in extraordinary circumstances.

Since the Action Fund is designed to encourage major projects of significant magnitude, only those projects with total project costs of \$250,000 or more are eligible for Action awards. The minimum amount of funding that can be requested of the Action Fund is \$60,000, which is required to be matched by the applicant institution on a 1:1 basis. Given that NSF requires a precise match of 30% by the applicant, in order to use Action Fund cost share, the minimum total project cost would be \$400,000 (see calculations below).

Total Project cost = \$400,000

Request to NSF = \$280,000

Required Cost Share by Applicant at 30% = \$120,000

Cost Share Ratio of 1:1 between the Action Fund and University = \$60,000 per entity

If you are interested in pursuing support from the Action Fund, please notify your Pre Award contact in RSP for further guidance.