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

The Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Program serves to increase access to multi-user scientific and engineering instrumentation 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. An MRI award supports the acquisition or development of a multi-user research instrument that is, in general, too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs.

MRI provides support to acquire critical research instrumentation without which advances in fundamental science and engineering research may not otherwise occur. MRI also provides support to develop next-generation research instruments that open new opportunities to advance the frontiers in science and engineering research. Additionally, an MRI award is expected to enhance research training of students who will become the next generation of instrument users, designers and builders.

An MRI proposal may request up to $4 million for either acquisition or development of a research instrument. Beginning with the FY 2018 competition, each performing organization may submit in revised “Tracks” as defined below, with no more than two submissions in Track 1 and no more than one submission in Track 2.

- **Track 1**: Track 1 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to $100,000 and less than $1,000,000.
- **Track 2**: Track 2 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to $1,000,000 up to and including $4,000,000.

Track 1 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. Potential PIs are advised to contact their institutional office of research regarding processes used to select proposals for submission.

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. Beginning with this competition, each performing organization is now limited to a maximum of three proposals in revised “Tracks” as defined below, with no more than two submissions in Track 1 and no more than one submission in Track 2. Any MRI proposal may request support for
either the acquisition or development of a research instrument. Within their submission limit, NSF strongly encourages organizations to submit proposals for innovative development projects.

Any MRI proposal may request support for either the acquisition or development of a research instrument.

Track 1: Track 1 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to $100,000 and less than $1,000,000.
Track 2: Track 2 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to $1,000,000 up to and including $4,000,000.

This year’s deadline window for the MRI competition is January 1 – January 22, 2019. 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 14, 2018, noting either Track 1 or 2. 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 [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=5260&ods_ke=nsf18513](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=5260&ods_ke=nsf18513). 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.