



EPSCoR Research Fellows

**An Opportunity for Early and
Mid Career Investigators**

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Outline



- The EPSCoR Research Fellows Mechanism
- Solicitation-Specific Merit Review Criteria
- Closing Remarks

Purpose and Useful Links



- The goal for today is to inform the community about the recently released EPSCoR Research Fellows solicitation.
- Solicitation Number: [NSF 23-535](#); up to \$300,000 over 2 years
- Deadline: April 11, 2023
- Please use the links below to access the solicitation and resources to assist with proposal preparation:
 - Solicitation : <https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/epscor-research-infrastructure-improvement-track-4-0>
- Recent Webinar Recording and Slides (scroll down a bit)
 - Link: <https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/epscor>

NSF EPSCoR: Building Jurisdiction-wide Research Capacity



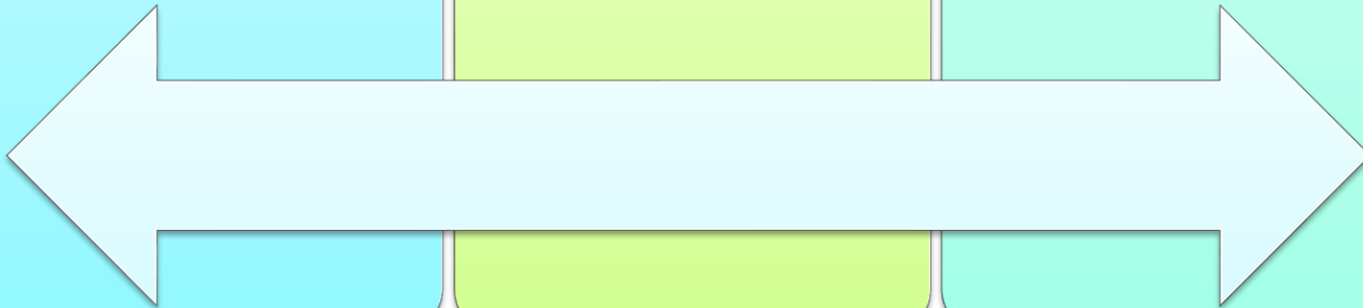
**Discovery &
Innovation**



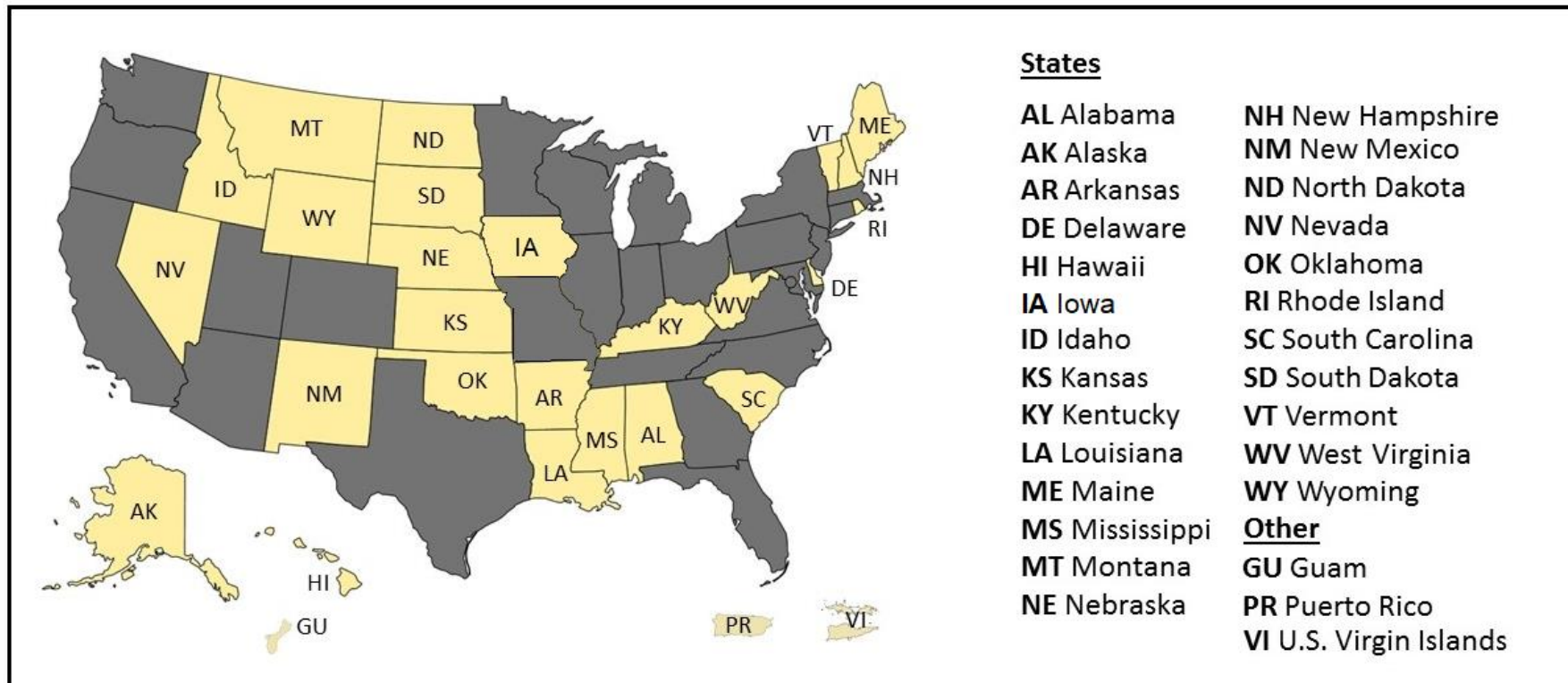
**Education &
Workforce**



**Economic
Development**



NSF EPSCoR FY23 Eligibility



- States, Commonwealths, and Territories are eligible for funding if their most recent 5-year level of total NSF funding is equal to or less than 0.75% of the total NSF budget.
- Eligibility table updated annually and publicly available:

https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/epscor/nsf_oiaa_epscor_eligible.jsp

RII Track-4 EPSCoR Research Fellows Opportunity



- Provides opportunities for **non-tenured** (or equivalent) and **tenured** investigators to further develop their individual research potential through extended collaborative visits to the nation's premier private, governmental, or academic research centers.
