



NSF/EPSC Materials Proposals 2009

Proposals for Cooperative Activities in Materials Research between U.S. Investigators and their Counterparts Abroad

EPSC Closing Date: Wednesday 11th November 2009, 16.00

(Please note: US counterpart proposals should be submitted to the NSF by 17.00, US proposers local time, Wednesday 11th November 2009)

Please note: Any UK applicants considering a resubmission of a proposal that has previously been submitted to this call must contact EPSC.

(Natalie Stear: NSFmaterials@epsrc.ac.uk)

Overview

EPSC is participating in the 2009 call by the National Science Foundation (NSF) entitled: **Materials World Network: Cooperative Activity in Materials Research between U.S. Investigators and their Counterparts Abroad (MWN)**. The NSF website link is: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12820&org=NSF&sel_org=MPS&from=fund.

The call is an initiative to foster opportunities for collaborative activities in materials research between researchers in the U.S. and the rest of the world.

To remove double jeopardy and to simplify the application process, EPSC has agreed with NSF a process where NSF will carry out peer review of the projects under its own system with input from EPSC.

Applicants from the U.K. and the U.S. (and any other collaborating nation) apply to NSF with a joint project or networking activity. EPSC requires U.K. applicants to submit the NSF full proposal along with a completed Je-S application form (for the U.K. part of the project). This will need to be done through the Je-S system on or before Wednesday 11th November 2009 (see Annex 4 for information on how to complete the proposal form).

Please note that you will be able to apply on Je-S from Tuesday 11th August 2009.

Each agency is responsible for funding their respective part if successful. At the end of the process, successful U.K. applicants will be awarded an EPSC grant, providing that eligibility criteria are met and that the justification of resources is satisfactory. This will then be announced without any further peer review from EPSC.

Criteria

U.K. applicants are advised to read the NSF call carefully to ensure that they, their U.S. partners and any other partners address all the criteria and principles set out in the call. NSF advice is that the U.S. applicant telephones them to discuss the remit and criteria of the call.

Projects to be supported by EPSRC through this competition should fulfil the following criteria in addition to existing EPSRC criteria for research grants (for further information please see the EPSRC Funding Guide).

- Proposals must have a clear relevance to fundamental materials phenomena, synthesis, characterisation and/or properties, or materials processing/fabrication and fall within **NSF's remit** for the call. This may differ to EPSRC's remit and must therefore be checked with NSF prior to submission. EPSRC and NSF reserve the right to reject any proposal that does not fulfil the submission criteria.
- Projects should aim to achieve **intellectual balance** between the respective partners. This is an important feature of the call and where the intellectual input or benefit is judged to be one-sided this will be a disadvantage in the peer review process.
- Proposals may also be associated with proposals from other nations participating in the NSF call as necessary for the project, but this third-party involvement is not a requirement of the call. Participating funding agencies and their contacts are listed in the NSF call.
- Projects should be formulated to demonstrate the necessity and **value of active collaboration** with the U.S. and with any other partner(s), and should not be potentially stand-alone. Both sides of the project must be fundable in order for either side to provide funding but the collaborative nature and the added value of that collaboration will be an important criterion in the assessment of the overall grant by both reviewers and the Panel.
- The NSF call strongly encourages exchanges of students and PDRAs between the U.S. and abroad and places **emphasis on opportunities for students and junior researchers** to participate in an international research and education experience.
- NSF places importance on integrating research and training in an international and diverse environment as well as achieving societal outreach. This is important to consider. For more details see the NSF website.

Annexes

- 1) Key steps and dates
- 2) Who can apply?
- 3) How to apply
- 4) How to complete the EPSRC proposal form
- 5) Peer Review
- 6) Results and full proposals
- 7) Contacts
- 8) Other ways to collaborate internationally

