



**National Science Foundation  
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## **Dear Colleague Letter: Unsolicited Proposals at the Interface of the Biological, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, and Engineering**

Divisions within the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) have seen increasing numbers of proposals in recent years that focus on biological systems at all levels of biological organization, ranging from the sub-cellular level to the environment. Additionally, the Directorate of Engineering (ENG) seeks to contribute to the understanding of biology using engineering tools to exploit unique aspects of biological systems in applications that are useful in industrial, environmental, and health care arenas. At the same time, divisions in the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) are receiving significantly more proposals that incorporate approaches and address questions that have traditionally been the domain of the mathematical and physical sciences and engineering. BIO, ENG and MPS recognize that it is vital for biological, mathematical, statistical and physical scientists and engineers to increase their collaborations, both in new research efforts and in ongoing research projects, to advance the frontiers of discovery and innovation. While many strong, vibrant interactions currently exist between the three directorates, this letter is to remind our research communities that BIO, MPS and ENG strongly encourage proposals from interdisciplinary research teams that involve collaborations among investigators from the biological, mathematical, and physical sciences and engineering to support new interactions that span interfaces between BIO, ENG, and MPS.

Unsolicited research proposals, depending on their scientific focus, can be submitted to the deadlines of any relevant program in BIO, ENG, or MPS. For the Divisions and programs that require a preliminary proposal before a complete proposal can be submitted, the PIs must submit a preliminary proposal at the relevant deadlines. Investigators are encouraged to contact appropriate program directors to discuss their research topics and objectives prior to submitting a proposal. Proposals that address the interface between the biological, mathematical and physical sciences and engineering should include the label "BIOMAPS:" at the beginning of the proposal title. Such proposals may be jointly considered by appropriate program directors in BIO, ENG, and MPS. Principal investigators should consult the NSF web site for additional information about programs in the three Directorates.

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines and proposal submission windows specified for unsolicited proposals for the respective programs.

Sincerely,

Dr. John C. Wingfield  
Assistant Director  
Directorate for Biological Sciences

Dr. Thomas W. Peterson  
Assistant Director  
Directorate for Engineering

Dr. H. Edward Seidel  
Assistant Director  
Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences