



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 24-079

Dear Colleague Letter: Expanding Geographic and Institutional Diversity in Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE)

April 16, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

The U.S. National Science Foundation's (NSF) Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) welcomes submissions of both new proposals and supplemental funding requests from Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) eligible institutions. This Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) aims to broaden geographic and demographic participation and to promote SBE-funded activities that enable sustainable growth and competitiveness across [all 28 EPSCoR jurisdictions](#). Proposals from institutions across EPSCoR-eligible jurisdictions are encouraged to submit to all SBE programs. Collaborative proposals led by EPSCoR institutions, and proposals from Minority Serving Institutions ([MSIs](#)) and [Emerging Research Institutions \(ERIs\)](#) in EPSCoR jurisdictions are particularly welcomed.

This DCL reaffirms SBE's commitment to bolster social and behavioral research that reaches diverse and talented communities across our country. SBE aims to support research from organizations located within EPSCoR jurisdictions, recognizes these institutions' contributions to the U.S. science and engineering ecosystem, and encourages the science and engineering community's active involvement in furthering discoveries that benefit all Americans. These contributions are pivotal in ensuring that research and innovation are not confined to particular regions and populations but are inclusive and representative of the diversity within the nation. Through research in the SBE sciences, NSF seeks to build on and enhance the human, social, cultural, institutional, educational, technological, geographic, demographic, and economic assets of EPSCoR jurisdictions.

This DCL responds to Section 10325 (expanding geographic and institutional diversity in research) of the [CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 \(P.L. 117-167\)](#) which directs NSF to dedicate an increasing percentage of its budget to organizations across EPSCoR jurisdictions. Through this DCL, SBE aims to promote funded activities that enable sustainable growth in the competitiveness of EPSCoR jurisdictions, including but not limited

to:

- Research proposals to [SBE core and cross-cutting programs](#) led by EPSCoR institutions, including full proposals as well as Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research ([EAGER](#)), Rapid Response Research ([RAPID](#)), and conference proposals to programs that accepts these.
- Supplemental funding for existing awards, to expand and enhance established projects, such as support for professional development, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, [undergraduates](#), or [teachers](#).
- Submissions to SBE-wide opportunities such as [SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowships \(SPRF\)](#), [SBE Research Experiences for Undergraduates Sites](#), [Build and Broaden \(B2\)](#), [Centers for Research and Innovation in Science, the Environment and Society \(CRISES\)](#), and [Strengthening American Infrastructure \(SAI\)](#).
- Proposals to [NSF-wide programs involving the SBE sciences](#).
- Infrastructure investments to build research capacity in EPSCoR jurisdictions such as SBE-oriented proposals to NSF's Mid-scale Research Infrastructure-1, Mid-scale Research Infrastructure-2, and [Major Research Instrumentation \(MRI\)](#) programs, as well as SBE's [Human Networks and Data Science - Infrastructure \(HNDS-I\)](#) and [Research Infrastructure in the Social and Behavioral Sciences \(RISBS\)](#).
- Partnerships with non-EPSCoR institutions that are led by EPSCoR institutions with the goal of building and/or expanding research, education, and workforce development capacity in EPSCoR jurisdictions, such as [Research Coordination Networks \(RCN\)](#) proposals.
- Capacity building activities for ERIs and MSIs within EPSCoR jurisdictions.

Proposers are encouraged to engage with NSF institutional representatives to identify and submit to active SBE [funding opportunities](#). Interested proposers should prepare and submit proposals and supplemental funding requests in accordance with the instructions contained in the relevant funding opportunity and/or the [NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide](#) (PAPPG). Please refer to specific program descriptions, Dear Colleague Letters, and program solicitations for program-specific deadlines for new proposals and supplemental funding requests

Investigators from eligible organizations are strongly encouraged to contact corresponding program staff to discuss prospective funding requests prior to submitting to NSF.

Questions should be directed to: nsfsbe-epscorinquiry@nsf.gov

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to advancing science and ensuring that all jurisdictions have equal opportunities to contribute to the national scientific enterprise. We look forward to your proposals and the exciting possibilities they hold.

Sincerely,

Sylvia M. Butterfield
Acting Assistant Director
Directorate for Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences