



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

NSF 15-092

Dear Colleague Letter: NSF STEM Teacher Leader Initiative

June 22, 2015

Dear Colleague:

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has long recognized the importance of teacher leadership and has sought to support it in a number of ways through programs such as the *Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching*, the Master Teacher Fellowship of the *Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship* Program, and the *Math and Science Partnership* program. In addition to these programs, teachers recognized through the Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program and teachers who have participated in NSF-supported research experiences for teachers (RET) programs are also considered to be teacher leaders for the purpose of this DCL. The Foundation wishes to expand opportunities for identified teacher leaders in the aforementioned groups, enabling them to boost their already considerable professional activities.

NSF will begin by requesting proposals for new ideas and approaches that can be piloted for up to two years with the goal of discovering successful models for long-term, more established programs to support teacher leaders. Proposed activities should provide more opportunities for the nation to take advantage of these teachers and for them to serve as a resource for improving K-12 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. In addition to new ideas and techniques, proposals might also build on existing activities that demonstrate promise for adaption and adoption at larger scales. Competitive proposals should describe enhanced professional development intended specifically for already identified teacher leaders that would increase their leadership capacity in STEM education and research.

Any number or combination of components could be addressed in a pilot effort, including but not limited to identifying stable sources of support; novel STEM research opportunities in U.S. public and private research organizations; avenues for teacher involvement in advisory and mentoring capacities; and international travel for participation in symposia, research, and education. Proposals should include an evaluation plan appropriate to the type of activity envisioned and suitable for all components of the project.

It is NSF's expectation that teacher leaders would leverage this increased capacity in order to augment and promote system-wide STEM education improvements, as well as advance research and dissemination of work supported by the NSF. The Foundation also anticipates these teacher leaders will serve as ambassadors for both their profession and the National Science Foundation—making substantial contributions in professional spheres at the national, state, and local levels.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Proposals should be submitted as an *EARly-concept Grant for Exploratory Research (EAGER)* to the

Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Program. For information on EAGERs, please consult the [NSF Grant Proposal Guide](#) [Chapter II: Proposal Preparation Instructions; Section D(2)]. Requests may be for up to \$300K and for up to two years' duration. The award size, however, should be consistent with the project scope and of a size comparable to grants in similar areas.

Prior to submission, proposers are required to contact a NSF program officer to discuss the upcoming proposal and determine its fit as an EAGER as well as its anticipated contribution to the goals of the Dear Colleague Letter. Please contact one of the following:

Nafeesa Owens
Program Director, Excellence Awards for Science and Engineering Program
nowens@nsf.gov or at 703-292-5120

Kathleen Bergin
Program Director, Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program
kbergin@nsf.gov or at 703-292-5171

Karen King
Program Director, Discovery Research K-12 Program
kking@nsf.gov or at 703-292-5124

Rebecca Kruse
Program Director, Discovery Research K-12 Program
rkruse@nsf.gov or at 703-292-4211

EAGER proposal inquiries will be accepted from a Principal Investigator (PI) or a consortium of Investigators led by a PI from an eligible U.S. institution. EAGER proposals must be submitted by **July 22, 2015, 5:00 PM** PI's time, via Fastlane or Grants.gov following the NSF's Grant Proposal Guide instructions. **Please be sure that the title of your proposal starts with "EAGER NSF STEM Teacher Leader Initiative."**

Please note that special attention should be paid to the EAGER requirement (Chapter II, Section D2) that project descriptions must include clear statements as to why this project is appropriate for EAGER funding, including why it does not "fit" into existing programs and why it is a "good fit" for EAGER.

Sincerely,

Joan Ferrini-Mundy, Assistant Director
Directorate for Education and Human Resources