Annex 1

NSF/EP SRC Materials Proposals 2009 Key Steps and Dates

Date	Action	Person/Body responsible
By Wednesday 11 th November 2009	Formulate and scope a joint project. U.K. institution to cost its involvement.	Applicants – U.K., U.S. and any other
Wednesday 11th November 2009, 17:00 (US proposers local time)	Submit full proposal to NSF	U.S. applicant(s)
Wednesday 11th November 2009, 16:00 (UK time)	Submit EPSRC Proposal form via Je-S to EPSRC	U.K. applicant(s)
November-early December 2009	Eligibility checks by both agencies.	EPSRC and NSF
December-January 2010	EPSRC provides NSF with peer review suggestions, NSF approaches reviewers.	EPSRC and NSF
February-March 2010	NSF topic-based panels for MWN proposals held at NSF in Arlington, Virginia.	NSF
April-May 2010	Respective NSF/EP SRC/any other agency agree which of the top-rated proposals to fund jointly.	NSF and EPSRC
May 2010	Notification of unsuccessful outcomes	NSF and EPSRC
May 2010	EP SRC and NSF fund respective parts of the project subject to satisfactory justification of resources and eligibility	NSF and EPSRC
May-June 2010	EP SRC Grant announced	EP SRC

Annex 2

Who can apply?

- All U.K. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may apply for research grants. HEIs are defined as those organisations that are funded by the Funding Councils.
- Certain elements of funding are also open to approved Research Institutes (RIs) and approved Independent Research Organisations (IROs). For full details please refer to the EPSRC Funding Guide.
- Principal Investigators must be academic employees of an eligible organisation and must be resident in the U.K.
- Principal Investigators should normally hold a permanent post but fixed-term employees may be eligible provided that the EPSRC can be satisfied that the host research organisation is prepared to give the individual all the support normal for a permanent employee and that there is no conflict of interest between the investigator's obligations to EPSRC and to any other organisation or employer. The term of employment of a fixed-term employee must extend beyond the duration of the proposed research project. If you are unsure about any aspect of eligibility, please contact EPSRC to discuss.

Annex 3

How to apply

You should submit your proposal using the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/>). When adding a new proposal you should select Council 'EPSRC', document type 'Standard Proposal' and the 'Standard' Scheme. On the Project Details page you should select the 'NSF/EPSRC Materials Proposals 2009' call.

Please note that your full proposal should include a copy of the equivalent U.S. proposal that is submitted to NSF in place of a Case for Support.

Details of which Research Organisations are eligible to apply are available at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/eligibility.htm>.

Note that clicking 'submit document' on your proposal form in Je-S initially submits the proposal to your host organisation's administration, not to EPSRC. Please ensure you allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the Call closing date. EPSRC must receive your application by Wednesday 11th November 2009, 16:00. This is the same date as for counterpart proposals to the NSF.

Guidance on the types of support that may be sought and advice on the completion of the research proposal forms are given on the EPSRC website (<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ResearchFunding/HowToApply/default.htm>) which should be consulted when preparing all proposals.

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How to complete the Proposal form:

Please note that you will be able to apply on Je-S from Tuesday 11th August 2009.

- a. Please cost the U.K. proposal in accordance with normal Full Economic Costing principles.
- b. Where **more than one U.K. institution** is involved in the same project, only one common proposal form should be submitted by the lead organisation to request the total funds.

The submitting organisation should be the organisation of the lead/coordinating applicant for the U.K. side of the project. This lead/coordinating applicant should be shown as Principal Investigator. The other U.K. members of the consortium should be entered in the role of Co-Investigator. The total resources for all participants in the project should be entered but not the costs requested by the U.S. partner.

- c. For the **Objectives, Summary, Academic Beneficiaries** and **Impact Summary** sections, please complete as you would a standard EPSRC proposal. The Summary should be suitable for copying as it stands on to the EPSRC website.

- d. Please enter your U.S. collaborator into the **Project Partner** section. Other project partners can also be entered here. You will also be required to provide a letter of support from your U.S. collaborator. Please use the letter of support to explain why you have chosen to work together and the benefits that this will provide to the U.S. and the U.K.

- e. For the **Case for Support**, please submit your **full proposal** as submitted to NSF. The normal page limit for the Case for Support will not be applied for this call. You are advised to convert the document to PDF format prior to uploading it to Je-S.

- f. Your **Justification of Resources** must not exceed a page and must justify the reason why you are asking for the items and how it will enable the science. This document will not be peer reviewed but will be analysed by EPSRC if you are successful and items may be removed if they are not fully justified.

