NSF EPSCoR
ADVANCING GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY IN STEM

EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII): EPSCoR Research Fellows

—*An Opportunity for Early and Mid-Career Investigators*

Informational Webinar

January 25, 2024

EPSCoR Research Fellows: Key Information

Funding opportunity that supports PI's from EPSCoR-eligible institutions in the development of research collaborations.

Solicitation Number: NSF 24-528; up to $300,000 for up to 2 years

Deadline: April 22, 2024, by 5 PM submitting institution's local time.

Please use the links below to access the solicitation and resources to assist with proposal preparation:

–Solicitation: https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/epscor-research-infrastructure-improvement-track-4-0

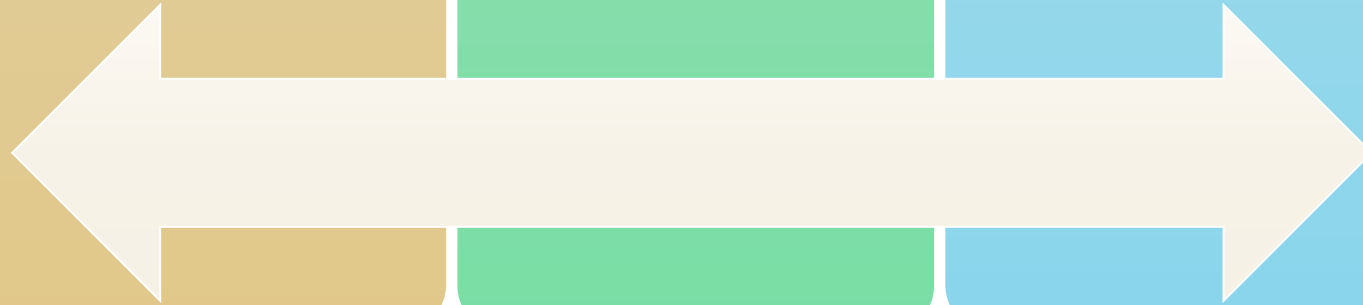# NSF EPSCoR: Building Jurisdiction-wide Research Capacity
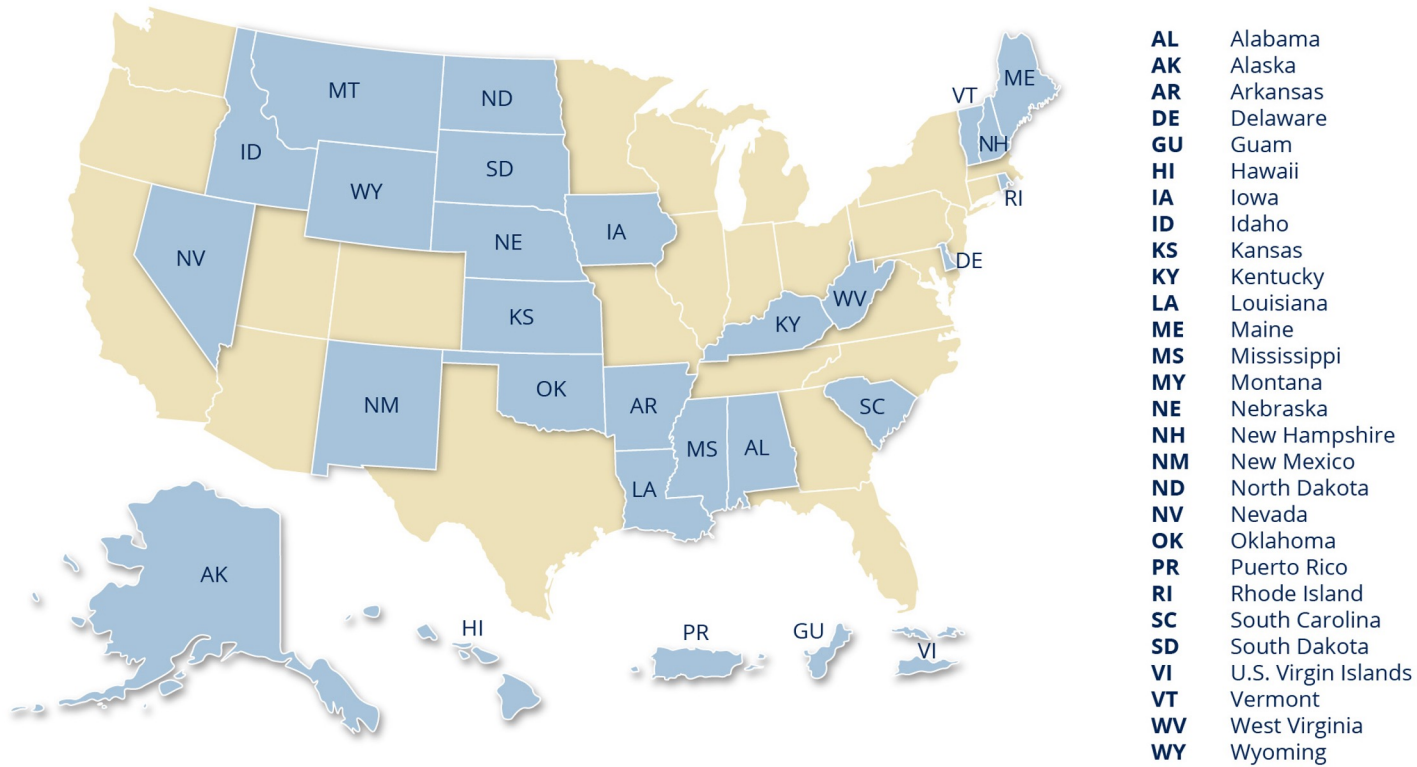

