NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

NSF 17-044

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Program Solicitation NSF 17-522, NSF INCLUDES

1. The solicitation states that an organization may serve as the lead institution on only one Design and Development Launch Pilot. Can an organization be the lead institution for more than one preliminary proposal?
2. Is a PI permitted to submit more than one preliminary proposal?
3. Can a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization serve as the lead institution for a Design and Development Launch Pilot? What if an organization is a school district?
4. If an organization has not had a previous NSF Award, is it eligible to submit an NSF INCLUDES preliminary or full proposal?
5. Are collaborative proposals accepted?
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7. Should a Design and Development Launch Pilot preliminary proposal be submitted to a Directorate and Division consistent with the proposal's focus and will different Directorates fund different numbers of Launch Pilots?
8. Are Design and Development Launch Pilot preliminary proposals expected to be interdisciplinary or are discipline-specific proposals permitted?
9. Should all preliminary proposals use a collective impact approach in order to be competitive?
10. The solicitation states that in FY 2017, NSF will invite proposals to form NSF INCLUDES Alliances. Must one first receive a Design and Development Launch Pilot award to be eligible to compete for an NSF INCLUDES Alliance?
11. Must the senior leaders of an organization (e.g., President, Chancellor, or Chief Executive Officer) be the PI on a preliminary proposal?
12. Does the organization need to have an Institutional Review Board provide human subject approvals for preliminary proposals?
13. Do Design and Development Launch Pilot proposals need to have an evaluator and an evaluation plan?
14. Do Design and Development Launch Pilot collaborations have to include a backbone organization?
15. When will the National Backbone Organization be established? When will an Alliance solicitation be public?

1. **The solicitation states that an organization may serve as the lead institution on only one Design and Development Launch Pilot. Can an organization be the lead institution for more**

than one preliminary proposal?

No, not as a lead institution. The solicitation limits each organization to one Design and Development Launch Pilot preliminary and full proposal as the Lead Institution. However, an organization may be a collaborating partner on multiple preliminary and full proposals.

2. **Is a PI permitted to submit more than one preliminary proposal?**

Yes, but the solicitation restricts the number of preliminary and full proposals on which an individual may serve as PI; an individual may serve as a PI or Co-PI on only two (2) preliminary or full proposals.

3. **Can a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization serve as the lead institution for a Design and Development Launch Pilot? What if an organization is a school district?**

Yes, both non-profit organizations and local school districts may submit a proposal. The categories of proposers eligible to submit proposals to the National Science Foundation are described in the NSF Proposal and Awards Policy and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) Chapter 1, Part E, https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg17_1/index.jsp.

4. **If an organization has not had a previous NSF Award, is it eligible to submit an NSF INCLUDES preliminary or full proposal?**

Yes, as long as an organization is of a type listed as eligible to submit proposals in the PAPPG (https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg17_1/index.jsp), it may submit a preliminary proposal to NSF INCLUDES. Please check the NSF Prospective New Awardee Guide (https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pnag/pnag161.pdf), which provides specific details about Grantee Standards that all new proposing organizations must meet to be granted an NSF award. The NSF Prospective New Awardee Guide includes a list of all documents needed should an award recommendation be made.

Any eligible organization may, after submitting a preliminary proposal that is invited, submit a full proposal to NSF 17-522.

5. **Are collaborative proposals accepted?**

Yes, but we are restricting the type of collaborative proposal to a single submission from a lead institution with collaborating institutions as subawards. Even though the Proposal and Award Policy and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) lists two types of collaborative proposals, for this competition Launch Pilot proposals submitted from multiple institutions may only be submitted via a lead institution with subawards.

6. **How quickly will preliminary proposal be reviewed?**

NSF Program Directors will make every effort to communicate the decision to Invite/Not Invite full proposals based on panel recommendations and additional portfolio considerations via FastLane in three to four weeks from the submission deadline.

7. **Should a Design and Development Launch Pilot preliminary proposal be submitted to a Directorate and Division consistent with the proposal's focus and will different Directorates fund different numbers of Launch Pilots?**

   No, all preliminary proposals and full proposals should be submitted to the Division of Human Resource Development (HRD) within the Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR). Support for NSF INCLUDES comes from all Directorates and Offices with award decisions made at the Foundation-level based on alignment with NSF INCLUDES' vision and goals.

