

## Pilot Funding for New Initiatives (Pfund)

Answers given by Board of Regents staff in response to questions asked in response to the **FY 2012-13 Pfund RFP** as of **September 20, 2012, which was the last day to ask questions about the RFP.**

**This is the final list of Q&A for this competition.**

**Proposal deadline: September 27, 2012**

1. **Q.** *Are fringe benefits for graduate assistants an allowable cost under the Pfund program?*  
**A.** If your institution routinely charges fringe benefits on graduate assistants, it is allowable.
  
2. **Q.** *A faculty member at my institution is going to apply for a Pfund grant but has been asked by a colleague to provide some training support on his application. Is this a conflict or will the faculty member be able to help the colleague and still have her own grant as well?*  
**A.** This would not appear to be a conflict.
  
3. **Q.** *How likely is it that the NSF will approve a third year of funding for the Louisiana NSF EPSCoR program? I noticed that the RFP says that funding is anticipated - I don't want to move forward on a proposal if funding is not going to come through.*  
**A.** It is extremely likely. Louisiana has had a series of EPSCoR awards over the last 20 years and has never had an annual funding increment disapproved.
  
4. **Q.** *I noticed that EPSCoR solicits seed-grant research from science and engineering faculty members. How likely is it that a proposal from a social scientist would be considered a strong contender for funding? I don't want to develop a proposal if funding tends to be reserved for engineers and non-social scientists.*  
**A.** The Pfund program is limited to the science and engineering research disciplines supported by NSF, and the social and behavioral sciences are among those that NSF supports. There are no specific disciplines that are favored when Pfund proposals are evaluated.
  
5. **Q.** *I have been a PI and co-PI on two NSF funded awards. The project I will outline in the proposal would be a new research area for me and would be a major shift in my current research direction. Will my past success in gaining NSF funding work against me in the evaluation of my proposal?*  
**A.** The Pfund program is available to tenured faculty that require a shift in their current research direction; it is generally assumed that tenured faculty will have a record of funding. The Pfund proposals are evaluated using the criteria as set forth in the

Proposal Evaluation Forms that are attached to the RFP; the criteria do not specifically address prior funding, and the reviewers are not given instructions beyond those listed on the form.

6. **Q.** *How can the Pfund award be used to support students? Is Pfund eligible for supporting an REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) program? If yes, how would such a program be supported?*

**A.** Funds associated with a Pfund award can certainly be used to support undergraduate students, but Board/EPSCoR staff cannot provide specific instructions to proposers on structuring their proposals. You may wish to consult with colleagues who have been awarded Pfund projects, or contact your campus office of sponsored research for guidance.

7. **Q.** *Can I apply for a Pfund award, although I have a no cost extension on a previous Pfund that was awarded in FY2010-11?*

**A.** According to the terms of the RFP, only those who were awarded new Pfund awards in FY2011-12 are ineligible to apply to this round; you do not fall into this category.

8. **Q.** *Can I be PI on one proposal and co-PI on another?*

**A.** You can be a Co-PI on one proposal and still submit one for which you are PI; but please refer to section I.D. of the RFP, entitled "Eligibility". It states that one and only one individual can be listed on the cover sheet. If you are Co-PI on a proposal, your name must not appear on the cover sheet for that proposal; only the name of the PI appears.

9. **Q.** *My Pfund application is based on some prior work that has been submitted for publication. Can a submitted manuscript be attached as an appendix to the application?*

**A.** The only attachments which may be included are letters of support.

10. **Q.** *NSF proposals require separate statements of "Intellectual Merit" and "Broader Impacts". Does the application need distinct sections for these areas? Do we need to address "Broader Impacts"?*

**A.** Section II.B.3 of the RFP describes the requirements for the project description. There is no requirement for separate statements describing intellectual merit or broader impact.

11. **Q.** *I work in an area of research that deals with diabetes related vascular complications such as stroke and heart attack. Typically, we apply to NIH for funding our research. I noticed on the website that Pfund is supported by NSF and the program is limited to disciplines supported by NSF and applications targeting funding*

*from NSF will have priority. I would like to know if our research in animal models of disease examining the effect of diabetes on heart attack is considered Pfund?*

**A.** 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.

NSF does not normally provide support for research with disease-related goals, including work on the etiology, diagnosis, or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals, or clinical trials; however, the NSF does support research in biomedical engineering and research that, because of its fundamental science content, may be applicable to disease problems.

**12. Q.** *The area of research that my proposal is based on involves the generation of transgenic mice. Although my institution does not have a transgenic mouse facility, (another in-state institution) does, and charges a fee for this service. Is the cost of having a transgenic mouse generated an allowable cost for the Pfund program?*

**A.** According to the RFP, the only disallowed budget items are: charges for tuition; faculty and post-doc salaries; and indirect cost charges. Other costs (with proper justification) are allowable.

**13. Q.** *Does the following project fit within the scope of the Pfunds program? The purpose of the project is to implement the aspects of museum-based learning (or informal learning) that have been found to be effective in other research and measure the impact on teachers' instruction and elementary students' achievement in science.*

**A.** As stated in the RFP, the Pfund program solicits "seed-grant research proposals from the State's tenured and tenure-track science and engineering (S&E) faculty members seeking funding to demonstrate an innovative or novel concept that can result in attracting federal funds." To be considered for a Pfund award, a proposed project must necessarily involve research.

Board of Regents/EPSCoR staff cannot make specific recommendations as to proposal topics; proposers should read the RFP carefully to ascertain whether their proposed project falls within the scope of the program.

**14. Q.** *When submitting Pfund proposals, if IRB approval is necessary for the proposal, does this documentation need to be included with the final submission in LOGAN?*

**A.** This documentation does not need to accompany the proposal.

**15. Q.** *Under the Eligibility section, it states that individuals must hold a regular tenured or tenure-track S&E position. I am an assistant professor but I am neither tenured or tenure-tracked. Can I apply perhaps with my chairman as a Co-PI who is tenured or tenure-tracked?*

**A.** Eligibility for Pfund is limited by the RFP to either tenured or tenure-track faculty. Pfund awards are usually single-investigator. While co-PIs are allowable, one and only one individual must be listed on the cover sheet as principal investigator, and that person must be tenured or tenure-track.

**16. Q.** *Is paying a research associate allowable? The RFP states that faculty salaries are not allowed, but I am not sure if you count research associates as faculty.*

**A.** The determination of whether research associates are faculty or not is the purview of the institution. Because Pfund awards are small seed-funding grants, it is imperative that funds for personnel be fully justified. It is also preferable to have students perform research tasks whenever possible.

**17. Q.** *Is it appropriate to name a co-investigator from another institution? What needs to be done before submission in this regard? A sub-award? Does listing a co-investigator jeopardize your chances of receiving the award?*

**A.** Please refer to question #8 above. If a subaward is required, you are advised to contact your sponsored research office for guidance on how to proceed. The Pfund proposals are evaluated using the criteria as set forth in the Proposal Evaluation Forms that are attached to the RFP; the criteria do not specifically address co-PIs, and the reviewers are not given instructions beyond those listed on the form.