National Science Foundation
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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Partnerships for International Research· and Education (PIRE)·

PIRE Program Solicitation is available on the PIRE webpage.

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ELIGIBILITY

1. **Who is eligible to serve as PI?**

   The PI must be an employee representing a U.S. Ph.D-granting institution. U.S. citizenship of the PI and other researchers on the U.S. team is not required. Collaborators in other countries should be listed as Foreign Collaborators, not as PIs, Co-PIs or other Senior Personnel. Although submission is limited to **one** proposal per submitting institution, there is no limit on number of proposals in which researchers can participate as partners or collaborators.Â See question 2 for information regarding researchers from non-Ph.D. granting institutions.

2. **What institutions are eligible?**

   Eligible institutions include all U.S. academic institutions with Ph.D. granting programs that have awarded doctoral degrees in the 2012 or 2013 academic years in any area of research supported by NSF. Any institution not listed at http://www.nsf.gov/oise/2015-PIRE-Eligible-Institutions.pdf should contact PIRE Program staff regarding eligibility. Institutions that have not participated in past PIRE awards are especially encouraged to submit. Researchers who are affiliated with a non-Ph.D. granting institution are encouraged to work with their colleagues at Ph.D. granting institutions in developing PIRE projects; such individuals may participate in PIRE projects, as Co-PIs or Senior Personnel, with their students being supported for research related activities, and with their own institutions serving as collaborating organizations on the PIRE project via sub-Awards.

3. **How many proposal submissions are expected?**

Based on past competitions, we expect to receive approximately 200 preliminary proposals and will invite approximately 50 full proposals.

4. **What areas of research are appropriate?**

In this competition (the fifth round), PIRE will support fundamental disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and education in all NSF supported-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research areas. In the previous PIRE competition (the fourth round), NSF focused exclusively on the NSF-wide investment area of Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability (SEES). In the current competition, SEES proposals focusing on interdisciplinary topics that will advance sustainability science, engineering and education are not excluded. However, NSF is casting a wider net by allowing proposals in all of the science and engineering research disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary fields, supported by NSF.

5. **What U.S. institutions are eligible to partner on PIRE projects?**

Partnerships may include multi-institutional collaborations or arrangements with other universities/colleges, national laboratories, research museums, private sector research laboratories, industrial organizations, state and local government laboratories. (Collaborations with colleagues from U.S. government agencies and labs are welcome although strict rules govern the use of NSF funds in such collaborations. Please consult NSF's Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Ch 1.E.7, for more information). For PIRE proposals that are collaborations, that include more than one U.S. university, the PIRE proposal must be submitted as a single integrated proposal by the lead university, with proposed sub awards to the other partner institutions. Separate proposals from each partner will not be accepted, since separately submitted collaborative PIRE proposals are not allowed.

6. **Are Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCs) and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) eligible for PIRE support?**

All U.S. academic institutions that primarily serve underrepresented minorities that have granted aÁ PhD in 2012 or 2013 are eligible to submit proposals. These institutions are encouraged to applyÁ as lead institutions. If they choose not to apply as lead institutions we encourage them to apply asÁ partner institutions. In addition, PIs are encouraged to establish linkages with NSF-sponsoredÁ programs to enhance diversity (e.g., AGEP, LSAMP, HBCU-UP, TCUP, CREST, ADVANCE, allÁ described at http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=HRD), especially at their own institutions.Á

7. **Can PIRE funds be used to support the salary or travel-related expenses of foreign participants?**

NSF funds are intended to support the U.S. side of a research and education collaboration; the international collaborators should seek funding for their participation in the project from their own funding sources. NSF is working with counterpart funding organizations to enhance opportunities for collaborative activities in research and education between U.S. investigators and their colleagues abroad. Additional funding for international collaborators on PIRE projects may be available from the following institutions:

- China: Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST),
- Finland:
  - Academy of Finland
  - the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes)
- France:
  - Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR)
  - Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)
- Germany: Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)
- India: Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)
- Japan:
  - Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
  - Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)
- Republic of Korea: National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF)
- Mexico: Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnologia (CONACYT)
- Russia:
  - Ministry of Education and Science (MES)
  - Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR)
- Spain: Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO)
- Taiwan: Ministry of Science and Technology, Taiwan
- US Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research Program (PEER Science)

Proposers are also free to negotiate with any other research funding bodies not listed above. For special funding opportunities, refer to section **ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES** of the current PIRE solicitation, section II.D.

For projects involving exchanges of researchers and/or students, reciprocal arrangements for provision of housing and subsistence are allowed and are encouraged, with adherence to the overall principle that each side supports equivalent costs. Please refer to the Solicitation under the section on Allowable Costs.

8. **Can the PIRE grant support sabbatical leave for a PI or co-PI?**

PIRE is not intended as a sabbatical support program. PIRE salary support for the PI is limited to two months per year and salary for co-PI(s) and Senior Personnel (including as consultants and in sub awards) is limited to one month per year.

9. **Must we request the same level of budget for each year?**

No. You are encouraged to request the budget that makes sense for your project. Ramping up the budget as the project develops may make sense in many cases.

10. **Can we use some of the budget to support project coordination? Must a project coordinator be a Co-PI?**

Yes, part of the PIRE budget may be used to support project coordination, (e.g., part-time salary for a coordinator, coordination meetings, support for an outside advisory committee) on a scale commensurate with the complexity of the partnership. For some of the current PIRE projects, strong coordination has been a key contributor to early success. The project coordinator does not have to be a PI or Co-PI.Â The amount of salary that a project coordinator can receive if listed as senior personnel is limited to one month per year.

OTHER QUESTIONS

11. **When and where should my foreign collaborator seek funding on his/her side?**

PIs are encouraged to be in contact with their foreign collaborators and encourage them to seek funding from their own sources as they develop their preliminary proposals.

NSF is working jointly with select counterpart national, international and multinational funding organizations to enhance opportunities for collaborative activities between U.S. investigators and their colleagues abroad. NSF has entered into co-funding/collateral funding agreements with 15 agencies to provide funding opportunities for international collaborators. Â These agencies are identified above in the response to question #7.

In addition, PIs may want to discuss with the relevant country program officers in ISE additional mechanisms for international collaborators to seek support in their own countries. ISE Program Officers are listed by region at (http://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/country-list.jsp).

RELEVANT LINKS

NSF Home Page: http://www.nsf.gov

Office International and Integrative Activities, International Science and Engineering Section (ISE): http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=OISE

PIRE homepage: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12819

ISE Staff by Country: http://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/country-list.jsp

How to Prepare Your Proposal: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/preparing/

NSF's Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp

NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide