

National Foundation of Science and Advanced Technologies

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Instrumentation for Scientific Infrastructure Program

I. Introduction

A. Summary of Important Features of the Program

The National Foundation of Science and Advanced Technologies (NFSAT) announces a three-part merit-based competition in the framework of the “Instrumentation for Scientific Infrastructure (ISI)” program. This program will provide grants to support the purchase of modern major scientific equipment or) scientific software, and improve access by the Armenian scientific community to modern scientific information..

In 2001, in accordance with its organizational objectives, NFSAT initiated a modest effort to renew and expand the instrumentation available to the Armenian scientific community. In the first ISI competition, NFSAT made two awards to the Institute of Chemical Physics of NAS and Center of Medical Genetics of NAS.

The main criterion for these three independent competitions will be the potential impact of the corresponding activity on the entire Armenian scientific community. Assuming sufficient meritorious proposals, a total of approximately \$330,000 will be awarded.

The ISI program is carried out under the prime Award #NFSAT-03-2001 provided by the U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation for the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (CRDF) to support NFSAT in accordance with its “Program of Development of Armenian Scientific and Technological Potential,” which was activated on October 1, 2001.

The organizations submitting proposals to the ISI program must be indigenous Armenian organizations and the Project Directors must be Armenian citizens currently residing and working in Armenia.

The competition will be divided into “Category A”, “Category B” and “Category C”.

- ?? Applicants to “Category A” may request modern research equipment that will enhance the scientific infrastructure in Armenia. The cost of the equipment requested may range from \$100,000 to \$200,000. NFSAT will award a maximum of three grants for “Category A” depending on the amount awarded to each successful applicant.
- ?? Applicants to “Category B” may request up to \$3,000 for licensed world standard single packages of scientific software. NFSAT will award a maximum of four grants for “Category B.”
- ?? Under “Category C,” applicants from an existing or new information center (such as libraries) may request up to \$20,000 in funding from NFSAT to facilitate the Armenian scientific community’s access to modern scientific information. Allowable expenses under these grants include, but are not limited to, computers, information training, Internet access, access to databases of partner libraries and journal subscriptions. Awarded centers will serve as an information resource to the scientific community of Armenia.
- ?? Applicants must submit three original hardcopies and an electronic version of the proposal to NFSAT.
- ?? No more than one project from an organization may be submitted to each category (the faculties of YSU-Yerevan State University and SEUA-State Engineering University of Armenia will be considered as separate organizations). As part of the evaluation process, expert site visits will be made to selected institutions applying to Category A and Category C, and will play a significant role

in the evaluation process. Such institutions will be determined during the initial review process. NFSAT expects to announce the awards no later than four months after the deadline for Category A and no later than two months after the deadline for Categories B and C. The deadlines are listed below.

?? **The deadlines for proposals to be submitted to NFSAT are 6:00 pm local time on:**

- a) **March 29, 2002** for Category A,
- b) **April 30, 2002** for Category B,
- c) **January 31, 2002** for Category C.

B. Program Goals

The goals of the ISI program are to increase the potential of Armenian scientists to carry out research at an international standard and to increase access of Armenian researchers to modern scientific information. NFSAT hopes that this activity will both promote the further integration of the Armenian scientific community with the international scientific community, and also promote Armenian economic development.

C. Required Features of the ISI Program

Though the overall structure of the program is flexible, each ISI center will be expected to share certain characteristics:

- ?? The center should be based at a civilian research institution (university, institute or pure Armenian legal organization);
- ?? The center should be in a position to implement linkages with other scientific organizations in Armenia and the surrounding region;
- ?? The center should be in a position to attract additional research support from national and international sources on the basis of outstanding scientific results.
- ?? The center should be in a position to sustain and improve industrial activities and to create jobs in the region;
- ?? The center should provide opportunities for young investigators;
- ?? The center should be managed by a Project Director who is a researcher and who takes an active part in the development of the institution; the Project Director may not be the institution director;
- ?? The center should demonstrate a cost-sharing commitment (either cash or in-kind) from a local source such as the host institution or a for-profit company.

II. Program Guidelines

A. Eligibility

Each proposal submitted to the ISI program:

- ?? Must come from a civilian research institution;
- ?? Must have the support of the institution director;
- ?? Must include signed one-page letters from other Armenian scientific, educational or industrial organizations indicating their intention to establish linkages with the center and explaining the benefits of their access to the granted equipment.

Note: No individual may appear as a Project Director on more than one ISI project.

