Announcing the 2018 Major Research Instrumentation Program (NSF Program Solicitation No. 15-504)

Internal deadline for intent to submit a proposal: November 15, 2017 *

Synopsis: The National Science Foundation’s Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) program provides funding aimed at increasing access to shared scientific and engineering instruments for research and research training at U.S. institutions of higher education, museums, science centers, and not-for-profit organizations. By providing shared instrumentation, the NSF fosters integration of research and education in research-intensive learning environments. Instrumentation for shared inter-and/or intra-organizational use is encouraged, as are efforts that leverage private sector partners to build instrument development capacity at universities.

The program focuses on either “acquisition” (Track 1) or “development” (Track 2) of shared research instrumentation that is generally too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs. Instruments are expected to be operational for regular research use by the end of the award period. Therefore, proposals must be for either acquisition or development of a single instrument or for combined equipment that serves as an integrated research instrument. The MRI program does not support the acquisition or development of a suite of instruments to outfit research laboratories/facilities or to conduct independent research activities. For further guidance and FAQs: http://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/mri.

Funding levels: Instrument “acquisition” or “development” proposals range from $100,000 to $4 million. However, since CSU, Chico is a non-Ph.D.-granting institution of higher education, NSF will accept proposals for less than $100,000 in all NSF-supported disciplines. Good news: no cost share/match is required for predominantly undergraduate institutions like ours!

Click here for link to NSF’s MRI program page and solicitation #15-504.

Instructions: If interested in this program please inform the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs (RESP), Denise Dion (x6543). No later than 5 p.m. on November 15, 2017 email your formal intent to submit. Include PI/co-PI names, a draft project title, and a draft one-page project summary (in either MS Word or pdf attachment). Title the subject line, “MRI: Intent to Submit Proposal” and email it to RESP at: Research@csuchico.edu. Your project summary should address the standard NSF merit review criteria in three sections: overview, intellectual merit, and broader impacts. See MRI program guidance for details.

* Note: NSF limits proposal submissions as follows: up to three (3) proposals per institution per year, only two of which can be for instrument “acquisition” (Track 1). The third must be for instrument “development” (Track 2). If necessary, a committee will be convened to determine which Chico proposal will be submitted based on the following review criteria: intellectual merits of the project, collective value to campus, and broader impacts of the research.

RESP (internal) deadline for intent to submit a proposal: November 15, 2017
NSF (external) deadline for proposals: January 10, 2018

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