

2009-NIST-ARRA-MSE-FELLOWSHIP-01 ELECTRONIC APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Overview

The only acceptable form of electronic application submission is through Grants.gov. Electronic application submissions via facsimile, electronic mail, or through means other than the Grants.gov application process, will not be accepted.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until the approaching due date before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through Grants.gov. The Grants.gov registration process must be completed before a new registrant can apply electronically. If all goes well, the registration process takes from 3 to 5 business days. If problems are encountered, the registration process can take up to 2 weeks or more. Applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and must be registered with the Federal Central Contractor Registry and with a Credential Provider, as explained on the Grants.gov web site. After registering, it may take several days or longer from the initial log-on before a new Grants.gov system user can submit an application. Only authorized individual(s) will be able to submit the application, and the system may need time to process a submitted application. Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (a) print any error message received, and (b) call Grants.gov directly at 800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Grants.gov hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) (except for Federal holidays). For assistance with using the Grants.gov, you may also contact support@grants.gov

All applicants, both electronic and paper, should be aware that adequate time must be factored into applicant schedules for delivery of the application. **Electronic applicants are advised that volume on Grants.gov is currently extremely heavy, and if Grants.gov is unable to accept applications electronically in a timely fashion, applicants are encouraged to exercise their option to submit applications in paper format.** Paper applicants should allow adequate time to ensure a paper application will be received on time, taking into account that guaranteed overnight carriers are not always able to fulfill their guarantees.

Do not wait until the last minute to submit a proposal. NIST will not make any allowances for late submissions, including incomplete Grants.gov registration. Any proposals not received by the due date will not be considered.

Content and Form of Application/Proposal Submission

Complete applications/proposals must include the following forms and documents:

- a. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- b. SF-424A, Budget Information Non-Constructions
- c. SF-424B, Assurances Non-Construction
- d. CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying
- e. SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (IF APPLICABLE)
- f. Proposal Narrative
- g. Budget Narrative.

The forms listed in 2.a. through 2.e. above are available as part of the Grants.gov application package for **2009-NIST-ARRA-MSE-FELLOWSHIP-01** and can be completed through the download application process.

Applications must include a Proposal Narrative and a Budget Narrative. Applications that are submitted without a Proposal Narrative and/or a Budget Narrative will be rejected. There is no set format for the Proposal Narrative and the Budget Narrative; however, they must be word-processed documents written by the applicant. The Proposal Narrative should describe in depth the scope of the proposal, its goals, the methods and equipment to be used, its schedule, the personnel working on the project and their qualifications, and the institutional capabilities of the applicant. The Budget Narrative should detail the funds requested, their purposes, and the timetable for using the funds.

The Proposal Narrative is limited to 25 pages. There is no page limit for the Budget Narrative.

The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the application is complete and that it conforms to the requirements of this notice.

Proposals may be structured in any way that the applicant believes will best present the proposed project.

The applicant should address the following issues:

- a. **Qualifications:** Proposals should include a description of the institution's qualifications for conducting the proposed project. Applicant institutions must ensure the availability of students for on-site work experiences in Gaithersburg, Maryland, Boulder, Colorado and Charleston, South Carolina. For training fellowships, the Fellows must work on site at NIST concurrent with their academic programs.
- b. **Needs Assessment:** Proposals should include an explanation of the needs to be met by the proposed project or problems to be solved as a result of conducting the proposed project.
- c. **Objectives:** Proposals should include a description of expected project outcomes and benefits to the participating Fellows and organizations expressed in measurable terms.
- d. **Evaluation:** Proposals should include plans for measuring success or determining the degree to which the project objectives were met.
- e. **Other:** Applicants may provide additional information, which is not required to conform to a prescribed format. For example, applicants may wish to describe any plans for continuing the project with necessary funding beyond the Federal funding currently requested. In addition, applicants may wish to describe the application criteria they plan to use in selecting the different types of Fellows for the program (undergraduate, graduate, post-doctoral, senior).
- f. **Proposal Budget:** Applicants should use the SF-424A to complete the budget submission. In addition to the SF-424A, applicants must provide a detailed Budget

Narrative to explain fully and justify all proposed project funding including each level of fellowship (undergraduate, graduate, post-doctoral, and senior) and other resources. Applications should contain budget estimates for the cost of each type of fellowship, using the following assumptions about the different levels of fellowships:

Research Training Fellowships -- Undergraduate: Working as a Fellow 200 hours per semester during the academic year (9 months) and 400 hours during the summer (3 months).

Cost elements to include in the annual budget:

- Proposed stipend or wage at a rate commensurate with student employment at comparable levels of experience and responsibility. Rates may differ depending on class level (freshman through senior).
- Full tuition assistance at the in-state rate,
- Fringe benefits, and
- Indirect costs.

Research Training Fellowships – Graduate: Working as a Fellow 20 hours per week during the academic year and 40 hours per week in the summer (3 months).

Cost elements to include in annual budget:

- Stipend or wage (equivalent to what a research assistant in the student's given department would receive),
- Full tuition assistance at the in-state rate,
- Fringe benefits (which may include fees and health insurance), and
- Indirect costs.

Research Training Fellowships – Postdoctoral: Working as a Fellow 40 hours per week year-round.

Cost elements to include in annual budget:

- Stipend or wage,
- Relocation expenses, (optional and usually limited to \$5,000 per Fellow),
- Other miscellaneous expenses (travel, conferences, training),
- Fringe benefits (including health insurance), and
- Indirect costs.

Senior Research Fellowships: Working as a Fellow 40 hours per week year-round.

Cost elements to include in annual budget:

- Ranges of stipends or wages, commensurate with varying levels of experience and skill,
- Relocation expenses, (optional and usually limited to \$5,000 per Fellow),
- Other miscellaneous expenses (travel, conferences, training),
- Fringe benefits (including health insurance), and
- Indirect costs.

Each proposal should include necessary costs to provide oversight of the program. All successful applicants will be required to have a Program coordinator. Responsibilities of the successful applicant's Program coordinator include: serving as a single point of contact for the various organizations participating in the Program, for Program applicants and participants, and for NIST scientists and engineers; assisting Fellows, their home organizations, and NIST advisors in implementing the program and resolving any difficulties that may arise; and serving as the signatory on all agreements between NIST, the Administering Organization, and each Fellow. The number of Fellows and number of hours worked are purely illustrative and do not reflect any commitment as to the number of Fellowships that may be approved under any resulting cooperative agreement.

The Proposal Narrative and the Budget Narrative should be attached using the Add Attachments option in field 15 of the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).

Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions to ensure the attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicating a proposal is received does not provide information about whether the required attachments have been received.

In order for an application to be considered complete, it must meet all the application documentation requirements stated in the Federal Funding Opportunity notice.

For further information or questions regarding applying electronically, please contact Christopher Hunton at 301-975-5718, e-mail address christopher.hunton@nist.gov or Sue Li at 301-975-8817, e-mail address sue.li@nist.gov.