- Fellows will be able to:
 - learn new techniques,
 - benefit from access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities
 - strengthen collaborative partnerships,
 - extend their research toward transformative directions
- Experiences gained through fellowships are intended to provide:
 - Time to develop new or extend current research directions.
 - A pathway to strengthen research connections with partners nationwide.
 - benefits that will impact the recipient's career in years to come.
- These benefits to the Fellows are also expected to in turn enhance the research capacities of their institutions and jurisdictions.



What Goes in the Proposal?

- Successful RII Track-4 proposals will present exciting, vibrant fellowship ideas that will positively impact and potentially transform the PI's individual career trajectory and more broadly impact his/her research field, institution, and jurisdiction.
- All proposals should include:
 - Motivation and research context for the work to be conducted;
 - Defined, reasoned, and organized research objectives which could be driven by specific research questions or hypotheses
 - PI's specific plans for the fellowship period; and
 - Discussion for how the benefits gained from the fellowship would be sustained beyond the award;
 - Clear specifications of fellowship goals, performance metrics, and a timetable;
- Explain how/why the RII Track-4 award will advance the work – what specific opportunities will be made possible *via* the PI's extended visit(s) to the host site?
 - The parameters for the partnership should be clearly established.
- Describe how the activities will lead to long-lasting impacts for both the PI's career and the home institution/jurisdiction.



What's new in the NSF 23-535 solicitation?

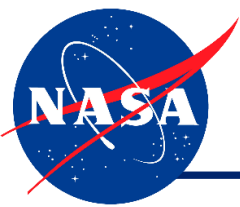
- The PI Eligibility has been expanded to include non-tenured and tenured Assistant and Associate professor ranks (or equivalent ranks).
- The Budgetary Limitations have also been expanded to allow for travel funds allocated for the host collaborator.
- The fellowship provides opportunities for extended or periodic collaborative visits to the selected host site for a minimum of 1 month.
- The RII Track-4:FAST has been renamed to RII Track-4:@NASA.
- NASA Centers: All NASA Centers are eligible to participate in the RII Track-4:@NASA sub-track.
- Number of Proposals: The number of allowable proposals per institution has also been increased from three to four in both RII Track-4:NSF and RII Track-4:@NASA.



- RII Track-4: NSF, host sites may be any research institution within the United States or its territories/possessions.
 - Generally expected to be beyond easy commuting distance from the home institution.
 - Any topic that NSF funds is eligible



Photo by [Elena Mozhvilo](#) on [Unsplash](#)



RII Track-4: @NASA



- RII Track-4: @NASA is a collaboration between the NASA and NSF EPSCoR programs.
- Host sites are selected NASA Research Centers
- Specific topics are eligible based on the NASA Research Center (links to these topics are available in the solicitation)
- Specific Institution types are eligible
- Research Focus Areas: <https://www.nasa.gov/stem/epscor/rii-track-4/index.html>

The screenshot shows the NASA website's navigation bar with links for Topics, Missions, Galleries, NASA TV, Follow NASA, Downloads, About, and NASA Audiences. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a banner for "NASA STEM Engagement" with the tagline "INSPIRE ENGAGE EDUCATE EMPLOY The Next Generation of Explorers". Below the banner, there is a section titled "EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) Track-4: EPSCoR Research Fellows". The text in this section describes the EPSCoR program's mission to promote scientific progress nationwide and lists eligible jurisdictions. It also details the EPSCoR RII Track-4 program, which aligns with NSF's strategic goal of establishing sustainable Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) professional development pathways. The program provides awards to build research capacity in institutions and transform the career trajectories of investigators, offering opportunities for strong collaborations through extended or periodic collaborative visits to a selected host site.

NASA Research Focus Areas:

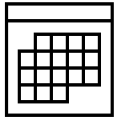
 [nasa_research_focus_areas-01-09-2023.xlsx](#)

 [nasa_research_focus_areas-1-09-2023.pdf](#)

