



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 22-080

Dear Colleague Letter: National Science Foundation and the Social Science Research Council Partnership to Advance Scientific Knowledge about the Impact of Public Health Guidance

May 2, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

With this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) notifies the research community of a collaboration with the [Social Science Research Council \(SSRC\)](#) on a coordinated effort to identify and jointly support research that advances knowledge about the impact of public health guidance.

SSRC is a private foundation based in Brooklyn, NY, that collaborates with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Craig Newmark Philanthropies and other private foundations to fund research focused on advancing scientific knowledge about public health guidance. It "fosters innovative research, nurtures new generations of social scientists, deepens how inquiry is practiced within and across disciplines, and mobilizes necessary knowledge on important public issues."

Across the country, public- and private-sector decision makers are working to improve the situation for those who face public health challenges. Many seek ways to improve the impact of public health guidance to promote the health and well-being of individuals and the broader society at the community, regional, national and global levels. What steps can be taken to improve the use, usefulness and impact of basic science-based public health information?

To help focus research on what we know and can learn about how individuals, groups and institutions make decisions related or in response to public health issues, NSF is partnering with the SSRC in a collaboration called "Advance Scientific Knowledge about the Impact of Public Health Guidance."

NSF is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; to secure the national

defense..." The many programs NSF runs receive and fund proposals that contribute to knowledge regarding public health guidance. For example, in a period from March 2020 through July 2021, for the programs from the Social and Economic Sciences (SES) division, there were more than 60 awards funded that advance knowledge regarding public health guidance.

Drawing on their complementary strengths, these two funders intend to jointly fund proposals that advance scientific knowledge about the impact of public health guidance. The public interest in this endeavor is self-evident in the time of COVID-19, but even after this pandemic is successfully managed, there will continue to be a public interest and societal need, not only in the U.S. but across the globe, for research to clarify what contributes to the impact of public health guidance.

PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Investigators who are interested in being considered for joint NSF-SSRC funding should follow the proposal preparation guidelines contained in the [NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#) and submit proposals to the participating programs listed below. To designate the proposal as being related to this research topic and submitted in response to this DCL, proposals must include "NSF-SSRC:" at the beginning of the proposal title. Other prefix information (e.g., "Collaborative Research:") may precede "NSF-SSRC:".

Proposal submissions to NSF in response to this DCL should adhere to the deadline(s) and submission requirements for the primary program for which they are applying.

PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS

- [Accountable Institutions and Behavior \(AIB\)](#)
- [Cultural Anthropology](#)
- [Decision, Risk and Management Sciences \(DRMS\)](#)
- [Developmental Sciences](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [Human Networks and Data Science - Research \(HNDS-R\)](#)
- [Law and Science \(LS\)](#)
- [Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace \(SaTC\)](#)
- [Science and Technology Studies \(STS\)](#)
- [Science of Organizations \(SoO\)](#)
- [Science of Science: Discovery, Communication, and Impact \(SoS:DCI\)](#)
- [Social Psychology](#)
- [Sociology](#)

REVIEW PROCESS

Successful research proposals submitted to NSF will have scientifically sound research plans that are explicitly rooted in relevant theory and literature. Proposals will be evaluated using the standard National Science Board approved merit review criteria of intellectual merit and broader impacts. Proposals submitted in response to this DCL with the indication that they wished to be considered for joint NSF-SSRC funding will be evaluated as part of the regular review process for the programs they are submitted to.

After scientific, technical and programmatic and merit review and consideration of appropriate factors, selected proposals will be identified for funding by NSF. Proposals submitted to NSF in response to this DCL that have indicated a request for consideration for joint NSF-SSRC funding by using the "NSF-SSRC:" prefix as part of the proposal title will be shared with SSRC. These proposals will have their award title and abstract provided to SSRC to notify them of NSF's decision to jointly fund the project(s).

PIs will be asked to participate in post-award activities such as meetings, conferences and webinars that SSRC may develop and fund independent of NSF.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT

For awards receiving joint NSF and SSRC funding as part of this DCL, awardees shall be instructed to use the following acknowledgement language in any publication: "This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under grant no. (NSF grant number) and is supported in part by funds from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC)."

Note: This is not a new funding opportunity or a call for additional proposals. The purpose of the DCL is to inform the community of the opportunity for joint NSF-SSRC award support. Investigators must indicate their interest in being a candidate for joint NSF-SSRC funding support by using the "NSF-SSRC:" prefix in the proposal's title, as well as indicating their potential contribution to advancing knowledge about the impact of public health guidance.

Questions about this DCL should be directed to the relevant program where the proposal will be submitted.

Sincerely,

Kellina Craig-Henderson
Acting Assistant Director
Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences