

Department Chair/Head Letter

(To be submitted as a supplementary document with every CRII proposal)

I am the immediate supervisor of _____ [name of principal investigator (PI)], the PI of a proposal being submitted to the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Computer and Information Science and Engineering Research Initiation Initiative (CRII) program. I hereby certify that all of the following eligibility criteria are satisfied.

- I. **Time criterion:** The PI completed their Ph.D. no more than six years prior to the CRII program deadline (if in 2021) or five years prior to the CRII program deadline (after 2021) to which the proposal is being submitted and be in the first three years of a tenure-track or research science or education position. Please complete:
Degree month and year: : _____
Date hired month and year: : _____
Specify the reason for any deviations from the time criterion, consistent with the instructions on the next page: _____
- II. **Appointment criterion:** One of the following holds and will continue to hold for at least the duration of the proposed award. Please check one:
☐ The PI holds a tenure-track position; or
☐ The PI holds a research scientist or education appointment with a job description that requires conducting research and allows supervision of student research;
- III. **Federal financial assistance criterion:** The PI has never been a PI on a federal financial assistance grant/cooperative agreement or federally-supported contract, except for the specific exceptions noted in the solicitation and instructions accompanying this letter template.
- IV. **Essential resources criterion:**
 - a. For PIs not at primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs), the PI has never (not now and not in the past) held resources from university, state, industry, or any other source that could support one graduate student for two calendar years (equivalently 24 months total of graduate student support), excluding any support that would be provided by this CRII proposal or resources provided directly to students without university involvement. (Guidance for calculating resources available to the PI is included in the instructions accompanying this letter template.) The PI has never had access to resources for more than _____ months [not more than 24] of graduate student support. The PI is requesting _____ months [at least 24] of graduate student support. The total of prior and requested support does not exceed 48 months of graduate student support.
 - b. For PIs who **are** at primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs), please initial here _____ to confirm that your institution meets NSF's requirements for a PUI.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____

Guidance to Department Chairs/Heads Regarding CRII Eligibility and Completing the Department Chair/Head Letter

- I. **Time Criterion** Positions with titles such as Visiting Assistant Professor, Research Associate, or Visiting Research Professor are considered as postdoctoral appointments, and hence not counted against the three-year limit, only if all of the following are true: (1) the position is not tenure-track; (2) someone in that position is not permitted by the organization to submit a proposal as a PI; and (3) the position is supervised by another faculty member in a fashion similar to that of a postdoctoral fellow.
Regardless of time spent in postdoctoral positions, time outside academia, or other time, the PI must be no more than six years since PhD granting for proposals submitted in 2021, and five years since PhD for proposals submitted after 2021. Exceptions may be granted only in cases of family or medical leave; consult with a cognizant NSF program officer for details.
- II. **Federal Financial Assistance Criterion** The following are the only exceptions to the limits on funding from the federal government in the PI role:
 - Workshop or student conference travel awards;
 - Doctoral dissertation improvement grants;
 - Postdoctoral research fellowship awards, such as Computing Innovation Fellows (CIFellows);
 - A Graduate Research Fellowship or similar fellowship award from NSF;
 - Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) or Research Experiences for Teachers (RET) awards; and
 - Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) awards that were received while the PI was not affiliated with a university.
- III. **Essential Resources Criterion** In calculating the resources available to the PI the following rules apply:
 - a. Graduate students who work as teaching assistants while serving as research assistants count one-half time per calendar month. For example, if a graduate student is a research assistant for the PI for 12 months and for six of those months is also a teaching assistant, then the student represents nine months of graduate student support.
 - b. PIs with eight or nine-month appointments may exclude up to four months of summer salary (equivalently two months for two summers) from their available resources.
 - c. State government and industry awards that are specifically limited to the acquisition of equipment may be excluded from the PIs resources. This exception does not apply to university funds that are used for equipment.
 - d. The PI may exclude up to \$20,000 from their available resources for travel, equipment, and other miscellaneous expenses.
 - e. Resources offered to the PI from their university conditionally (that is, resources that are only made available to the PI if they do not have such money from other sources) must be counted in full. For example, if a PI holds a start-up package

with \$50,000 in unrestricted funds and up to an additional \$100,000 in conditional funds, then the startup-up package is valued at \$150,000.

- f. Resources that the PI held in the past but that have either been spent or have timed out must be counted in full. For example, if a PI received a \$100,000 start-up package that had to be spent within two years, but only spent \$40,000 during that time and is now applying for a CRII in their third year, then the full \$100,000 must be included in the calculation of available resources.
- g. For non-PUI institutions, the PI must not already have more than 24 months in graduate student support from all sources (excluding students supported externally to the university, such as GRFP), and must be applying for no less than 24 months in graduate student support from CRII. Additionally, the combination of prior or existing graduate student support and the graduate student support requested through the CRII proposal must not exceed 48 months.
- h. For PUI institutions, there are no restrictions on support.