Discovery & Innovation

Education & Workforce

Economic Development

NSF EPSCoR Eligibility

AL	Alabama
AK	Alaska
AR	Arkansas
DE	Delaware
GU	Guam
HI	Hawaii
IA	Iowa
ID	Idaho
KS	Kansas
KY	Kentucky
LA	Louisiana
ME	Maine
MS	Mississippi
MY	Montana
NE	Nebraska
NH	New Hampshire
NM	New Mexico
ND	North Dakota
NV	Nevada
OK	Oklahoma
PR	Puerto Rico
RI	Rhode Island
SC	South Carolina
SD	South Dakota
VI	U.S. Virgin Islands
VT	Vermont
WV	West Virginia
WY	Wyoming

- States, Commonwealths, and Territories are eligible for funding if their most recent 5-year level of total NSF funding is equal to or less than 0.75% of the total NSF budget.
- Eligibility table updated annually and publicly available:
  https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/epscor/nsf_oiia_epscor_eligible.jsp

EPSCoR Research Fellows EPSCoR Research Fellows Opportunity

Provides opportunities for non-tenured (or equivalent) early- and tenured investigators to further develop their individual research potential through extended visits to the nation's premier private, federal, or academic institutions.

Fellows will be able to:

- learn new techniques
- benefit from access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities
- strengthen collaborative partnerships
- extend their research toward transformative directions

Experiences gained through fellowships are intended to provide:

