



BSF Call for Proposals in a Joint NSF-BSF Program in Computational Neuroscience

The U.S.-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) is accepting applications in the Computational Neuroscience (CRCNS) joint funding program with the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF).

The Terms of this program are as follows:

General:

1. This NSF-BSF program is not a “special” program with the NSF setting aside money for potential grants. Rather, it is an integral part of the regular NSF programs in this discipline, with no “special” funds. Clear understanding of it by the U.S. partner is essential before embarking on proposal writing.

Synopsis of Program:

2. The call is limited to applications in Computational Neuroscience, as it is defined by the NSF. **Please read carefully the NSF solicitation document <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2018/nsf18501/nsf18501.htm>) in order to understand the nature of the program, and the type of applications that are being sought. The following comments are meant to help you decide whether to look more carefully at the possibility of applying to the program, but they by no means replace the NSF solicitation, which is the sole source of obligatory information .**
 - Applications must involve a computational aspect, but can also involve empirical work. For example, examines a computational model or shows that the theoretical or analytical approach is on solid ground. Thus, the competition is open to neuroscientists and other scientists who are not classical computational neuroscientists, if they are engaged in appropriate collaborations and their study is relevant to the program .
 - Research projects must be grounded in Biology (as opposed, e.g., to studies pertaining only to artificial neural networks.
 - Applications must clearly demonstrate the added value of the cooperation between the partners.
 - **Applications in Data Sharing Proposals between U.S. and Israeli PIs will be accepted. Please note that the term “data sharing” may be somewhat misleading, and projects that develop new tools for computational neuroscience are central to this part of the solicitation. Please read carefully the NSF solicitation regarding Data Sharing of applications. <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2018/nsf18501/nsf18501.htm>**

3. The CRCNS program is managed by the NSF, but is joined also by the NIH, and is also open to German, French, Japanese and Spanish scientists.
4. Applications must be submitted jointly by an Israeli, and an U.S. scientist from a U.S. research institution. The addition of French and/or German and/or Japanese and/or Spanish scientists to the proposal, to form a multinational proposal, is also allowed.
5. Applications are to be submitted to the NSF according to its submission regulations, even if the application may eventually be chosen for a grant by the NIH. See the NSF solicitation for further details on the joint review process.
6. If awarded a grant, the U.S. scientist will receive a grant from the NSF, or the NIH, while the Israeli scientist will receive a grant from the BSF. Total maximum **combined amount of grants to all partners is limited to \$250,000/year**, excluding overhead and travel budgets (**there is no difference in the maximum sum if the project is binational or multinational!**).
7. The size of the grant to the Israeli is expected to be larger than traditional BSF grants, possibly up to \$80,000/year for experimental studies and \$55,000/year for theoretical and computer based research. These sums are subject to the availability of funds. If more than a single Israeli group is involved in the research, the budget may be increased by up to 50%.
8. Duration of grants to Israelis will follow the approved grant length to his/her partner(s).
9. The program is expected to be held annually.
10. We have put together a presentation with tips for Israeli scientists who wish to submit to the NSF-BSF. You can download the presentation [here](#).

Eligibility:

1. All inquiries regarding the eligibility of the research topic must be made by the U.S. PIs to the program directors at NSF. BSF will not respond to any query regarding topic eligibility.
2. All regulations regarding eligibility of the BSF (for the Israeli PI) or the NSF (for the U.S. PI) will apply to this program.

3. Each Israeli scientist is allowed to submit up to two applications/year, if at least one of them is to any of the NSF-BSF programs that have no deadline.
4. Israelis with active grants are allowed to submit an additional application to any of the NSF-BSF programs with no deadline (they don't have to wait for the last year of their grant before submitting).
5. It is allowed to submit both to an NSF-BSF program and the regular BSF program, including similar applications. In the event that both applications are awarded grants, they will be funded, unless the research applications are mostly similar, in which case only the NSF-BSF program will be funded.
6. In case of similar NSF-BSF and regular BSF applications, in which the NSF evaluation was not completed by the time the regular BSF awards are made, the BSF will defer its decision regarding a possible grant to this application, until the NSF-BSF awards are announced.

Evaluation:

1. Proposals will be evaluated by the NSF, using its [criteria](#). The BSF will create a small screening panel to quickly examine the role of the Israelis in the applications, and ascertain that it is meaningful, and that they have the knowhow and facilities to perform their part in the research. This panel will also advise the BSF regarding the budget requests, but will not evaluate the scientific merit of the applications. However, Israelis may possibly take part in the NSF evaluation process as panel members and/or external reviewers.
2. BSF is likely to fund any Israeli whose partner in this program is funded by the NSF, subject to the eligibility constraints listed above and availability of funds, and to the advice of the Israeli screening panel.
3. NSF uses a conventional peer review system with expert panels and ad-hoc (external) reviews for full proposals. However, unlike the practice in Israel, panel members serve in an advisory capacity, and final decisions lie with the program directors and their management. These post-panel officials may introduce additional considerations such as whether the research topic already has support from the U.S. government, whether support from other NSF programs may be sought, etc.
4. Israeli applicants are advised that they should pay particular attention to the NSF evaluation criteria, http://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/, which may include issues such as broad impact, data management, etc. That are either missing in BSF/ISF applications, or have a greatly different meaning (particularly the term 'broad impact'). **Failure to appropriately refer to such**



topics by the U.S. partner may be detrimental to the proposals, including its rejection without review.

Submission:

The full proposals will be submitted to the program twice.

The U.S. scientist (only) will submit to the NSF using its regulations (http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=ggg) and submission system (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/>). **The U.S. PI submission to the NSF MUST include the BIOGRAPHY (in the NSF format) and BUDGET (in the BSF format) of the Israeli partner as part of the auxiliary material.**

The Israeli scientist (only) will submit to the BSF, also providing the U.S. scientist information, according to its regulations and submission system: <http://www.bsf.org.il/ElectronicSubmission/GatewayFormsAndGuidelines.aspx?PageId=7&innerTextID=0%20>

If the program is Multinational, rather than Binational, only the details of the U.S. partner have to be introduced to the BSF system, but the title of the application must include the term “Multinational”.

Timetable:

Full proposals should be submitted to the BSF no later than 5 pm (Israel time) on December 1, 2019. NSF deadline is Nov. 25, 2019.

Applicants are requested to acquaint themselves with the BSF regulation for this NSF-BSF program before they submit applications. The forms and regulations can be downloaded from the BSF website (www.bsf.org.il) under ‘Guidelines and Forms’.

Questions regarding the applicability of the proposed research for this program should be directed by the U.S. partner to the program officer at the NSF.

Other questions regarding this special NSF-BSF program can be discussed with the BSF management by mail or phone (972-2-5828239): Dr. Rachel (Heni) Haring (heni@bsf.org.il ext. 110) or Ms. Yael Dressler (yael@bsf.org.il ext. 103). Questions regarding the online application system should be directed to Ms. Orli Rozenchwajg (orli@bsf.org.il ext. 109).