GENERAL

Q: How many PAWR community deployments will be awarded?
A: The program will award up to 2 PAWR platforms in the first year, to be followed by up to one additional award in each of years two and three, for a total of up to four awards. All awards are subject to the availability of funds and the quality of proposals received. Please refer to the AWARD INFORMATION section of the RFP Reference Guide – page 12.

Q: What services/components are available as in-kind contributions from the PAWR Industry Consortium?
A: A list of the types of in-kind contribution (e.g., expertise, equipment, etc.) to be provided by the PAWR Industry Consortium is specified in the RFP Reference Guide (Appendix 3 page 39). Proposers should not exclusively rely on these contributions when preparing their proposals; rather, they are encouraged to be aware of the types of contributions available as they formulate a technical architecture, a functional plan, and a budget for their proposed platforms.

Q: Will future PAWR program funds be available for the operations and maintenance of a funded research platform?
A: Funding from the PAWR program is expected to cover operating costs as platforms are established, stabilized and institutionalized. However, each awardee is responsible for sustaining the testbed by generating revenue from usage fees and/or other sources before the end of the five-year period of initial funding and support from the PPO (via NSF and PAWR Industry Consortium funds). Note that future NSF-funded academic research projects may include support for PAWR platform usage fees, subject to the availability of funds.

Q: Are there other NSF programs that can offer insight into the PAWR RFP?
A: Yes. Consider the NSF's Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) Research Infrastructure Program (CRI), which offers a Community Infrastructure (CI) track, as an example. This CI track can give platform proposers insights into how the platforms are expected to support diverse sets of users across the country.

Q: After funds are awarded, what is the desired timeline for making a given platform operational?
A: The PPO expects some basic testing functionality of each platform to be available for general use within one year of the award, but expects most of the platform to be fully functional within three years. The functionality definitions and any levels of functionality will be part of the discussions during the award process. The exact timelines may vary based upon platform complexity, and are subject to negotiation prior to the actual award.

PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS

Q: On what basis will the PPO evaluate a preliminary proposal?
A: The six review criteria include the following:
1. Vision and Technical Merit
2. Research Community
3. Community Engagement
4. Alignment with PAWR Vision
5. Implementation plan
6. Sustainability

Please refer to the section "Proposal Processing and Review Instructions" on pages 20-21 of the RFP Reference Guide for further descriptions of these merit review criteria.

Q: How will the review process work for Preliminary Proposals?
A: Each preliminary proposal will be reviewed internally by the PPO.

Q: What feedback will I receive on my preliminary proposal?
A: Proposers will receive feedback on the strength of the identified team, the concise description of the proposed platform, and the relevant application domain(s). Please refer to the section "Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions, Preliminary Proposals" on page 12 of the RFP Reference Guide for additional guidance.

Q: Do results from prior support have to be included in a preliminary proposal?
A: Results from prior support are not required. However, prior infrastructure deployment/ operations experience can be used to demonstrate the strength of a given team. Please refer to the section "Full Proposal Preparation Instructions" on pages 13 of the RFP Reference Guide for additional guidance.

Q: What happens if our preliminary proposal is encouraged but we are unable to submit a full proposal? May we resubmit at a later time?
A: If you miss the full proposal deadline set by the PPO, then you must wait for the next RFP window and resubmit a preliminary proposal again.

FULL PROPOSALS

Q: What is the maximum funding to be requested for a full proposal, and over what period of time?

A: Based on the anticipated amount of cash and in-kind resources for the 4 community-scale platforms that are planned, the maximum budget of submitted proposals should not exceed $20 million over 5 years. Please refer to the section "Award Information, Anticipated Funding Amount" on page 12 of the RFP Reference Guide for additional guidance.

Q: If our proposal is declined in the first year, can it be resubmitted in the following years?

A: Proposers are welcome to reapply to subsequent PAWR competitions if their proposals are declined in the first year. However, verbatim resubmissions that do not incorporate feedback from the panel are discouraged. There is no limit on the number of times a proposal can be submitted across multiple RFPs.

Q: Who will review PAWR proposals?

A: Full Proposals will be evaluated by a peer review panel. The panels will be composed of subject matter experts from academia, various government agencies and industry, including experts from companies that are members of the PAWR Industry Consortium.

Q: When requesting "A List of Project Personnel and Partner Institutions" for the Full Proposal, who should be included?

A: All personnel who are included in the proposal budget should be listed in this section.

Q: What review criteria will be used to evaluate a proposal?

A: The six review criteria include the following:

1. Vision and Technical Merit
2. Research Community
3. Community Engagement
4. Alignment with PAWR Vision
5. Implementation plan
6. Sustainability

Please refer to the section "Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions" on pages 20-21 of the RFP Reference Guide for further descriptions of these merit review criteria.

Q: How will the review process be conducted for Full Proposals?

A: Full proposals will be evaluated by a peer review panel. Reviewers will be drawn from academia, government, and industry, with potential reviewers suggested by the PPO, PAWR Steering Council (PSC), National Science Foundation, and the Industry Consortium. Reviewer names will not be released outside the PPO.