- Time to develop new or extend current research directions
- A pathway to strengthen research connections with partners nationwide
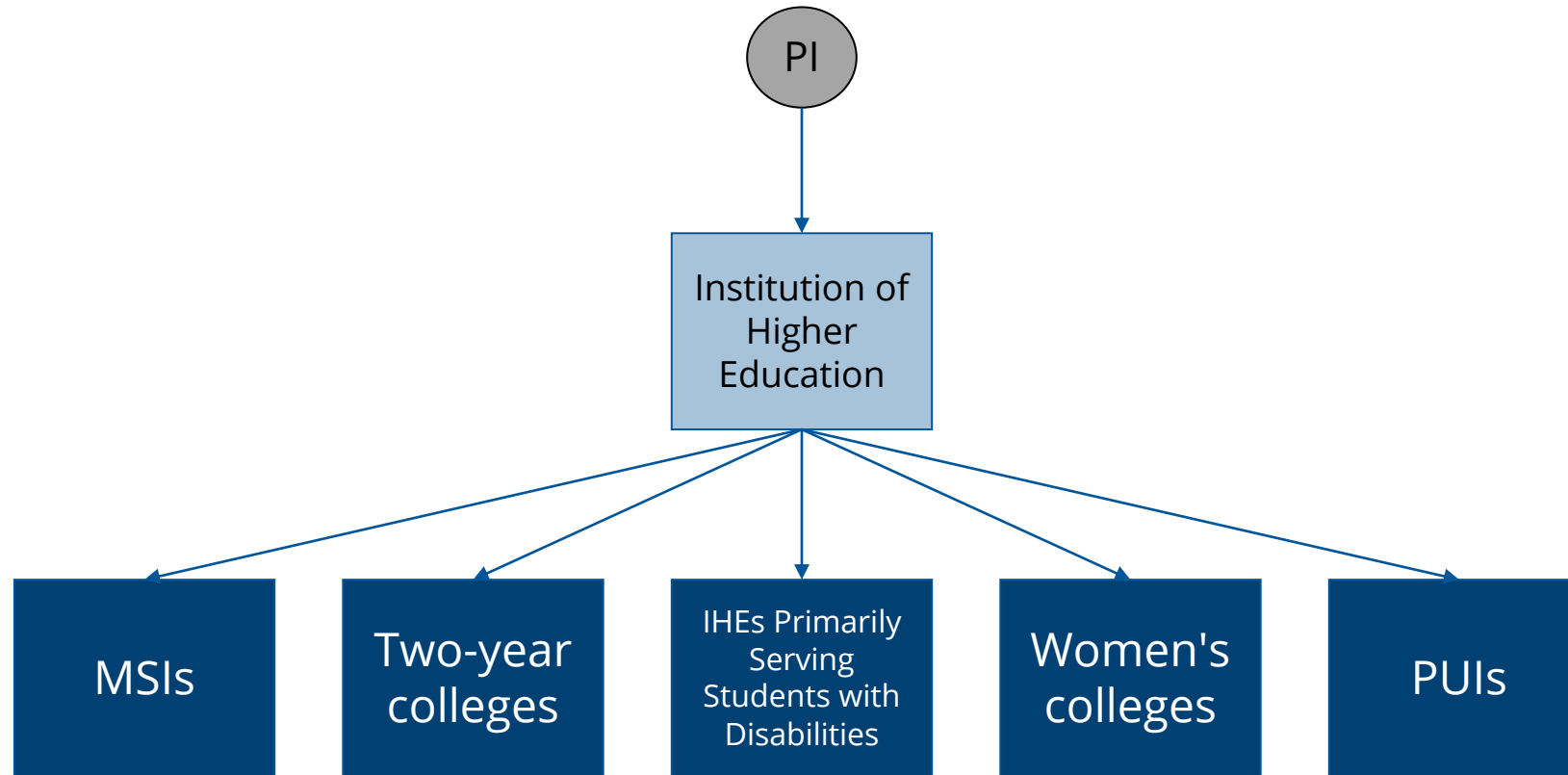- benefits that will impact the recipient's career in years to come

Outcomes are expected to enhance the research capacities of the home institution or jurisdictions.