RII Track-4:@NASA Funding Information



Planning to fund up to 10 proposals



Access to NASA facilities starting as early as Q1 2024



Teams can visit NASA facilities for 24 weeks during the two-year timeline

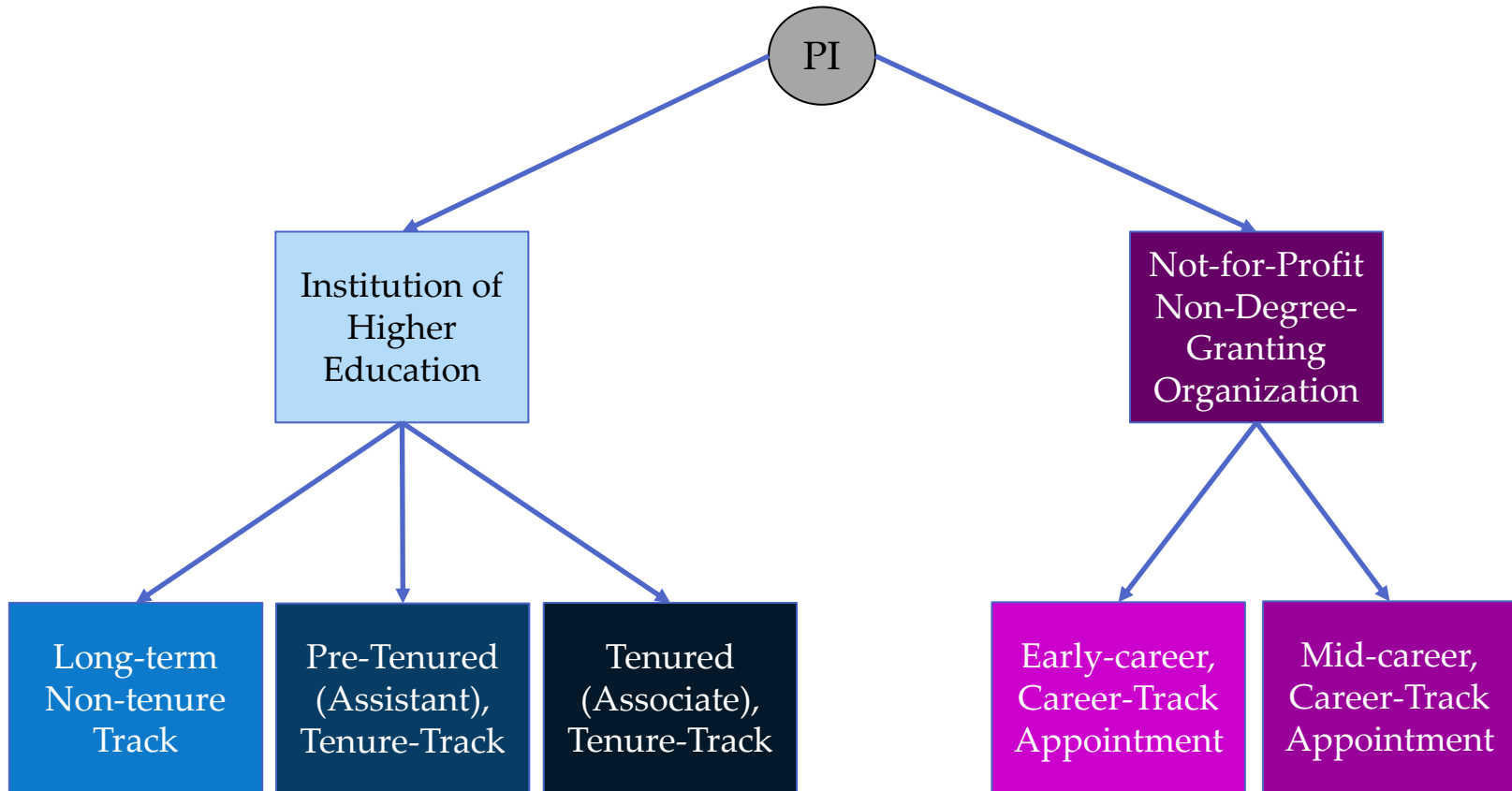


The NASA research collaborator also serves as mentor to the PI and Technical Monitor for the project; will provide site visits and annual reports.

