U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 23-107

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Centers for Research and Innovation in Science, the Environment and Society (CRISES)

(**Updated as of 3/28/24**)

1. What is the NSF CRISES Program?

2. What is the goal of the NSF CRISES Program?

3. How can planning awards inform future centers?

4. What is a center?

5. How do I gauge whether my planning proposal is a good fit for the NSF CRISES program?

6. Can an individual serve as PI or Co-PI on more than one submission?

7. What is the allowable duration of a CRISES planning award, one or two years?

8. What is the difference between a target date and a deadline?

9. Will proposals or center concepts be considered from single institutions or are the eventual centers to be supported envisioned to be multi-institution efforts?

10. Can a research team include participants from outside the social, behavioral, or economic sciences and can concepts span to topics relevant to other NSF directorates?

11. The DCL indicates that co-investigators can be experts in other disciplines. Some of our specific research aims require interdisciplinary collaboration from other disciplines (e.g., computer science). Does this put us at a disadvantage?

12. Is there further guidance on the structure for planning proposals?

13. Can research teams still submit a concept note for a planning proposal after May 1st?

14. Do you have timeline or budget information for the center grant submissions?

15. Whom should I contact if I have a question not addressed on the website or in the FAQs?

1. **What is the NSF CRISES Program?**

   The U.S. National Science Foundation seeks to build research capacity and infrastructure to address complex and compounding national and global crises whose solutions require a human-centered approach. To help generate effective and long-lasting solutions that benefit the entire U.S. public, NSF is providing this funding opportunity to inform possible future Centers for Research and Innovation in Science, the Environment and Society (CRISES). The program is described in the CRISES program description and the Dear Colleague Letter: Catalyzing Human-Centered Solutions through Research and Innovation in Science, the Environment and Society.

2. **What is the goal of the NSF CRISES Program?**

   The goal of the NSF CRISES program is to fund centers that will catalyze new research and research-based innovations to address seemingly intractable problems that confront our society. These centers will develop evidence-based solutions that address fundamental quality-of-life issues, such as those involving the environment, extreme weather and sustainability; workforce and the economy; equity and access to opportunities; and well-being.

   The current DCL seeks to support teams in the development of planning proposals that help them create an approach for a full center-level program.

3. **How can planning awards inform future centers?**

   Planning activities can provide teams the opportunity to develop structures that would ultimately compose a center. This includes forming partnerships with stakeholders, working as a team to refine the scope and vision for a center, and creating a vision for the potential broader impacts of a center, including diversity, workforce development and education. Building the framework for a center requires time and investment to strengthen relationships and refine a common vision and planning proposals are intended to support teams in that process.

4. **What is a center?**

   Centers address opportunities in which the complexity of the research problems or the resources needed to solve them require the advantages of scope, scale, change, duration, equipment, facilities and students that can only be provided by an academic research center. Centers focus on investigations at the frontiers of knowledge not normally attainable through individual investigations, at the interfaces of disciplines or by

incorporating fresh approaches to the core of disciplines. Centers focus on integrative learning and discovery and demonstrate leadership in broadening participation through focused investments in a diverse set of partner organizations and individuals. In doing so, they draw upon, and contribute to, the development of the Nation's full intellectual talent. More information about centers can be found in Chapter II.F of the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG).

5. **How do I gauge whether my planning proposal is a good fit for the NSF CRISES program?**

   Prior to submission of a planning proposal, prospective PIs are required to submit a research concept outline of up to two pages that includes the project title, team members, institutions involved and a summary of the project concept. Concept outlines should be submitted by email to NSF_CRISES_Program@nsf.gov by May 1, 2024. To ensure proper processing, the subject line of the email should begin with: "Planning: CRISES:". NSF program directors will review the concept outlines and will authorize PIs of those that fall within the scope of this DCL to submit a full proposal. Comments will primarily focus on responsiveness to the DCL scope as concept notes generally do not provide sufficient basis to provide evaluative feedback on potential quality or merit.

6. **Can an individual serve as PI or Co-PI on more than one submission?**

   A researcher may only serve as a PI on one submission for the CRISES DCL. The CRISES DCL does not have a prohibition on the number of submissions on which a researcher can be a Co-PI.

7. **What is the allowable duration of a CRISES planning award, one or two years?**

   Most planning grants will be awarded for one year, though up to two years is allowable. The strongest proposals will identify effective plans to develop their ideas for a center proposal. If more than one year is envisioned, the proposal should clearly justify why it would take a team two years to realize outcomes. Please keep in mind that the maximum award amount allowed for a CRISES planning grant is $100k regardless of whether the award duration is one or two years.

8. **What is the difference between a target date and a deadline?**

   Target Dates are dates after which proposals may still be accepted, but for full consideration submissions should be submitted by the target date. *Deadline Datesare dates after which proposals will not be accepted or will be returned without review by NSF.*

   The target date for full proposal submissions to the CRISES Program is by 5 p.m. Eastern time on **July 1, 2024**. Given the tight timing of when proposals will be reviewed

for inclusion in funding recommendations for the current fiscal year, there may only be limited flexibility around this target date. Please treat this as a firm due date.

9. **Will proposals or center concepts be considered from single institutions or are the eventual centers to be supported envisioned to be multi-institution efforts?**

   There are no eligibility criteria related to the number of institutions involved in a submission and there is no prescribed structure (single institution or multi-institution).

10. **Can a research team include participants from outside the social, behavioral, or economic sciences and can concepts span to topics relevant to other NSF directorates?**

    Yes, interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research ideas relevant to directorates other than SBE are acceptable. But the strongest proposals will emphasize the potential to advance scholarship in SBE program area, even if they also advance scholarship in other domains of science and engineering.

11. **The DCL indicates that co-investigators can be experts in other disciplines. Some of our specific research aims require interdisciplinary collaboration from other disciplines (e.g., computer science). Does this put us at a disadvantage?**

    While proposals that involve co-investigators from fields within other scientific disciplines are encouraged, this is not a requirement for a CRISES submission. Planned activities must focus on at least one program area supported by the SBE directorate and bring together experts from a range of disciplines.

12. **Is there further guidance on the structure for planning proposals?**

    Please refer to the CRISES DCL and the section of the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide on planning proposals.

13. **Can research teams still submit a concept note for a planning proposal after May 1st?**

    After May 1st, concept notes will no longer be evaluated for consideration of a planning proposal submission. Principal Investigators who have not submitted a concept note for a planning proposal might consider contacting program directors of SBE programs to inquire about the fit of a research idea for regular programs.

14. **Do you have timeline or budget information for the center grant submissions?**

    At this time there is no guidance on additional proposal deadlines for future CRISES submissions. Any announcements of opportunities to submit CRISES proposals in the future will be distributed via NSF distribution lists (select "Social, Behavioral and

Economic Sciences (SBE) funding and updates" from the NSF Email distribution service) and posted on the NSF website.

15. **Whom should I contact if I have a question not addressed on the website or in the FAQs?**

Questions should be directed to NSF_CRISES_Program@nsf.gov.