



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

**NSF 18-109**

## Dear Colleague Letter: Enabling Early-Stage Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) Socio-Technical Interdisciplinary Collaborations

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September 25, 2018

Dear Colleague:

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) program aims to promote research on the fundamentals of security and privacy as a multidisciplinary subject that will lead to new ways to design, build, and operate cyber systems, protect existing infrastructure, and motivate and educate individuals about cybersecurity. With this DCL, NSF is announcing its intention to encourage the submission of Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) proposals that foster excellent interdisciplinary research in the SaTC domain to be carried out in early-stage collaborations between one or more Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) researchers and one or more Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) researchers. Note that this DCL is focused on collaborations of principal investigators (PIs) who have not previously jointly received a SaTC award.

Many scientific and practical challenges of security, privacy, and trust have sociotechnical dimensions, making it important to encourage interdisciplinary collaborations among researchers from the disciplines represented in NSF's CISE and SBE directorates on topics that draw on the strengths of each researcher. Some of these topics are suggested in the most recent SaTC program solicitation ([NSF 18-572](#)), but other topics relevant to the SaTC program are also welcome.

NSF anticipates funding up to 10 EAGER awards pursuant to this DCL, subject to the availability of funds and quality of proposals received.

Proposals in response to this DCL are due November 12, 2018

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

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Prior to submitting a proposal, send a brief email and a one-page summary of the project concept to the program directors listed at the end of this DCL. They will provide feedback and inform you as to whether you are encouraged to submit. Submissions sent without consulting with the identified program directors will be returned without review.

To prepare a proposal fitting the purpose of this DCL, please follow these guidelines:

1. Proposals submitted pursuant to this DCL should include at least one PI from the fields supported by NSF's CISE directorate, and at least one from the fields supported by the SBE directorate. The collaborations must be interdisciplinary and new to the SaTC program according to the following:
  - o Collaborators must not have previously jointly received a SaTC award.
  - o Proposals may include two (or more) PIs from a single institution or PIs from several institutions (a collaborative proposal).
  - o A PI may participate in only one submission pursuant to this DCL.
2. Proposals should describe how the contribution of each discipline (CISE and SBE) will contribute to intellectual merit and broader impacts for the SaTC research community. Proposals in which one discipline or set of skills is mainly in service of the other are not appropriate. Ideally, the research will be interdependent, integrated, and will contribute novel understanding and impact on privacy, security, and trust in cyberspace, with contributions valued by both the CISE and SBE communities. Such integration and impact may require extra effort in leadership, regular communication, and cross-training. Proposals must describe how the collaboration will work in the planning, research, and dissemination stages.
3. EAGER is a funding mechanism for supporting exploratory work in its early stages on untested, but potentially transformative, research ideas or approaches. Thus, proposals responsive to this DCL must include a section stating why they are appropriate for an EAGER (for instance, proposals that respond to this DCL may be "high-risk, high-reward" through involving radically different approaches, applying new expertise, or engaging novel disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives). EAGERS may request up to \$300,000 for two years.

Submission of EAGER proposals will be via Fastlane or Grants.gov. EAGER submissions should follow the guidelines for EAGER awards contained in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG). The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=pappg](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg). To ensure proper processing, please begin the proposal title, and the subject line of your initial email, with: **DCL: SaTC: Early-Stage Interdisciplinary Collaboration.**

Submission of EAGER proposals in response to this Dear Colleague Letter does not apply against the limits on submissions to the SaTC solicitation [NSF 18-572](#).

Please contact the following SaTC program directors regarding this DCL:

Sara Kiesler ([skiesler@nsf.gov](mailto:skiesler@nsf.gov))

Dan Cosley ([dcosley@nsf.gov](mailto:dcosley@nsf.gov))

Susanne Wetzel ([swetzel@nsf.gov](mailto:swetzel@nsf.gov))

Sincerely,

Fay Cook  
Assistant Director, SBE

Jim Kurose  
Assistant Director, CISE