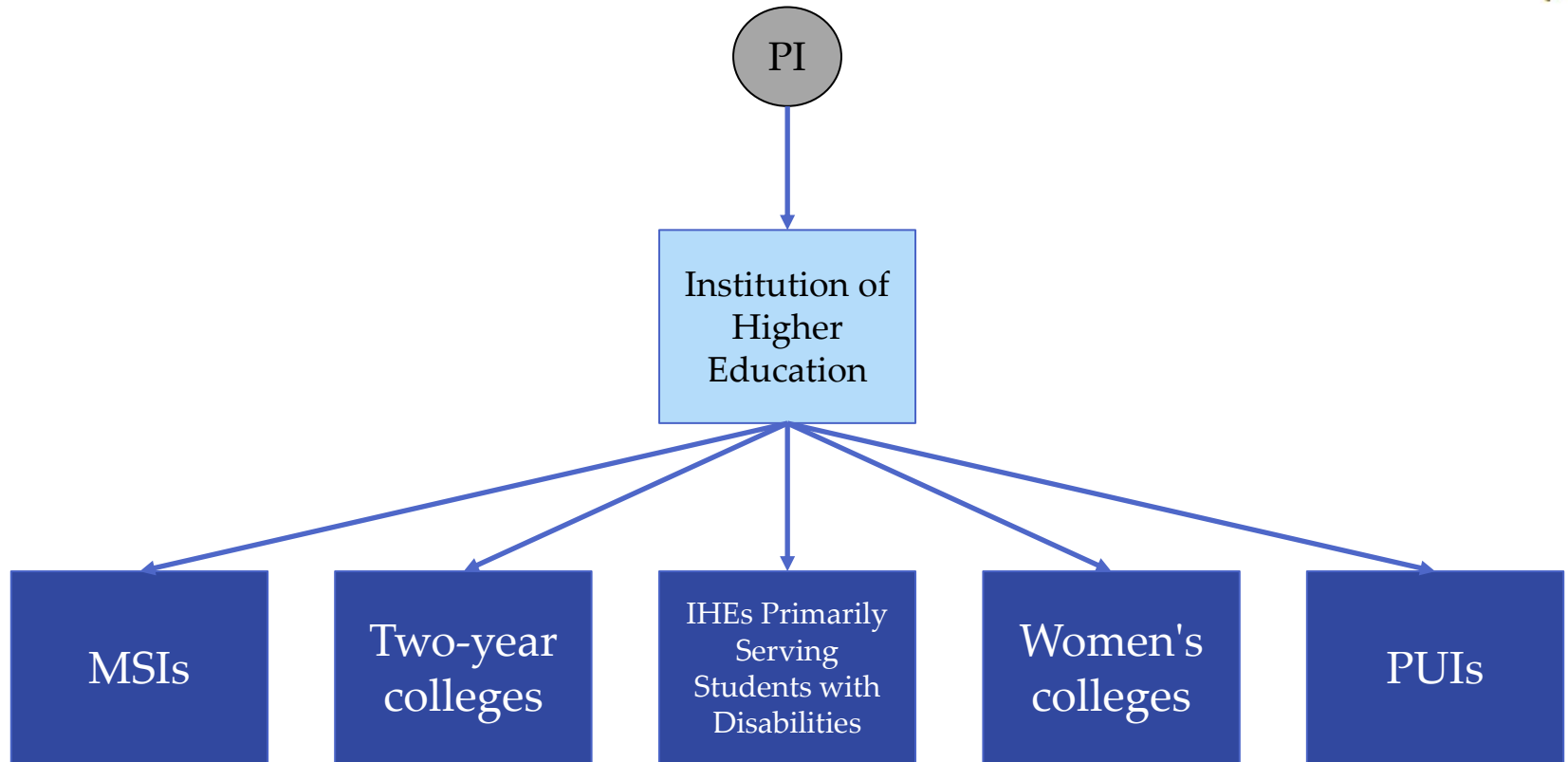


U.S. citizenship is required for research opportunities at specified NASA Centers. Lawful permanent residents are eligible for research opportunities at specified NASA Centers.

EPSCoR Research Fellows Eligibility



RII Track-4:@NASA Eligibility



EPSCoR Research Fellows: Budget Request Overview



- For **both** tracks, NSF budget requests may be up to \$300,000 over a duration of **24 months**
 - Up to 6 months of salary support for the PI and **one** trainee-level participant
 - It is expected that the PI will complete a minimum of a **one** month extended visit to the host institution, or an equivalent of several periodic visits totaling one month.
- There are **no** budget caps on travel, lodging or other direct costs.
 - PIs are **not** allowed to split their fellowship period between two or more host sites.
- Up to \$10,000 may be requested for the host collaborator for travel related to the fellowship project which includes visit to the PI's home site and/or participation in conferences where the collaborative work is presented.
- For **RII Track-4:@NASA**, an additional \$60K Research Infrastructure Development (RID) grant from NASA for research infrastructure at home institution is available

Required Letters



Please provide all letters as supplementary documents

At least one letter is required in each of these three categories:

1. From the appropriate supervisory administrator at the PI's home institution.
 - Should confirm the institution's support of the PI's plans and particularly should verify that the PI will receive release time from other academic duties to complete the project as proposed.
 - Should also confirm the PI's employment status at the home institution as it pertains to eligibility for the RII Track-4 competition.
2. From the identified primary research collaborator(s) at the host site.
 - Should confirm the collaborator's understanding of the goals of the fellowship and provide evidence to demonstrate that the PI will receive the support necessary to complete the proposed activities.
 - For RII Track-4:@NASA, this letter will be provided through the [NASA EPSCoR Coordinator](#).

Required Letters (cont.)



3. For RII Track-4:NSF, a letter must be provided from an appropriate administrative manager at the host institution.
 - Should confirm that all necessary logistical arrangements (site access, office space, cyber connectivity) to ensure that the project can proceed as proposed.
 - In the rare cases where the PI believes the primary research collaborator at the host site is also the appropriate administrative manager, the PI should contact a program officer from NSF EPSCoR for guidance.

Additional Letters from other parties may be submitted only if they are needed to verify specific tangible commitments related to activities described in the proposal. PIs will be required to remove letters that do not meet this standard.

Additional Letters For RII Track-4:@NASA



4. Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs)

- For this category, a fourth letter, from an Authorized Organizational Representative, certifying that the originating and managing institution is an accredited college or university
 - that awards Associates degrees, Bachelor's degrees, and/or Master's degrees in NSF-supported fields,
 - **and** has awarded **20** or fewer PhD/DSci degrees in all NSF-supported fields during the combined previous two academic years

Merit Review Criteria cont.



- Solicitation-Specific Criteria:
 - What evidence is presented to demonstrate that the proposed research outcomes can be achieved **within the constraints of the fellowship period**, with the work being **performed primarily at the host site**?
 - How will the fellowship have **a transformative impact** on the trajectory of the PI's research career both during the period of the award and beyond?
 - How will the fellowship yield **tangible benefits to the home institution and/or jurisdiction** beyond the individual benefits to the PI?
 - What **evidence** is there that the home institution and the host site are each committing the necessary resources, both scientific and administrative, to lend confidence that the fellowship project will be successful in achieving its intended outcomes?

Contact information



- National Science Foundation:
 - Chinonye Nnakwe Whitley, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8458, email: cwhitley@nsf.gov
 - Jose Colom-Ustariz, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-7088, email: jcolom@nsf.gov
 - Pinhas Ben-Tzvi, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8246, email: pbentzvi@nsf.gov
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration:
 - Jeppie Compton, NASA, telephone: (321) 867-6988, email: Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov
 - Ali Shaykhian, NASA, telephone: (321) 289-0512, email: Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov
 - Dawn M. Martin, NASA, telephone: (321) 747-8093, email: Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov



EPSCoR Research Fellows Outreach

- PIs are encouraged to attend the outreach events for questions regarding this opportunity.
 - Office hours at 2:00 PM ET on the dates below:
 - Thursday, February 2, 2023
 - Friday, February 17, 2023
 - Thursday, March 2, 2023
 - Friday, March 17, 2023
 - Thursday, March 30, 2023
- **Please use this link to register:**
https://nsf.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_ttChdLcOSyS8gWf35b6TYg
- Submit questions in advance to cwhitley@nsf.gov
- While real time captioning will be available, requests for additional accommodations may be sent to cwhitley@nsf.gov 14 days in advance.

In Summary



Steps to a successful application:

1. Consult with your sponsored research office regarding internal competitions
2. Identify a collaborator at a host site or NASA Center*
* For RII Track-4:@NASA: Review the research [focus areas](#) to find alignment with available opportunities and contact the NASA EPSCoR Agency Coordinator
3. Write the proposal narrative and obtain letter(s) of support
4. Contact NSF and NASA POC regarding questions
5. Submit your proposal through [Research.gov](#)** **well before** the deadline of April 11, 2023

**If you are interested in reviewing for this opportunity, please send your CV to an NSF POC and you will be asked to complete a reviewer survey in advance of the deadline.

Thank you!