B. Proposal Submission

?? Only those proposals received prior to the indicated deadlines (see Section I.A) will be considered for a grant; three hard copies in Armenian must be submitted. In addition to this, applicants to Category A should submit three hard copies of the proposal in English. If the institution submitting a proposal has a Conflict of Interest with the NFSAT Scientific Board, three hard copies in English must also be submitted

for external reviewers, as NFSAT will recuse itself from the review process on such proposals, and the proposals will be reviewed by an outside organization. Each institution may only submit one proposal to the ISI program per category.

??Project Directors must submit their proposals to NFSAT in person.

??Hard copies should be accompanied by a diskette that contains the proposal in Word 6.0/95 format.

??Proposals for “Category A” must be accompanied by a separate set of specifications of the requested equipment. In addition, the applicant must provide a list of three vendors for the equipment. When possible, equipment should be purchased from US vendors.

??All proposals must be complete at the time of submittal.

??No modifications may be made to any item once it has been received by the NFSAT.

??If circumstances change so significantly after the qualification letter or proposal submission that the project can no longer be carried out as proposed, the Project Director should notify NFSAT in writing and indicate that the letter or proposal is being withdrawn from the competition.

??The Project Director’s CV and a separate list of publications during the last five years must be included in the proposal submission. Similar information is requested for all principal team members.

??Any proposal not containing all the required information as described below in Section IIC will be ruled ineligible.

C. Proposal Contents

Each ISI proposal must contain the elements prescribed below. Only proposals that contain this information will be considered. All proposals should be typed by 10pt font size, single-spaced with 2 cm margins on the sides, top, bottom, left and right. All pages should be numbered consecutively in the upper right corner.

Proposals should not exceed ten pages excluding letters of support from external organizations.

1. Cover Form A should include the original signatures of the Project Director and the Institution Director. The signature of the Institution Director must be sealed.

2. Budget Form B:

?? **Category A.** From \$100,000 to \$200,000 will be available for the ISI institution, including equipment delivery expenses to Armenia. ***The budget must be based on primary specifications and should also indicate the expected cost share from the host institution and other sources. The budget should include quotes from no fewer than three vendors.***

?? **Category B.** Up to \$3,000 will be available for the ISI institution, including equipment delivery expenses to Armenia. ***The budget should also indicate the expected cost share from the host institution. The budget narrative should include an indication of the computer resources currently available to run the software.***

?? **Category C.** Up to \$20,000 will be available for the ISI institution. ***The budget narrative should include the following information: an indication of the expected cost share from the host institution, a list of equipment currently available at the host institution, and any other in-kind contributions provided by either the host institution or other sources.***

3. Narrative: The narrative section of proposals to Categories A, B, and C must contain the following elements:

- I. Scope and Linkages:** The proposal should contain a plan for integrating the ISI center with other scientific or industry organizations in Armenia and indicate how the ISI program will positively impact the research works of other organizations. For Category C, the applicant institution is required to identify a U.S. institution willing to provide information and resources on a contracted basis.
- II. Sustainability:** The proposal should contain a plan for maintaining the equipment and for the operation of the center after the award period has ended.

- III. **Young Investigators:** The proposal should indicate how young researchers would be involved in the center or how young scientists will have priority access to the requested equipment.
 - IV. **Management:** There must be a sound management plan for the center. There must be a detailed plan of the management structure, indicating how the center will be operated. The management plan should discuss how the institution will allocate the resources to other regional institutions. Included in this should be any cost structures or fees associated with equipment or resource use, as well as a plan for attracting external users.
 - V. **Civilian Research:** When appropriate, the proposal should indicate the level of involvement of scientists with former defense experience, or collaborations with former defense institutions.
4. **Letters of Support** The proposal should contain one page signed letters of intent from non-applicant institutions indicating the importance of the proposed center and their intention to establish linkages with it. Additionally, any letters of support (for Category C) from U.S. institutions willing to provide resources will strengthen the proposal.

D. Proposal Review

All proposals will be screened for eligibility and completeness upon receipt; those that do not meet the program guidelines will not be forwarded for scientific review. NFSAT will select expert reviewers to evaluate the proposals, and will conduct site visits at selected institutions. The reviewers will use the evaluation criteria listed below to review the proposals. NFSAT will announce the award decisions approximately three months after the deadline dates of the corresponding competitions (see Section I.A). All NFSAT decisions will be final.

