NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 21-075

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for ACCESS NSF 21-555 and NSF 21-556

1. What is the anticipated start date for NSF 21-555 and NSF 21-556 Awards?

2. My institution does not qualify as an Institute of Higher Education (IHE). Would my institution be able to participate in NSF 21-555 or NSF 21-556?

3. Can I / my institution submit proposals to both NFS 21-555 and NSF 21-556?

4. Will I require detailed knowledge about existing incumbent activities to prepare a successful proposal?

5. What services will be provided to help transition each track's services?

6. If a service provided by the current NSF-supported cyberinfrastructure(CI) coordination services landscape is not visible in this solicitation, will that service continue?

7. Is each Track in 21-555 expected to be self-contained or will it need to interact with other tracks?

8. What does NSF mean by "dedicated, circumscribed staff" in the User Services track? Does this denote any expected structure or budget guidance?

9. Are there additional opportunities for Minority Serving Institutes to grow and train a diverse workforce?

10. Is ACO proposer expected to fund efforts of the executive council members, or the executive council members must budget their effort for coordination in their own Service proposals?

11. Can I submit to just a subset of solicited services within any one Track?

12. How do you envision the integration of the multiple tracks in 21-555 and 21-556?

13. What is the range of NSF-funded CI resources which will be allocated in Track 1?

14. How do you describe an end user, in terms of novice, advanced, etc.?

1. **What is the anticipated start date for NSF 21-555 and NSF 21-556 Awards?**

   Awards for NSF 21-555 and NSF 21-556 are expected to be made in FY 2022, subject to the outcome of proposal reviews and availability of funds.

2. **My institution does not qualify as an Institute of Higher Education (IHE). Would my institution be able to participate in NSF 21-555 or NSF 21-556?**

   Yes. There are opportunities for an organization that is not an IHE to participate. As set forth in solicitation, organizations that do not qualify as an IHE may not apply as the *submitting* organization for NSF 21-555 or NSF 21-556. Partnerships between an IHE and certain other organizations are allowed provided that all requirements specified in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide and the solicitations are met.

3. **Can I / my institution submit proposals to both NFS 21-555 and NSF 21-556?**

   Yes. Eligibility information on NSF 21-555 and 21-556 are **independent**. Hence, an institution can submit and/or an individual may be PI on one proposal to NSF 21-555 **and** one proposal to NSF 21-556.

4. **Will I require detailed knowledge about existing incumbent activities to prepare a successful proposal?**

   No. NSF seeks innovative proposals that can drive new thinking and transformative discoveries in all areas of science and engineering (S&E) research and education including where applicable, the transition of certain existing activities to the proposer's vision. Proposals to NSF 21-555 and NSF 21-556 will be reviewed using the National Science Board (NSB) approved merit review criteria, intellectual merit and broader impacts, and respective solicitation-specific review criteria. The eXtreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment (XSEDE) project and the XSEDE Metrics Service (XMS) project have made material, including documents labeled transition plans, available on their web presences. Any material presented by incumbent awardees on their web presences are the views of the awardee(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the NSF or the US Government.

   Detailed knowledge about existing incumbent activities will not be expected from proposals.

5. **What services will be provided to help transition each track's services?**

   NSF seeks innovative proposals that can drive new thinking and transformative discoveries in all areas of S&E research and education including, where applicable, the

transition of certain existing activities to the proposer's vision.

NSF is committed to ensuring a smooth transition to minimize impacts on the community.

6. **If a service provided by the current NSF-supported cyberinfrastructure(CI) coordination services landscape is not visible in this solicitation, will that service continue?**

The services currently being solicited are specific to calls NSF 21-555 and NSF 21-556. For more information about NSF's vision for the CI service ecosystem more broadly, as well as other facets of the CI ecosystem more broadly, visit NSF's blueprint a National Cyberinfrastructure Ecosystem for Science and Engineering in the 21st Century.

7. **Is each Track in 21-555 expected to be self-contained or will it need to interact with other tracks?**

NSF 21-555 expects to fund five awards to establish a suite of CI coordination services as five independently-managed, yet tightly-interrelated services. Each of the five service tracks has an associated set of requirements detailed in the body of the solicitation, including defined roles and responsibilities for the services, and specific requirements to interface operationally with one or more other defined ACCESS services and with a coordination function to be organized by NSF separately from solicitation 21-555.

8. **What does NSF mean by "dedicated, circumscribed staff" in the User Services track? Does this denote any expected structure or budget guidance?**

No. Proposers are encouraged to develop innovative solutions that are responsive with this and other guidance in the solicitation. The Allocation and Utilization Assistance plan should detail how the activity will, in conjunction with the General User Assistance plan, respond to queries from external individuals (customers) via dedicated, circumscribed staff who rely extensively on coordination with, reach back to, and hand-off to Allocation Services and relevant computational resource providers as appropriate.

9. **Are there additional opportunities for Minority Serving Institutes to grow and train a diverse workforce?**

Yes. Proposals for every track will be reviewed against the Broader Impacts criterion. Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to, the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology,

engineering, and mathematics (STEM); improved STEM education and educator development at any level; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

10. **Is ACO proposer expected to fund efforts of the executive council members, or the executive council members must budget their effort for coordination in their own Service proposals?**

    Solicitation 21-555 describes the scope of activities to be funded in each of the five tracks. Every track description in Solicitation 21-555 includes the sentence "The PIs for the proposal awarded in this track will be expected to serve on the ACCESS Executive Council, as managed by the ACO." Additionally, solicitation 21-556 refers to an agreement which will be reached between the ACCESS awardees of all the tracks and the ACO regarding the "number of other ACCESS award senior personnel as secondary members or observers." Respondents to solicitation 21-556 are encouraged to describe their proposed approach to creating the Executive Council.

11. **Can I submit to just a subset of solicited services within any one Track?**

    No. The tracks are purposefully defined. Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with ALL the requirements and criteria of a given track.

12. **How do you envision the integration of the multiple tracks in 21-555 and 21-556?**

    These solicitations seek to advance NSF's blueprint of a National Cyberinfrastructure Ecosystem for Science and Engineering in the 21st Century. Well-defined process interfaces will enable integration of the multiple tracks, which will be independently-managed, yet tightly-interrelated efforts, in concert with the Executive Council, and advisory bodies coordinated by the ACO.

13. **What is the range of NSF-funded CI resources which will be allocated in Track 1?**

    CI resources that will be allocated must include the range of computing resources funded in the NSF advanced computing systems portfolio including Leadership-class Computing, Advanced Computing Systems & Services, High Throughput Computing (HTC) environments such as Partnership to Advance Throughput Computing (PATh) (funded as a continuation of Open Science Grid), as well as NSF-funded CI resource providers that have committed to provisioning resources and services to the wider national S&E community, such as those funded through the Major Research

Instrumentation (MRI) and Campus Cyberinfrastructure (CC*) programs, and any other resources deemed necessary by the proposer to enable transformative research in next-generation, end-to-end S&E discovery workflows.

14. **How do you describe an end user, in terms of novice, advanced, etc.?**

It is imperative that these services be made broadly available to prospective and current end users from the Nation's S&E research community consistent with the goals and intent of the diverse set of NSF-funded resources. These services support critical aspects such as allocation, measurement and user support, and enable researchers across every field of NSF-supported S&E to effectively and efficiently use the CI ecosystem and ensure overall user productivity in spite of rapidly changing application and CI landscapes.

Note that End User Support Services activities funded via this track are not expected to include general CI community learning and workforce development, which is separately supported through OAC's Learning and Workforce Development programs.