EPSCoR Research Fellows Eligibility
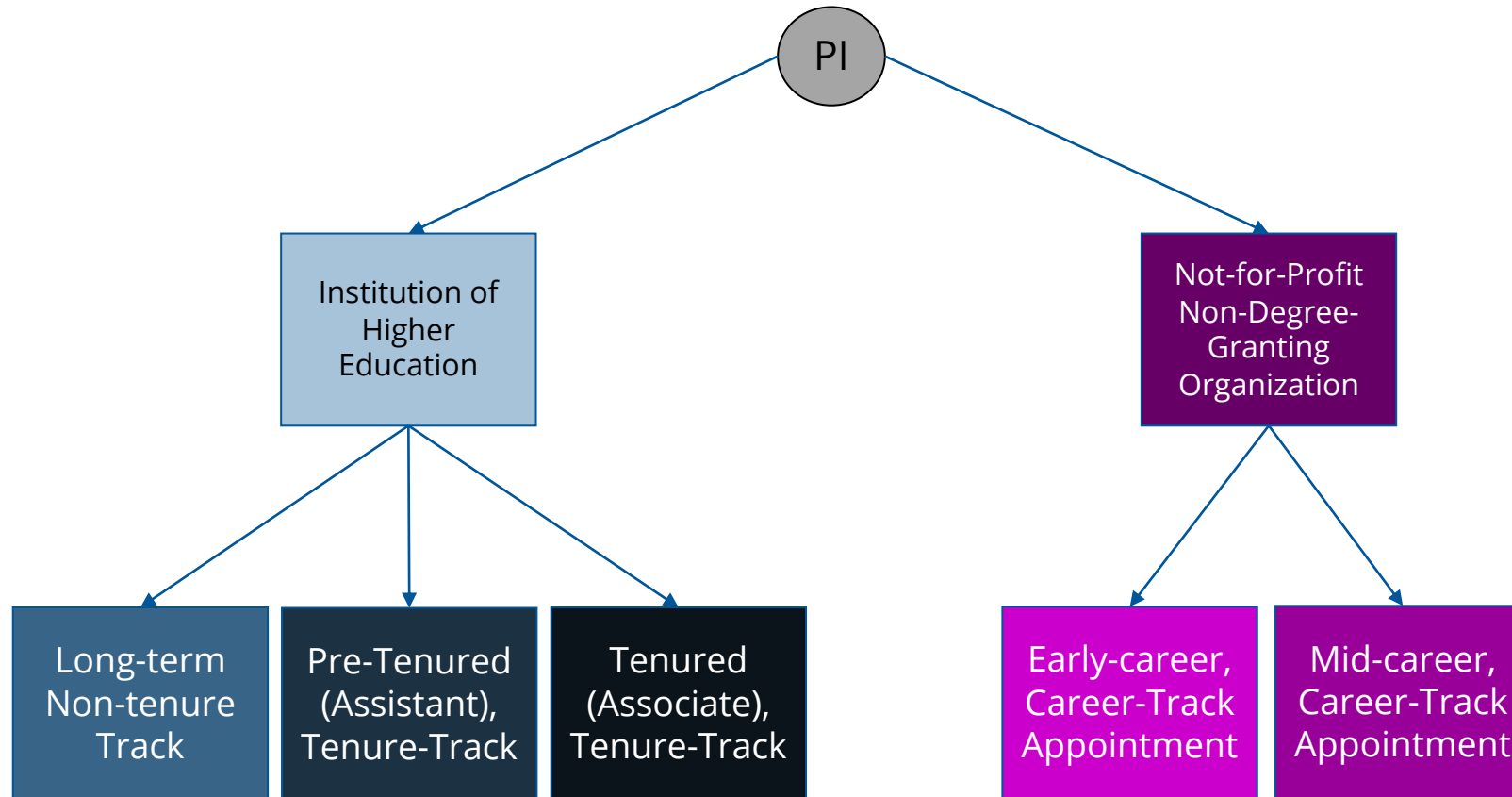
Additional EPSCoR Research Fellows:@NASA Eligibility

What Goes in the Proposal?

Successful EPSCoR Research Fellows proposals will present exciting, vibrant fellowship ideas that will potentially **transform** the PI's individual career trajectory and more broadly impact his/her research field, institution, and jurisdiction.

All proposals should include:

- Motivation and research context for the work to be conducted;
- Well Defined, reasoned, and organized research objectives which could be driven by specific research questions or hypotheses
- PI's specific plans for the fellowship period; and
- Discussion for how the benefits gained from the fellowship would be sustained beyond the award;
- Clear specifications of fellowship goals, performance metrics, and a timetable;

Explain how/why the EPSCoR Research Fellows award will advance the PI's research program – what specific opportunities will be made possible via the PI's extended visit(s) to the host site?

- The parameters for the partnership should be clearly established.

Describe how the activities will lead to long-lasting impacts for both the PI's career **and the home institution and /or jurisdiction.**

EPSCoR Research Fellows: Budget Request Overview

For both sub tracks, NSF budget requests may be up to $300,000 over a duration of 24 months.