- g. You do not need to submit nominated reviewers, a work plan or an impact plan with the proposal.

- h. As described in the NSF call <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2009/nsf09600/nsf09600.htm> proposals submitted to NSF by the U.S. counterpart need to include specific information on the counterpart (i.e. U.K.) aspects of the project. For full details of what you need to provide check the NSF web pages and contact your U.S. collaborator.

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Peer Review Procedure

a. NSF will conduct the entire Peer Review process. It will use its normal procedure and criteria common to all proposals received, as described under its call (link above). In addition EPSRC will suggest reviewers to NSF with the aim of obtaining a suitable level of input from EPSRC, subject to practicability. A number of UK reviewers may be invited to participate in an NSF panel.

b. NSF approaches a number of reviewers for each proposal, who submit written reviews by the date of the panel (which often they will also attend). These panels will consider all proposals in a given field received by NSF under the MWN call, including those proposals with a U.K. partner. The panels are expected to be held at the NSF in Arlington, Virginia in February and March 2010.

c. The reviews received before the NSF panel discussion may be "mail only", from reviewers who are not present at the panel, or reviews provided by panel members. In both cases the reviews are provided confidentially in writing in advance of the panel and only seen by all panellists on the day of the panel. **U.K. applicants may wish to note that the reviews are not fed back to applicants for response before the panels.** At the panel the reviews are presented and discussed. This results in a fundability recommendation for each proposal, along with a written summary of the panel discussion on each proposal. The NSF submission and peer review procedures are described, with links to all relevant information, at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2009/nsf09600/nsf09600.htm> .

d. The respective NSF and EPSRC programme managers will decide on which of the proposals from those in the NSF first priority recommendation category they are able to fund jointly, in light of the quality of the proposals as assessed by peer review and the funding available.

While each agency will retain the ultimate responsibility for the decision on the funding, the above process is expected to result in a mutually agreed list of jointly funded projects.

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Results and full proposals

The unsuccessful and successful U.K. applicants are expected to be notified by EPSRC in May 2010.

EPSRC will proceed directly to announcement of the grant providing that the resources requested are fully justified and eligible.

NSF and any other national agencies will each be fully responsible for notifying the results and funding the proposal submitted to their own organisation.

For successful and unsuccessful applicants, NSF provides anonymous copies of the reviews received to the US applicants, as well as the summary of the panel's discussion and funding recommendation. U.K. applicants wishing to see these are requested to obtain copies from their US counterparts.

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Contacts

For U.K. enquiries please contact:

Dr Natalie Stear, Physical Sciences Programme

Tel: (44) (0) 1793 444260, e-mail: NSFmaterials@epsrc.ac.uk

The NSF contacts are:

Dr Uma Venkateswaran, Division of Materials Research

Tel : (1) 703-292-7732, e-mail: uvenkate@nsf.gov

Dr Daniele Finotello, Program Director, Office of Special Programs, Division of Materials Research

Tel: (1) 703-292-4676 e-mail: dfinotel@nsf.gov

Annex 8

Other ways to collaborate internationally

Applicants may wish to note that EPSRC's responsive mode, which has no closing dates, can include proposals where the U.K. partner wishes to involve an international collaborator without a formally linked proposal to a counterpart agency (i.e. NSF). In such cases, which do not fall under this call, the U.S. collaborator should be cited as a Project Partner.

On a research proposal to EPSRC you are allowed to request travel, accommodation and subsistence for travel for yourself or an RA to go to abroad to liaise with other research groups. This can be support for long periods of time to carry out collaborative work (although you will not be funded for working in the lab at all - this would have to come from the host's budget).

Although you are not able to request funding to cover any actual research work by an international collaborator at your university, you can request travel, accommodation and subsistence for them to come over to the U.K. to interact with you. This can include a salary if they are not receiving one from anywhere else during that time.

Please remember that all costs must be fully justified in terms of the need to carry out the scientific programme of work.

The Royal Society also runs schemes to support international collaboration:
<http://royalsociety.org/funding.asp?id=1120>

There is more information about funding from EPSRC and other organisations on our website: <http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/InternationalActivity/HowtoGetFunding/default.htm>.