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**National Science Foundation  
Directorate for Biological Sciences  
Office of Assistant Director**

**BIO Collaborative Research at Undergraduate Institutions (C-RUI)**

Dear Colleague:

This announcement is provided as an addendum to the NSF-wide program announcement, NSF 00-144, Research in Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) (<http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?nsf00144>). Section II. B. of the RUI Program Announcement refers to "Collaborative Faculty Research Projects" and directs potential applicants to the appropriate NSF Directorate for further instruction. It is the intention of the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) to participate in this activity by continuing the Collaborative Research at Undergraduate Institutions (C-RUI) activity that began in Fiscal Year 1995 and held competitions in Fiscal Years 1997, 1999, and 2001.

Increasingly, advances in research in the biological sciences depend on skills and knowledge that extend beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. Research projects supported through BIO C-RUI involve faculty members and undergraduate students across disciplinary or departmental boundaries, and if appropriate, institutional boundaries. Collaborations between undergraduate institutions and other institutions may be proposed; however, all but one faculty member of the collaborative research group must come from the predominantly undergraduate institution(s) and all students involved must be from the undergraduate institution(s).

By this letter, we would like to assure the biology community of our commitment to C-RUI activities and encourage qualified investigators at undergraduate institutions to apply for collaborative research funding. BIO further encourages applicants whose research would especially benefit from forging a collaboration with their colleagues across traditional disciplinary lines, and in doing so offer their students an exposure to a multidisciplinary research environment.

This letter is an update of the FY2001 Dear Colleague Letter (NSF01-9) and no substantive changes have been made other than the deadline and FastLane submission procedures.

**Eligibility:** As described in the RUI program announcement (NSF 00-144)

**Award Information:** Awards will be made for a period of three or four years. The proposal must contain an explicit justification for the proposed research and award duration. Annual budgets for C-RUI projects are expected to average \$200,000. In addition to the operating budget, up to \$50,000 may be requested for the acquisition of well-justified research equipment at the undergraduate institution(s) for the enhancement of the collaborative research project. The BIO Directorate expects to make up to 10 awards in FY2002, contingent upon the quality of proposals and the availability of funds. Awards are expected to be made in August 2002.

**Description of C-RUI Projects:** Collaborative projects that are submitted in response to this Dear Colleague Letter must have the following characteristics. This augments the description of collaborative research in the RUI program announcement, Section II. B and Section V. A. "Project Description".

- The scientific merit of the proposed research must clearly be enhanced by development of the collaboration. A strong research activity is the heart of a successful collaborative group, and therefore the research plan is a crucial component of the proposal. [Please note that BIO does not support biological sciences research with disease-related goals, including studies on toxicology, epidemiology, or the etiology, diagnosis, or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals. Studies of animal models for such conditions and the design or testing of drugs or procedures for their treatment are also not eligible for support.]

- The collaborative research project must have a project theme. Each member of the collaborative group should take advantage of the strengths of its particular institution, justifying the nature of the research in that context.
- The collaborative research project must integrate the research with more effective scientific education at the predominantly undergraduate institution(s).
- The research should enhance the research training of undergraduates actively involved in the project. To this end, the project must include explicit mechanisms by which the impact on students involved can be measured, including mechanisms for tracking progress of the students after graduation.
- The research project should enhance the research productivity of all faculty and student investigators involved. Measures of productivity must be described in the proposal, and may include research presentations by faculty and students at regional and national meetings, publications, and other scholarly works.
- Equipment purchased for the project must benefit the research and teaching environment specifically at the predominantly undergraduate institution, as well as be adequately justified for the proposed scientific research project.

**Proposal Preparation:** No preproposals are required or accepted. Full proposals should be prepared according to the RUI program announcement, Section V A-B and to the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) NSF 01-2 (<http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?nsf012>). The Project Description section is limited to 15 pages. The title of the proposal should begin "C-RUI: :..."

**Proposal Submission:** Full proposals should be submitted through FastLane as described in the RUI program announcement, Section V. D. Refer to the program announcement number NSF 00-144. On the Cover Sheet/NSF Unit Consideration select NSF 02-020 as the Program Announcement and then select the Division of Biological Infrastructure as the Division and Collaborative Research at Undergraduate Institutions as the Program. Please note that submission of signed cover pages is no longer required. FastLane questions specific to C-RUI can be directed to [biofl@nsf.gov](mailto:biofl@nsf.gov).

**Proposal Deadline:** Proposals must be submitted by 5:00 PM, submitter's local time, January 28, 2002.

**Proposal Review Process and Protocol:** Proposals will be received by the C-RUI Coordinator in the Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI). Each proposal will be assigned to and reviewed by appropriate existing review panels in BIO. When appropriate, a joint review by two or more panels within or outside of BIO will be arranged by the Coordinator.

**Contact:** The C-RUI Coordinator in DBI will act as the point of contact, and is responsible for overall management of C-RUI activities and for communicating with the applicant community. The C-RUI Coordinator is Dr. Robert Taylor. He can be contacted at (703) 292-8470 or [rtaylor@nsf.gov](mailto:rtaylor@nsf.gov).

Although investigators at undergraduate institutions are not required to submit their unsolicited research proposals to the RUI program or the C-RUI activity, we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and to share this information with others that may be interested.

BIO anticipates that collaborative research projects at RUI will be assimilated into BIO's regular RUI activities beyond FY2003.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Clutter  
Assistant Director

NSF 02-020 (Replaces NSF-01-9)

CFDA No. 47.074 - Biology  
OMB Clearance Number: OMB 3145-0058