NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

NSF 16-143

Dear Colleague Letter: Life STEM

September 30, 2016

Dear Colleague,

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has established inclusiveness as one of its core values. The Foundation seeks and embraces contributions from all segments of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) community including underrepresented groups and minority serving institutions. NSF currently invests in a number of programs targeting underrepresented populations and institutions. This Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) describes another opportunity to build on the Agency's longstanding efforts of inclusiveness by providing a mechanism for researchers to create, implement, and evaluate innovative models of intervention in STEM (with particular attention to life science and bioscience), beginning in elementary school through undergraduate studies.

Through this DCL, NSF invites eligible organizations to submit research proposals that create, implement, and evaluate models of intervention that will advance the knowledge base for establishing and retaining underrepresented minorities in STEM fields with particular attention to life science and the biosciences. Researchers from minority-serving institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities, are particularly encouraged to apply. Proposals should partner eligible organizations with local elementary, middle or high schools to foster collaborative relationships between K-12 science educators and the research community. The activities may occur in formal and/or informal settings. Proposals may address science topics and activities related to curriculum development, teacher support, and student engagement. Proposals should describe effective methods to disseminate findings broadly to the K-16 science education community.

Researchers are invited to submit proposals to one of the following programs, in accordance with NSF's *Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) and individual program solicitation requirements. Regardless of the program, the title of each proposal should begin with "Life STEM."

- For PreK-12 learning environments, submit to:
  - Discovery Research PreK-12 (DRK-12, NSF 15-592) due date December 5, 2016
  - Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST, NSF 15-599) August 10, 2017
  - Advancing Informal STEM Learning Program (AISL, NSF 15-593) due November 8, 2016
- For undergraduate learning environments, submit to:
  - Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUSE, NSF 15-585) due November 2, 2016/January 11, 2017.
  - HBCU Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP, NSF 16-538) due November 22, 2016. Researchers who have met the Letter of Intent requirement for the HBCU-UP solicitation may choose to submit a proposal that focuses on or incorporates life science or bioscience in alignment with the specifications in NSF 16-538.

Through this DCL, researchers may also submit EArly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) proposals to explore new directions or appropriate extensions of disciplinary-based research activities. EAGER proposals must conform to the guidelines for preparation of such a proposals (including the requirement to discuss the proposal with a program officer prior to submission) as specified in the Chapter II.D.2 of the PAPPG. EAGER proposals have a maximum size of $300,000 and a maximum duration of two years. All EAGERS in response to this DCL should be submitted by January 31, 2017. The title of the proposal should be prefixed with "Life STEM EAGER."

Researchers interested in submitting proposals or have questions pertaining to this DCL may contact: Celestine Pea, Program Officer, cpea@nsf.gov.

This DCL is expected to be in effect from October 1, 2016, to September 30, 2017. All proposals should be submitted in accordance with NSF's PAPPG and individual program solicitation deadlines listed in this letter.

Sincerely,

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