Once proposals have been received, they will be evaluated, and reviewers assigned to each proposal based on expertise and conflict-of-interest rules. The PPO will vet each set of reviewers for balance before the review process begins. Reviewers will sign a short PPO agreement before undertaking reviews. In this agreement, the reviewers will promise (i) to maintain confidentiality for the proposals that they review, and (ii) to report any conflicts of interest following standard conflict of interest rules commonly used in the NSF review process.

Q: How are research platform proposals different from standard NSF proposals?
A: Research platform proposals are not related to standard NSF proposals. Please read the PAWR RFP Reference Guide carefully and pay attention to all of the requirements.

Q: May I discuss my research platform proposal with NSF program directors?
A: Research platform proposers are encouraged to consult with the PPO (not NSF program directors), which is responsible for managing all aspects of the RFP process, including selection and oversight of the subsequent platforms. Contact information is provided in the RFP Reference Guide.

Q: Can one budget for students/post-docs in a proposal to the PAWR program?
A: Students/post-docs can be included in the budget to the extent that they will support the design, deployment, and initial operations of the research platform. However, given the emphasis will be less on research during these phases, professional staff support is encouraged over students.

Q: Is international partnership considered an advantage/disadvantage? Can I budget for international researchers/facilities in my proposal?
A: International partnerships can be considered an advantage if they enhance one or more of the following: (a) usability; (b) diversity and/or technical depth of research focus areas supported; and (c) sustainability models. However, no funds can be allocated to international researchers/facilities in the proposal.

Q: If a proposal includes a particular vendor's products (e.g., software-defined radios) and that vendor is part of the PAWR Industry Consortium, does the cost of that product need to be factored into the proposal?
A: Yes, the retail cost of all the equipment and services needed for the design, deployment and operations of a given research platform over its five-year duration needs to be explicitly requested in the budget, regardless of whether the vendor of a particular product/service is part of the PAWR Industry Consortium.

Q: Can there be multiple platforms with the same focus areas?
A: While some level of overlap in focus areas can be accommodated if sufficiently motivated, diversity in focus areas is a guiding principle of the PPO.

Q: You mention a $100 million program, but then say that each winner will receive on average $20 million. That's $80 million across four research platforms, not $100 million. Could you clarify?
A: The funding amount is averaged across all four research platforms. There may be some research platforms that receive higher than $20 million and some may be lower than $20 million.

Q: When will award decisions be determined?
A: The award decisions will be determined within 6 – 7 months of the full proposal submission deadline.

PARTNERING

Q: Are partnerships necessary for a response to the RFP?
A: Partnerships are the best way to ensure complete coverage of the requirements of the RFP. It is assumed that a proposal will incorporate a partnership between a community and a university. Proposals are encouraged to include partners as subawardees.

Q: If I am part of the wireless industry or an innovator and want to participate, how can I find a partner with whom I can submit a complete proposal?
A: The PPO will provide advice on the best way to approach the partnerships so that the value of the relationships can be assessed, matched and blended for a suitable proposal. The PPO will also be hosting several events over the course of the next few months to help with matchmaking innovators, industry suppliers, universities and communities.

Q: Is there a list where I can see possible partners and work to establish a relationship?
A: The PPO will help proposers locate potential partners. During the process for registering for Proposers' Day (via this link: https://goo.gl/forms/tRzheVwF1zpGnAT22) and other events hosted by the PPO, you will have the opportunity to identify yourselves as a proposer looking for a partner. You may be asked for a few details about yourself and what you may interested in achieving through a partnership. The PPO has assigned outreach experts on staff to help registered individuals with the introductions and matchmaking process.

Q: Are all partners listed in the register?

A: No, only individuals who voluntarily place information into the register will be identified within the list.

INDUSTRY AND SPECTRUM

Q: I have a hardware product I would like to contribute to the PAWR program so that I can be included in a proposal. How would I get my product to be part of a proposal?
A: You may need to find a university, community, or other non-profit prime to partner with so that they can include your product in their proposal.

Q: I have a software product I would like to contribute to the PAWR so that I can be included in a proposal. How would I get my product to be part of a proposal?
A: You may need to find a university, community, or other non-profit prime to partner with so that they can include your product in their proposal.

Q: I have licensed spectrum that I would like to contribute as part of a proposal for a PAWR. How would I associate my spectrum license to a proposal?
A: Please refer to the FCC public notice < https://www.fcc.gov/document/oet-announces-acceptance-applications-program-licenses > that alludes to the process for securing an innovation zone designation that allows for experimentation on licensed/unlicensed spectrum. It is possible that the spectrum that you have can fall under one of these experimental categories and can be applied to a PAWR platform. As you find a University or Community that you would like to partner with and submit your spectrum holding as part of the platform, please note it within your proposal.

Q: I have a platform architecture that will require a spectrum that I do not have a license for. How can I get access to the spectrum I may need to support my proposal's architecture?
A: Please refer to the FCC public notice (found at https://www.fcc.gov/document/oet-announces-acceptance-applications-program-licenses) that discusses the process for securing an innovation zone designation and experimental license application that provides access to spectrum not currently available in your area.