



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

NSF 15-084

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for NSF 14-589, Enriched Doctoral Training (EDT) in the Mathematical Sciences Program

1. Does EDT aim to support projects that are interdisciplinary but confined to the academic setting?

No. As EDT aims to support activities that prepare students for a broader range of career paths, EDT projects are expected to foster substantive engagements with partners from the non-academic sector, for example those in the business, industry, government, non-profit, policy, or national laboratory spheres.

2. What is the relationship between results arising from EDT activities and trainees' doctoral theses?

EDT aims to provide trainees with an enhanced understanding of mathematical sciences research in a broader context. This may or may not provide an enhanced perspective on the student's dissertation topic. It would be appropriate to include a thesis chapter related to work done in EDT activities if it makes sense in the particular context and arises organically in the student's course of study, but EDT activities do not need to be directly related to a given student's thesis.

3. Is the EDT program inclusive of all subfields of the mathematical sciences?

Yes. Through the EDT program, NSF aims to support students whose dissertations focus in all subfields of the mathematical sciences. The goal is to broaden the view of the career horizons that all graduate students in the mathematical sciences typically experience. Highly specialized thesis research does not preclude experience with the role of mathematical sciences research in a broader context.

4. Does EDT hope to catalyze brand new efforts or to fund projects which improve already-existing activities?

Both scenarios are possible. Proposers are specifically asked to describe the relationship of proposed activities to already existing efforts. In making funding decisions, NSF will take into account the "added value" of the project.

5. What is the expected scope of EDT activities? Is it anticipated that EDT projects will substantially revise the graduate curriculum/activity of a traditional program?

It is not expected that EDT activities pervade the graduate curriculum. It is envisioned that successful EDT projects will provide students with first-hand experience in potential non-academic career paths. This goal might be accomplished with a relatively small investment of time, say a semester or a summer, on the part of a student.