- 1 to 6 months of salary support for the PI and one trainee-level participant
  - It is expected that the PI will complete a minimum of a one month extended visit to the host institution, or an equivalent of several periodic visits totaling one month.

Up to $10,000 may be requested for the host collaborator for travel related to the fellowship project which includes visits to the PI's home site and/or participation in conferences where the collaborative work is presented.

For EPSCoR Research Fellows:@NASA, an additional $60K Research Infrastructure Development (RID) grant from NASA for research infrastructure at home institution is available.

- Please do not include this request in budget requests to NSF.

EPSCoR Research Fellows Outreach

- PIs are encouraged to attend the outreach events for questions regarding this opportunity.

  - Office hours at 3:00 PM ET on the dates below:
    - Thursday, February 8, 2024
    - Thursday, February 29, 2024
    - Thursday, March 21, 2024
    - Thursday, April 11, 2024

- You can register here: https://nsf.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_b-kN-N0LT8mLqF8JUG_2dw

- Submit questions in advance to cwhitley@nsf.gov

- While real time captioning will be available, requests for additional accommodations may be sent to cwhitley@nsf.gov 14 days in advance.

Contact information

National Science Foundation:

- Chinonye Nnakwe Whitley, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8458, email: cwhitley@nsf.gov
- Pinhas Ben-Tzvi, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8246, email: pbentzvi@nsf.gov
- Lisa Cliggett, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-2759, email: lcligget@nsf.gov
- Hongmei Luo, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8867, email: hluo@nsf.gov

National Aeronautics and Space Administration:

- Kathy Loftin, NASA, email: Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov
- Frank McDonald, NASA, email: frank.mcdonald@nasa.gov

HBCU-Excellence in Research

- Recommended and appropriated by Congress
  - "…provide opportunities for both public and private HBCUs,… in order to stimulate sustainable improvement in their research and development capacity. NSF is further encouraged to use research infrastructure improvement grants, co-funding programs, and other innovative mechanisms to achieve these goals."
- Provides research grants to individual faculty with emphasis on long-term impacts on research infrastructure at the institution.
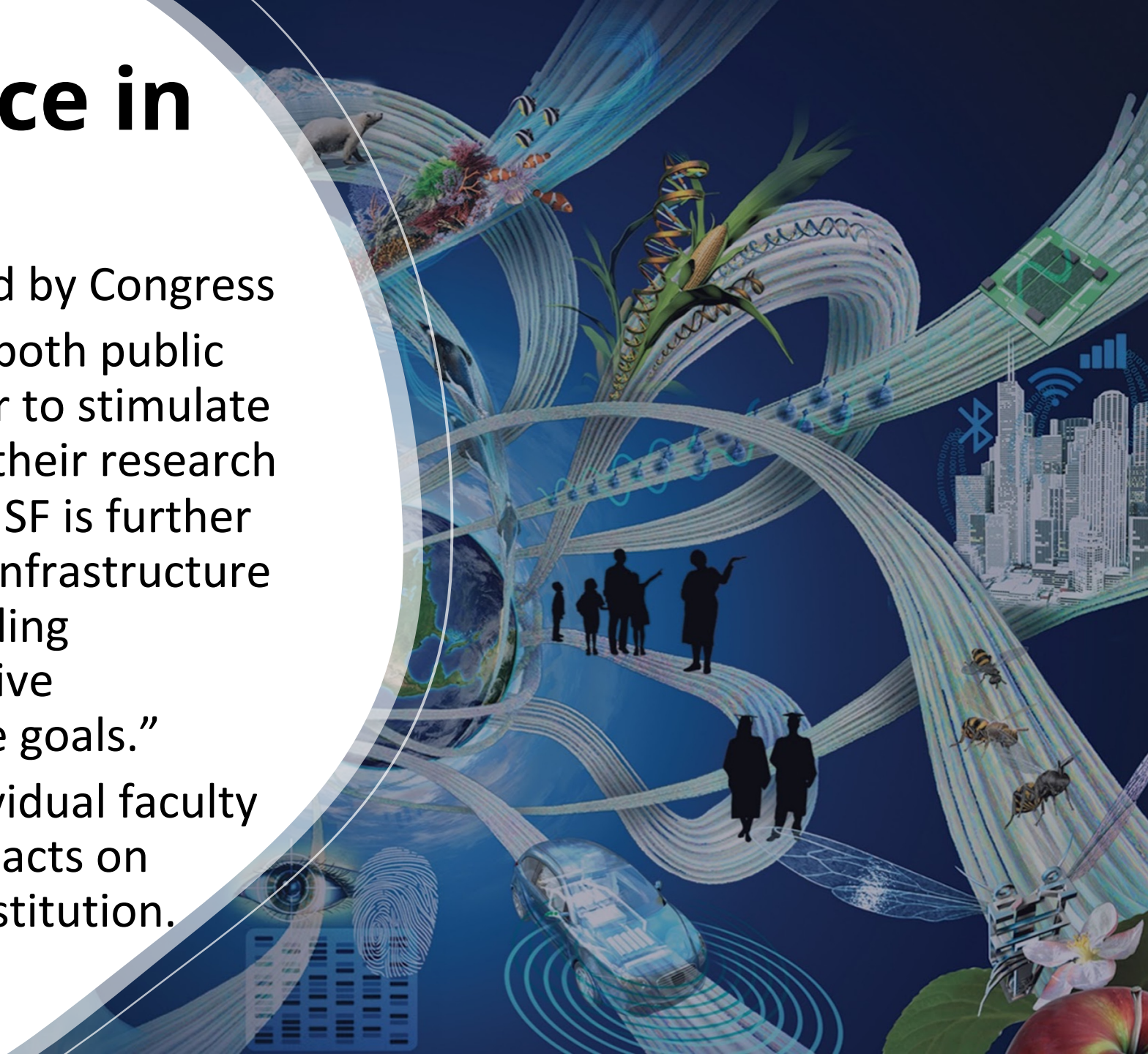
Primary Goal

