



**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

**NSF 22-046**

## Dear Colleague Letter: International Collaboration Supplements in National Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes

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February 16, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

With this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), NSF invites requests for supplemental funding from existing awardees of the National Artificial Intelligence (AI) Research Institutes program ([NSF 20-503](#), [NSF 20-604](#)) to add a new — or strengthen an existing — international dimension to their award. International collaboration should advance efforts to achieve the goals of the institute as outlined in the existing NSF award. Supplemental funding requests should represent mutual benefit and true intellectual collaboration with international partners.

These supplemental funding requests are anticipated to be for up to \$300,000. Funding should provide support for activities intended to begin and make substantial progress on the proposed activities within 12 months of the supplement being awarded. Any international collaborative activities that both enhance the vision of the submitting AI Institute(s) and advance the goals and impact of the National AI Research Institutes program are in scope for this funding opportunity. For further guidance on the scope, please contact the NSF program directors listed at the end of this DCL.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

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Supplemental funding requests may be submitted by active NSF-supported National AI Research Institutes; National AI Research Institutes with awards from USDA/NIFA should contact their program officer. The PI, co-PI(s), senior personnel, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral researchers currently funded under the existing NSF award may participate in the international collaboration. Supplemental funding is not intended to significantly increase the personnel allocations from the base project.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

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All supplemental funding requests will be subject to NSF's merit review process, as described

in the *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The supplemental funding request must be prepared in accordance with the guidance specified in PAPPG Chapter VI.E.5 and submitted electronically via the NSF FastLane system. The following information should be included in the request:

- A summary of the proposed work. Describe both the intellectual merit and broader impacts of the proposed activities.
- Justification of the Need for the Supplemental Funds, including:
  - Succinct statement of the Institute activities with a focus on those relevant to the supplement request.
  - Project plans. Summarize the major goals of the new activities, the scientific and technical approaches to be used, and the expected outcomes.
  - Nature of proposed collaboration. Describe collaborative arrangements including the roles for the international investigator(s). If applicable, provide information on the history of collaborative efforts between the proposed partners (new versus existing collaborations). This description should address why the international collaboration is needed to conduct the proposed activities and the benefit of the partnership to advance the field of study. This might include — but is not limited to — specialized skills, knowledge, data, equipment, facilities, and other resources the collaborators bring to the project. The description should also describe active engagement of U.S. students and early career researchers in the collaborative research, where appropriate.
- Qualifications of the research partners. In accordance with PAPPG Chapter II.C.2.f., provide a three-page biographical sketch for each U.S. and international investigator named in the supplemental funding request (to be uploaded as a supplementary document).
- Documentation from the international collaborator(s) (individuals or organizations as appropriate). Provide a letter of support signed by the international PI of the foreign organization(s). This letter must indicate their role in the project and the proposed duration of the collaboration. If they will provide resources (e.g., materials and supplies, instrument time, training, housing, etc.), the letter must describe such resources. Letters with such detail should not exceed 3 pages and should be uploaded as a supplementary document.
- A budget justification of the supplemental request.
- A one-page supplementary document describing contingency plans for the disruptions caused by events such as COVID-19.

## **WHAT MAY BE COVERED**

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The budget may only cover costs for the U.S.-based proposing institute to engage in the proposed international collaboration, such as travel expenses and research-related

expenses. Requests for supplemental funding submitted in response to this DCL may not include requests for direct funding support to foreign organizations.

NSF will not approve requests for supplemental support for such purposes as defraying the costs of increases in salaries, wages or staff benefits or for additional indirect cost (F&A) reimbursement, whether caused by a change in the indirect cost rate or by changes in direct cost expenditures which affect the indirect cost base.

Funding requests may include international travel to establish relationships and/or to engage in research activities, but travel to international conferences or educational programs will not be considered for this supplemental funding opportunity. Given the status of the COVID-19 pandemic, PIs are strongly encouraged to plan for virtual, hybrid or other alternative approaches in addition to international travel. It is expected that these approaches will extend collaboration beyond the actual international trip and strengthen the collaboration overall.

## **WHEN TO APPLY**

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Supplemental funding requests must be received by April 1, 2022.

### **Cognizant Program Officers:**

PIs are strongly advised to consult with AI Institute Program leads ([AllInstitutes@nsf.gov](mailto:AllInstitutes@nsf.gov)) and their cognizant NSF program officer prior to submitting a supplemental funding request.

Points of contact for this DCL:

- James Donlon (CISE/IIS)
- Rebecca Hwa (CISE/IIS)
- Kleanthis Psarris (OD/OISE)

Sincerely,

Margaret Martonosi  
Assistant Director, Computer and Information Science and Engineering

Kendra Sharp  
Office Head, Office of International Science and Engineering