

EPSCoR Opportunities for Partnerships in Technology with Industry (OPT-IN)

Answers given by Board of Regents staff in response to questions in response to the Request for Proposals as of **October 17, 2012**.

The last day to answer questions is **November 26, 2012**

Proposals Due: December 3, 2012

Question:

Can Co-PIs be included in an OPT-IN proposal?

Answer:

Yes. The cover page provided has spaces to list Co-PIs.

Questions:

1. We have a technology which is being developed for a medical device and we have received funding from NIH to develop the technology further, but this funding does not emphasize the LA contribution of the project. Would the OPT IN be something that could be used to develop the LA portion of the project? Would this be category I or category II?

2. We have a related technology which is currently in the idea phase and could quickly move into the prototype phase for another medical device. We have not received funding to develop this technology but would be highly motivated to pursue an SBIR for it. Would the OPT IN be something that could be used to develop that? Would this be category I or category II?

3. If the answer is that the category I is more appropriate, what should I do if the other companies involved do not have funds for cost sharing? We are currently waiting on funding from an SBIR to finance developing these technologies, but would not have funds for cost sharing for at least a year.

Answers:

Board/EPSCoR staff cannot make specific recommendations on what category a proposal should be submitted under; proposers should read the RFP carefully, keeping in mind the following thoughts:

The RFP states that the OPT-IN program is designed to facilitate collaboration with private sector industrial/business entities. In the case of Category I awards, private sector cash match is an absolute requirement. So any proposal that does not include this cash match will automatically be disqualified.

Category II awards are to be used specifically for prototype development which can result in the commercialization of a product, or formation of a spin-off company, and—as stated in the RFP—do not require this cash match. However, Section I.A. of the RFP states that the OPT-IN program is limited to the science and engineering research disciplines supported by NSF. It is up to the proposer to make the case that what is proposed falls within this limitation.

Question:

As stated in the RFP, the category II award should be used for prototype development, which can result in the commercialization of a product. If I am going to develop a modeling training session/course for local industry companies, can it be considered as category II?

Answer:

The idea of developing a training course is different from those typically seen in Category II OPT-IN proposals. Ultimately, the reviewers will determine how such a proposal would fare in comparison with the other proposals received. It would not be disallowed, but it would be in the proposer's interest to make the case for such an approach as compelling as possible.

Question:

Can I have a Co-PI outside the university? This person graduated from my institution and is now working in industry. If the answer is no, can an outside person join the program as a volunteered collaborator or consultant?

Answer:

Because eligibility for the OPT-IN program is limited to tenured or tenure-track faculty members at institutions of higher education, co-investigators must conform to this requirement as well. Projects may include collaborators and/or consultants.