- 1. **Intrinsic Scientific Merit:** the likelihood that the project may directly or indirectly lead to new knowledge or novel perspectives or processes that will have a substantial impact on one or more fields of science and the economy of Armenia.
- 2. **Integration of Research and Industry:** the likelihood that the proposed center will promote collaboration between research institutions and local industry, result in improved industrial activity, and create jobs.
- 3. **Civilian Research:** the amount and type of involvement of former defense institutions or defense scientists in civilian-based research.
- 4. **Innovation:** the use of novel administrative or organizational structure, including sharing of resources between institutions and other new external linkages, etc.
- 5. **Technical Expertise:** the experience of the researchers, the technical soundness of the proposed approach, the adequacy of technical resources (existing and requested) available to the center.
- 6. **Management:** the soundness of the plan to manage and coordinate the project.
- 7. **Young Investigators:** the promotion of a sound research environment for young investigators.

E. Confidentiality

The NFSAT will treat all proposals as confidential material and will require all reviewers to respect the confidentiality of proposals. However, proposal authors are advised that successful proposals will be treated as being in the public domain. Therefore, at the author's discretion, specific information in the proposal that is business-confidential and not intended for public dissemination should be clearly labeled as such at the top and bottom of the applicable page of the proposal. Such passages will be withheld from public distribution if the proposal is successful. Proposals that do not result in awards are not subject to public dissemination.

COVER SHEET FOR ISI Categories A and B SUBPROGRAM APPLICATION

I. ISI ACTIVITY	CATEGORY <input style="width: 80px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
a. PROJECT TITLE _____ _____	
b. QUALITY ¹ _____ NEW; _____ SECOND HAND; c. MANUFACTURER _____ YEAR _____	
d. SELLER NAME and CONTACT DATA _____	
e. BRIEF DESCRIPTION of SCIENTIFIC FIELDS _____	
f. QUANTITY of ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN ISI ACTIVITY (number of solicitations) _____	
=====	
¹ For Category A, only.	
II. PROJECT DIRECTOR – <i>the project director is the primary person responsible for the project</i>	
a. NAME: Last _____ First _____ Patronymic _____	
b. Sex M ___ F ___ c. DATE of BIRTH (date/month/year) _____	
c. HIGHEST DEGREE EARNED _____ Field _____ Year _____	
d. OFFICE Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____	
e. PROFESSIONAL TITLE/POSITION _____	
f. PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION _____	
g. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS _____	
h. _____ SIGNATURE* DATE	
III. HOST INSTITUTION	
a. FULL NAME _____	
b. DESCRIPTION of SCIENTIFIC FIELDS _____	
c. STATUS _____	
b. FULL ADDRESS _____	
c. CONTACT DATA: Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____	
d. BRIEF CHARACTERIZATION of DEFENCE RESEARCH and DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE TO BE APPLIED TO CIVILIAN WORK _____	
IV. INSTITUTION DIRECTOR	
a. NAME: Last _____ First _____ Patronymic _____	
b. DATE of BIRTH (date/month/year) _____	
c. HIGHEST DEGREE EARNED _____ Field _____ Year _____	
d. OFFICE Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____	
e. PROFESSIONAL TITLE/POSITION _____	
f. PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION _____	
g. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS _____	
h. _____ SIGNATURE; SEAL of ORGANIZATION* (only one application may be submitted from each institution) DATE	
* By signing this application, I certify that I meet all the eligibility requirements in this announcement and that I will honor all conditions of the program.	

BUDGET FORM FOR ISI Categories A and B SUBPROGRAMS

	Item Request (For Category A system's crucial components and their prices must be listed)	Amount Requested from NFSAT	Amount Contributed by Institution
Purchase (Name of Equipment or Software)			
Delivery to Armenia			
Maintenance Supplies			
Salary			
Security			
Total Requested			

BUDGET FORM FOR ISI Category C SUBPROGRAM

Individual Financial Support (no more than 3 persons including Project Director will be involved; maximum IFS will be 50% of individual salary)			Amount Requested (in US Dollars)
Name	Amount Per Month	# Months	
1.			
2.			
3.			
TOTAL INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT			
Equipment and Supplies (Please list. All items over \$1,000 must be justified in the Budget Narrative. If more space is needed, please list on separate page.)			
1.			
2.			
3.			
TOTAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES			
Institutional Overhead			
International Communication Expenses			
Traffic Cost Per one Mbt			
Traffic Cost Per quarter			
Traffic Cost Per award period			
TOTAL TRAFFIC COST			
Service Charges for U.S. Affiliate Libraries/Institutions			
TOTAL SERVICE CHARGE COST			
Other (Please describe in Budget Narrative.)			
TOTAL REQUESTED FROM NFSAT			
Plus TOTAL PROVIDED BY OTHER SOURCES			
TOTAL PROJECT COST			