

Limited Submission Opportunity

National Science Foundation: Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI)

- **Limited Submission Internal Deadline:** October 30, 2020 (see below for requirements)
- **Selection of Applicants for full proposal submission:** November 20, 2020
- **NSF Submission Window:** January 1, 2021 – January 19, 2021

The Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Program serves to increase access to multi-user scientific and engineering instrumentation for research and research training. 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. **Each organization may submit 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.

Cost sharing of precisely 30% of the total project cost (i.e. NSF-requested funds + cost share) is required for submission to this program. See information regarding eligibility of cost share below.

Interested applicants must submit the following information to ospa@siu.edu **no later than close of business on Friday, October 30, 2020:**

- Complete and Submit a [Proposal Notification](#)
- Complete and Submit a [Limited Submission Form](#)
- Submit a complete Pre-Proposal consisting of:
 - A project description describing the scope of the project, including at least 5-7 major users and their research subsections.
 - Project budget, including a plan for obtaining the required level of cost share, an equipment quote, and a plan to support personnel to maintain the instrument;
 - 2-page curriculum vitae; and
 - If the proposal is a resubmission, provide reviewer comments as well as a response to comments.

Budget Request and Cost Share Eligibility

Acquisition proposals: Within the Total Project Cost, eligible project costs are limited to the cost of the instrument, installation, commissioning, and calibration, the direct and indirect costs of maintenance, and of appropriate technical support (including training) to operate the instrument during the award period. They should be commensurate with the scale and scope of the instrumentation. Salary support, including fringe benefits and indirect costs, is considered an eligible cost only for personnel directly involved in maintaining the instrument or providing appropriate technical support to operate the instrument. Any proposal including students or post-doctoral associates in operations and maintenance should justify the involvement in terms of both instrument needs and the training the next generation of instrumentalists; reviewers will be asked to evaluate the appropriateness of this type of involvement. Travel costs associated with training for operations and maintenance may be an eligible expense but must be well-justified. Publication costs are **not** eligible costs for acquisition proposals. MRI support for research, research training, or education/outreach to be conducted using the instrument after commissioning is also **not** allowed.

Development proposals: Within the Total Project Cost, eligible project costs are limited to parts and materials needed for the construction of the instrument, commissioning costs, and the direct and indirect costs associated with support of personnel engaged strictly in the instrument development effort. Requests for personnel support must include a description of the responsibilities of the individuals involved and explain why a given position is necessary for the completion of the design, construction and commissioning of the new instrument. Any proposal requesting direct student support in development efforts must justify the involvement in terms of both project needs and training the next generation of instrumentalists; reviewers will be asked to evaluate the appropriateness of this type of involvement. Sufficient detail should be given to allow reviewers to analyze the costs and risks of the new instrument. Travel costs that are integral to the development work are eligible expenses. For development proposals, publication costs associated with the dissemination of information about the design and capabilities of the instrument are eligible costs. Support for research, research training, or education to be conducted using the instrument after commissioning, along with operations and maintenance, is **not** allowed.

For acquisition and development proposals, funds included for cost sharing must be for eligible project costs, as described above.

All match commitments must be honored at the time of proposal submission or the selected proposals will not be submitted.

Please see MRI [FAQs](#) for additional information.