LIMITED SUBMISSION COMPETITION GUIDELINES

National Science Foundation

EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Program:
Track-2 Focused EPSCoR Collaborations (RII Track-2 FEC)

Internal Pre-Proposal Deadline: 12:00 p.m. CST on November 12, 2018
Letter of Intent Deadline: November 26, 2018
Full Proposal Deadline: January 25, 2018

Overview and Purpose

The Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) is designed to fulfill the National Science Foundation (NSF) mandate to promote scientific progress nationwide. The EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Program: Track-2 Focused EPSCoR Collaborations (RII Track-2 FEC) program builds inter-jurisdictional teams of EPSCoR investigators in scientific focus areas consistent with NSF priorities. Projects are investigator-driven and must include researchers from at least two RII-eligible jurisdictions with complementary expertise and resources necessary to tackle those projects, which neither party could address as well or rapidly alone. For FY 2019, RII Track-2 FEC proposals are invited on a single topic: “Harnessing the Data Revolution to solve problems of national importance.”

The proposed science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) research and education activities should seek to broaden participation through the strategic inclusion and integration of different types of individuals, institutions, and sectors throughout the project. Proposals must describe a comprehensive and integrated vision to drive discovery and build sustainable STEM capacity that exemplifies diversity of all types (individual, institutional, geographic, and disciplinary). The development of diverse early-career faculty is a critical component of this sustainable STEM capacity.

There is no limit on the number of RII Track-2 FEC proposals in which UAB faculty may participate as sub-awardees. However, UAB is able to submit a single proposal as the primary applicant in response to the current RII Track-2 FEC program solicitation. Faculty wishing to serve as the PI of an RII Track-2 FEC proposal in 2019 must submit an internal pre-proposal by 12 p.m. CST on November 12, 2019.

Internal Pre-proposal Instructions

Formatting and Submission Information

Use one-inch margins on all sides and an NSF-allowable font for body text. Text used in captions and figures may be smaller, but it must be readable.

Applications must be submitted as a single PDF via email attachment to uabresearch@uab.edu. Please include “RII Track-2 FEC internal pre-proposal” in the subject line of the message. The submission deadline is 12:00 p.m. CST on Monday, November 12, 2018.

Required Content

Prepare the following information – in the order described – as a single PDF file:
1. **COVER PAGE – LIMITED TO 1 PAGE**

Provide the following information:

- An informative project title.
- The name of the Principal Investigator (PI) and his/her title and department/center affiliation(s).
- A list of up to four Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs). Include the titles and institutional and departmental/center affiliations of these individuals. *Each proposal must have at least one collaborator from an academic institution or organization in a different RII-eligible jurisdiction listed as co-PI.*

2. **PROJECT SUMMARY – LIMITED TO 1 PAGE**

Provide a summary description of the proposed RII Track-2 FEC project written in the third person and in a manner informative to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader. The project summary must consist of three parts that use the following headings:

- **Overview:** Provide an overview of the vision and goal(s) for the collaboration, a description of the project objectives and methods to be employed, the expected impacts of the proposed activities, and the plan for sustaining the collaboration beyond the award period.
- **Intellectual Merit:** Describe the potential of the proposed project to advance scientific knowledge and discovery.
- **Broader Impacts:** Describe the potential of the collaborative project and its resulting activities to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

3. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES**

Present the proposed activities in a clear, compelling way and describe how the activities will lead to long-lasting impacts. Include detailed information about the following:

- **Status and Overview (1/4 page suggested).** Describe the motivation and rationale for establishing the collaboration, and how the proposed project addresses the identified research focus area for the FY 2018 competition: *Harnessing the Data Revolution to solve problems of national importance.*

- **Results from Relevant Prior Support (1/4 page suggested).** Describe results from relevant prior NSF support and the relationship of any such activity to the proposed activities explained. In addition, this section should summarize the coordination and synergy among EPSCoR and other NSF investments in the participating jurisdictions.

- **Research, Collaboration, and Workforce Development (1 1/2 pages suggested).** Describe the long-term research and education goals, intellectual focus, and planned activities in sufficient detail to enable their scientific merit and broader impacts to be assessed. Present proposed research in the context of other efforts in the field (with appropriate references). State the major challenges and how they will be addressed, and comment on novelty and/or originality of the proposed approach. Summarize plans for recruitment or development of diverse early-career faculty and plans to prepare them for future leadership roles.

- **Inter-jurisdictional Collaborations and Partnerships (1/4 page suggested).** Present the rationale for the composition of the team, describe the leadership structure, and the context for establishing the collaboration. Coordination and synergy among the collaborators should be summarized and the role of each of the faculty-level investigators should be clearly defined. Describe mechanisms that will be used to foster collaboration across the team and risk-mitigation strategies.

- **Workforce Development (1/4 page suggested).** Describe a series of STEM workforce development activities that are integrated with the research and education components of the project and discuss how they will contribute to the preparation of a diverse, new cadre of skilled researchers, innovators, and educators.
• **Evaluation and Assessment Plan (1/4 page suggested)**. Describe plans for developing a formative and summative evaluation and assessment plan, including goals, metrics, and milestones.

• **Sustainability Plan (1/4 page suggested)**. Provide a plan for long-term sustainability of the proposed activities. Describe the strategy for sustaining the impacts and achievements of the project beyond the award performance period.

4. **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES – LIMITED TO 2 PAGES PER INVESTIGATOR**

Provide a biographical sketch in NSF format for the PI and Co-PIs.

5. **CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT FORMS – NO PAGE LIMIT**

Provide the PI’s and Co-PIs’ current and pending support information in NSF format.

6. **BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION – LIMITED TO 2 PAGES**

Provide a detailed budget (1 page maximum) and budget justification (1 page maximum) for the proposed project. Project periods up to four years in duration may be requested. Award amounts depend on the number of participating jurisdictions.

If two jurisdictions participate, the award amount may not exceed $1 million per year. If three or more jurisdictions participate, the award amount may not exceed $1.5 million per year. See Section B (Budgetary Information) within the program solicitation for other budget requirements.

**Review Process and Evaluation Criteria**

Internal pre-proposals will be reviewed by senior research administrators from the Office of the Vice President for Research. If needed, reviewers from the applicants’ academic unit(s) or external reviewers may be engaged. The Vice President for Research will make the final selection.

In addition to standard NSF review criteria, internal pre-proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria, as applicable:

- Responsiveness of the “Harnessing Big Data to solve problems of national importance” focus area.
- Potential to advance the relevant fields of science and engineering and enhance research competitiveness and research capacity and infrastructure in the jurisdictions.
- Ability of the PI and co-PI(s) to form the intellectual nucleus for a sustained collaborative effort.
- Rationale for a cross-jurisdictional, sustained collaborative effort.
- Potential to recruit and/or develop early-career faculty in the focus area and prepare them for sustained productivity and to broaden participation of underrepresented groups at all levels.
- Potential to achieve meaningful and sustained impacts within the jurisdictions with respect to educational capacity, economic development, and quality of life.
- Potential to reach education and workforce development goals and objectives as a result of the proposed research and the level of integration among shared facilities and research partners.

Notification regarding the outcome of this limited submission competition is expected no later than the close of business on Friday, November 16, 2018.

**Questions**

If you have questions regarding the limited submission competition, contact Kent Keyser, Associate Vice President for Research (ktkeyser@uab.edu or 205-934-7757) or Nathan Meier, Director of Research Development (nmeier@uab.edu or 205-934-0934).