Primary goal is for HBCU faculty to establish stronger connections with NSF's research programs.

Ideally serves as a bridge between funding through the HBCU-UP Research Initiation Award (RIA, 23-563).

RIA is specifically for those that have never had NSF funding or not in the last 3 years

https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23563/nsf23563.htm

Not required to have an RIA before an EiR

Eligibility for EiR

PIs must have a full-time faculty or research appointment at an HBCU (not restricted to new or early career faculty)

Non-HBCUs can be partners but can only receive funding though subawards

HBCUs can submit collaborative research proposals

An individual can only serve as PI or Co-PI on a maximum of 2 HBCU-EiR Awards during the course of their career (no limit on being Sr. Personnel)

Due Dates and Budget

Due Dates:

- Required Letter of Intent- July 11, 2024
- Full Proposals-October 15, 2024

Estimated awards: 35

Anticipated Funding: $28,000,000

Budget for Equipment can now be 30%

Can only be PI or Co-PI on One Submission per deadline

Secondary Unit of Consideration must be included in the LOI and the Full Proposal

Secondary Unit of Consideration

Proposals will be reviewed by research programs, the one that best aligns with your work in then referred to as the secondary unit of consideration.

- <u>Directorate</u> Biology (BIO), <u>Division</u> of Environmental Biology (DEB), <u>Program</u>- Ecosystems Science Cluster (ES)

Include on **both** the Letter of Intent (LOI) and the Full Proposal

> ❖ **The Secondary Unit may change between the submission of the LOI and the full proposal – as project develops or per discussion with program directors**

Liaison Group

- Liaison Group can assist in determining which research program is the best fit for your work.

Office Hours starting in

May/ June

BIO- Anna Allen – akallen@nsf.gov

CISE- Subrata Acharya – acharyas@nsf.gov

EDU- Carleitta Paige-Anderson – cpaigean@nsf.gov

ENG- Christine Grant – cgrant@nsf.gov

GEO- Brandon Jones – mbjones@nsf.gov

MPS- Kathy McCloud – kmccloud@nsf.gov

SBE- Enrique Pumar – epumar@nsf.gov

TIP- Nina Muang-Goana – nmuangga@nsf.gov

HBCU-EiR Proposal Review Process

Time to decision varies based on program that reviews the proposal

Letter of Intents in July, Full Proposals in October

Come into OIA

- Compliance
- Program Alignment
- Distribute to Liaison Group

Liaisons

- Find Final Program Home*
- Ensure Proposals are Reviewed
- Reflect and Inform Process

Cognizant POs

- Manage Review
- Make Funding Recommendation

Proposal Preparation

After the proposal is created in Research.gov, click on the "Manage Where to Apply" link to select the NSF research program(s), division(s) and the directorate(s) believed to be most appropriate for the review of the EiR project.

Project Description

- A brief description of the PI's overall research goals;

- Information on the institutional context in which the work is being done (e.g. number of faculty engaged in research, faculty teaching loads, number of undergrads or/and graduate students);

- An outline of the general plan of work, including the research questions or hypotheses, the broad design of activities to be undertaken, and, where appropriate, a description of experimental methods and procedures;

- Background information that is firmly grounded in the literature with enough information to understand how the proposed work will advance the field;

Proposal Preparation

Project Description (cont'd)

- Fully articulated research questions and rationale or clearly stated hypothesis the project will test;

- Preliminary data or proof of concept work if available and appropriate;

- Experimental strategy, if applicable, that includes enough detail to determine feasibility and scientific merit as well as a timeline of activities;

- A sustainability plan that describes how the proposed work could lead to future submission to a current NSF core discipline specific research funding opportunity;

- Details on how success of the project will be determined, including specific achievements or metrics; and

- A plan for scholarly dissemination of this research

Additional Requirements

The proposal must include a letter by the chair, dean, or chief academic officer of the primary PI.

- The letter should convey:
    - how the PI's research and activities are supported by and advance research goals of the department and the institution,
    - that the institution is committed to the support, research progression, and professional development of the PI.
- The letter must not be more than 2 pages.

Mid-Career Advancement (MCA) Program – 22-603

NSF-wide (goal): BIO, EDU, GEO, SBE, TIP, OIA – *see solicitation for participating units*

- **Who:** Scientists and engineers at the Associate Professor rank (or equivalent) with at least 3 years at that rank. [New PUI Track (FY23) in BIO and GEO extends eligibility to Full Professors at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions only.]

- **What:** An opportunity to substantively advance the PI's research program and career trajectory through synergistic and mutually beneficial mentored partnerships.

- **Why:** To ensure that PIs remain active in cutting-edge research at a critical career stage replete with constraints on time that can impinge on research productivity, retention, and career advancement.

- **Details:** Provides salary for protected time (up to 6.5 months) and $100K in **direct** costs for research and training.

MCA.info@nsf.gov for more information

Mid-Career Advancement (MCA) Program – 22-603

Solicitation-Specific Criteria:

- **Project Description (12 pages)** – describes past research, proposed research advancement and training plan, and long-term career plans. Evaluate quality of past work and potential to build upon this foundation for future advancement if given time and funds.

- **Impact Statement (2 pages Supplementary Doc)** – PI discusses past and/or current constraints on time and/or resources that have limited productivity or advancement, and the future impact of an MCA award on the PI's research program and career trajectory.

- **Partner** – evaluate choice of the partner(s). What is the likelihood of a synergistic and mutually beneficial collaboration given their respective skills, background, and areas of expertise? Will the partner expand the PI's networks, toolkit, ability to advance, etc.? Read 2-page Letter of Collaboration by the Partner.

- **Departmental Letter** – should indicate support for the PI's activities.

- **Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts** – Proposed research may seem a bit risky because the PI seeks to work with a partner in order to learn new skills *that the PI currently does not have*. Results should be the foundation of new, future achievement. Broader Impacts should be reviewed in **the spirit of the MCA, which is an award to provide release time and $ for PIs with constraints on time due to admin, outreach, service, teaching, so they can focus on their own research and training.**