

Pilot Funding for New Initiatives (Pfund)

Answers given by Board of Regents staff in response to questions asked in response to the **FY 2010-11 Pfund RFP** as of **December 1, 2010**.

Last day to ask questions about the RFP: December 1, 2010

Proposal deadline: December 6, 2010

1. **Q.** Section II.A.2 lists a format requirement for the project description text of "No more 6 lines of text within a vertical space of 1 inch." Could you please clarify?

A. This means that a vertical section of the text that measures one inch can have no more than six lines of text.

2. **Q.** In section II.A.2, typefaces for the proposal have been specified but at the same time, PIs are required to complete the forms that are on the RFP (e.g. budget and the cover page). Should the PIs change the format on those forms in order to conform to the fonts (typefaces) in the entire proposal?

A. As noted in Section II.A.2., the format requirements refer only to the Project Description.

3. **Q.** Section II.B.3 notes that the Project Description should "provide a statement of work." What do you mean by this statement? Is this the same as objective(s) or goal(s) of the project?

A. As noted in the instructions, the statement of work lists the major research tasks to be carried out, a timeline for accomplishing the tasks, and expected outcomes. The statement of work can include the goals and objectives or illustrate how the goals and objectives will be accomplished.

4. **Q.** Is there a maximum or minimum number of pages of references?

A. No.

5. **Q.** Can I apply for a Board of Regents Support Fund Research Competitiveness Subprogram (RCS) grant for next year's cycle (2011-2012) if I were to be awarded a Pfund grant this year (2010-2011)?

A. Receiving a Pfund grant will not make you ineligible to apply for an RCS grant.

6. **Q.** Can funds be requested to support a graduate student as a part time research assistant (i.e., an RA, which is equivalent to a teaching assistantship)?

A. Support of graduate students is an allowable request.

7. **Q.** Is it possible for two co-investigators to submit an application, rather than one principal investigator?

A. Pfund awards are usually single-investigator. While co-PIs are allowable, one and only one individual must be listed as principal investigator.

8. **Q.** Is paying participants for time they spend participating during a study an allowable expense?

A. The NSF Grant Proposal Guide, under the section dealing with "Other Direct Costs (Lines G1 through G6 on the Proposal Budget), states:

*Any costs proposed to an NSF grant must be allowable, reasonable and directly allocable to the supported activity. The budget must identify and itemize other anticipated direct costs not included under the headings above, including materials and supplies, publication costs, computer services and consultant services. Examples include aircraft rental, space rental at research establishments away from the grantee organization, minor building alterations, **payments to human subjects**, service charges, and construction of equipment or systems not available off the shelf.*

So, yes, payments to human subjects are allowable if they are directly allocable to the supported activity.

9. **Q.** Given that the Pfund RFP states that the goal of the program is to enable faculty to submit more competitive federal proposals, particularly to NSF, how much will a non-NSF focused proposal impact the evaluation of my application?

A. The proposal evaluation form that is included with the RFP contains the criteria the reviewers use to judge the proposals, one of which is the potential of the proposed project to attract federal funding. NSF is not specifically mentioned in this criterion, so the reviewers are neither required nor instructed to give added weight to proposals that are directed toward NSF funding.

10. **Q.** The RFP states that "This program is limited to the science and engineering research disciplines supported by NSF." However, I am unclear if my research topic would fit into that definition. The topic is directly related to STEM research and has the potential for attracting a future NSF grant. Would you please advise us regarding eligibility to apply for this grant?

A. As you noted, the Pfund program is limited to the science and engineering research disciplines supported by NSF. For more information about which disciplines are supported by NSF please visit: <http://www.nsf.gov/funding/aboutfunding.jsp>. It is the responsibility of the proposer to make the case that the proposed research is among the disciplines supported by NSF.

11. Q. The Cover Sheet requests a list of out-of-state reviewers. Are out-of-country reviewers accepted? Or, should the list of prospective reviewers be made up of individuals within the United States, but outside of Louisiana?

A. It is strongly preferred that the reviewers be from the U.S., as they are paid a nominal honorarium and it is very difficult to send payment to foreign individuals.

12. Q. How frequently are Pfund RFPs issued?

A. Pfund RFPs are usually issued once each calendar year. This is contingent upon the receipt of annual funding increments from the National Science Foundation to support the Louisiana EPSCoR program.

13. Q. To whom should letters of support be addressed?

A. The RFP does not specify the addressee for letters of support; support letters will be accepted regardless of the addressee.

14. Q. Are figures and tables considered as part of the 5 pages for the project description?

A. Yes.

15. Q. Is foreign travel allowable under the Pfund program?

A. There is no restriction on foreign travel, but requests for such travel should be justified in the proposal.