

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 10, 2012**

Last day to ask questions about the RFP: September 20, 2012

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.