8. **Are Design and Development Launch Pilot preliminary proposals expected to be interdisciplinary or are discipline-specific proposals permitted?**

   There is no requirement that proposals be either interdisciplinary or discipline-specific. Organizations and teams of PIs and key personnel may come together with a specific disciplinary or interdisciplinary focus, but neither is a requirement. Key to a successful proposal is the identification of specific, high-impact broadening participation in STEM goals with measurable objectives, as well as a strong argument that the set of partners being assembled includes all who are needed to successfully achieve that goal. Examples of recent awards made through the first NSF INCLUDES solicitation may be found here.

9. **Should all preliminary proposals use a collective impact approach in order to be competitive?**

   No, the use of the collective impact framing and approach is not required. However, each preliminary proposal must articulate and justify the framework for collaboration, the processes for the development of a shared goal for broadening participation, and identify shared metrics and mutually reinforcing activities. Keep in mind that whatever framework is used must provide for expansion, impact and scale, and must include openness to multiple (and new) partners.

10. **The solicitation states that in FY 2017, NSF will invite proposals to form NSF INCLUDES Alliances. Must one first receive a Design and Development Launch Pilot award to be eligible to compete for an NSF INCLUDES Alliance?**

    Yes, only organizations with Design and Development Launch Pilot awards may compete for NSF INCLUDES Alliances. Design and Development Launch Pilot awardees are expected to carry out and report on the results of projects to demonstrate their ability to implement a collective impact-style approach to address their selected broadening participation challenge. The project is expected to demonstrate how teams and organizations can be reconfigured and joined together to form an NSF INCLUDES Alliance with common goals and purposes, shared metrics for success, and with a strategy for how the effective practices of the Alliance can be expanded. The accomplishments of a Launch Pilot will be assessed as part of the review of the subsequent NSF INCLUDES Alliance proposal. New partners may be invited to join a Design and Development Launch Pilot that is submitting an Alliance proposal.

11. **Must the senior leaders of an organization (e.g., President, Chancellor, or Chief Executive Officer) be the PI on a preliminary proposal?**

No, the PI may be any individual eligible to be a PI at an organization or institution. NSF does encourage senior leaders to take a direct and personal role in helping to build collaborative alliances, as suggested by NSF Director France Córdova in her Dear Colleague Letter (NSF 16-048).

12. **Does the organization need to have an Institutional Review Board provide human subject approvals for preliminary proposals?**

No, IRB approvals are not needed for preliminary proposals, although they may be needed for full proposals. For guidance on IRB approvals needed for full proposals, please consult the NSF web site about the protection of human subjects (https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/human.jsp). Further guidance is also provided in the NSF PAPPG (https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg17_1/pappg_2.jsp#IID5).

13. **Do Design and Development Launch Pilot proposals need to have an evaluator and an evaluation plan?**

Yes, part of the Design and Development Launch Pilot activities should be to develop common goals and shared metrics for success of the launch pilot collaboration. This requires the assistance of an evaluator on the team from the beginning of the project, along with some questions for the evaluation effort to answer, as well as a plan for data collection and analysis.

14. **Do Design and Development Launch Pilot collaborations have to include a backbone organization?**

Not necessarily. While a Launch Pilot proposal may not be ready to engage a backbone or support organization, part of the process of developing a collaboration should include assessing the needs the collaboration might have for a backbone or support organization and the development of a plan to include one in a broader effort. Backbones or similar support organizations will be required for full alliances, and there will be a national backbone infrastructure that Alliances will be expected to link to; but the purpose of a Design and Development Launch Pilot is to explore the feasibility of creating collaborations that may or may not include a backbone or support organization from the outset.

15. **When will the National Backbone Organization be established? When will an Alliance solicitation be public?**

We anticipate a solicitation for a national backbone organization to support the work of the national NSF INCLUDES network to be forthcoming in calendar year 2017, followed by a solicitation for Alliances later in the year.