U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 24-093

Dear Colleague Letters: National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource (NAIRR) Pilot Demonstration Projects

May 28, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

The National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource (NAIRR) Pilot, led by the Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (OAC) of the National Science Foundation (NSF), has been launched as a proof of concept to demonstrate the value and potential impact of the NAIRR concept as described in the NAIRR Task Force Report. Activities aligned with the NAIRR Pilot vision include facilitating researcher and educator requests for computing, model access, and other resources; integrating data, software, platforms, and tools; reaching new and broad communities; fostering positive end user experiences; and building a NAIRR pilot user community. These activities are administered by designated working groups and overseen by the NAIRR Pilot Program Management Office (PPMO). More information about the NAIRR Pilot and contributing organizations can be found at the NAIRR Pilot NSF site and at nairrpilot.org.

This Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) announces NSF's interest in receiving Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) proposals and supplemental funding requests for NAIRR Demonstration Projects to highlight innovative use cases and technologies that make use of the NAIRR Pilot.

NAIRR Pilot Demonstration Projects are multi-disciplinary efforts involving a team of AI researchers, domain scientists, and/or cyberinfrastructure specialists who are undertaking specific research challenges that innovatively use, integrate with, or rely on one or more NAIRR Pilot requestable resources. Demonstration Projects should result in prominent scientific publications and demonstrate potential capabilities of a future full NAIRR.

Proposed projects should be submitted as supplemental funding requests from existing collaborative teams or as EAGER proposals from new collaborative teams to make innovative use of NAIRR resources to undertake ambitious, near-term research through demonstration projects.

Submissions led by teams located in Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) jurisdictions and from Minority Serving Institutions are encouraged in response to this opportunity.

HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS DCL

Proposers interested in the Demonstration Projects opportunity are required to first submit a concept outline to NAIRR_Pilot@nsf.gov and are encouraged to contact NSF through this email address to have preliminary discussions before submission of the concept outline. The concept outline is limited to three pages, including a draft budget, and must include a problem statement describing a specific research or cyberinfrastructure challenge relevant to the NAIRR, a description of the proposed work to address this challenge, and a description of NAIRR resources that will be needed to undertake the work.

Pending NSF approval of the concept outlines,

- Multi-disciplinary teams with existing NSF awards may request supplements to those awards, and
- New collaborative teams proposing exploratory, high risk-high reward AI integration work may submit EAGER proposals. EAGER awards may be for up to $300,000 for up to two years.

Complete guidance on the preparation and submission of an EAGER proposal is contained in Chapter II.F.3 of the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG). Complete guidance for supplemental funding requests can be found in Chapter VI E.5 of the PAPPG.

EAGER proposals and supplemental funding requests submitted without prior submission of a concept outline as described above and subsequent correspondence email from NSF inviting a full submission will be returned without review. Proposals and supplemental funding requests that fail to address the objectives and guidance described in this DCL will be returned without review. EAGER proposal titles should begin with "NAIRR Pilot: " after the required prefix "EAGER:".

EAGER proposals and supplemental funding requests for demonstration projects submitted by **July 10, 2024**, will have the highest opportunity to be funded in FY2024. Submissions after **July 10, 2024**, may be considered in FY2025.

All questions concerning this DCL should be directed to NAIRR_Pilot@nsf.gov and not the signatories of this DCL.

Sincerely,

Dilma Da Silva, Acting Assistant Director
Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE)