

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated Feb 19, 2020

Q: For the Institutional Endorsements, is there a set dollar amount or percentage of costs that is required?

A: For the Institutional Commitment, there is no specific amount or percentage that is required because we expect that what will be required for per institution will be very different – some will need to commit to facility upgrades that won't be necessary at other institutions, or to new faculty lines, or to certain aspects of the proposed data science solutions. Given these variables, we are not mandating a particular level of support.

Q: For the pre-proposal stage, how much detail is required in a quote for instrumentation purchases? Must there be a firm quote that is valid through time of award?

A: At the pre-proposal stage, the instrumentation purchase costs may be an informed estimate – if purchasing from a commercial supplier, the estimate must come from that supplier. There does not need to be a firm quote that is valid through the time of award. At the Full Proposal stage, applicants will have the opportunity to further refine the instrumentation costs and program budget. At that stage, the costs for the instrumentation will need to be more definite.

Q: How much preliminary data is required for pre-proposals or full proposals?

A: Preliminary data is not a specific requirement for submission of the pre-proposal or full proposal applications. You may include any data that has been collected to support the description of the proposed research projects if applicable.

Q: The last question on the cover sheet that asks for current light sheet microscopy equipment and capabilities within your consortium and an introduction to your overarching research program goals. Is there a word count for this section?

A: There is no maximum word count in this section. We do recommend that applicants keep their responses to two paragraphs (one paragraph for the current capabilities and one for the research program goals).

Q: The RFP mentions developing a training plan for junior scientists. Should this plan be included in a specific section of the pre-proposal?

A: The training plan will be a separate component of the Full Proposal submission, so can be mentioned within the pre-proposal sections, but is not necessary to include as a stand-alone item for the pre-proposals.

Q: Will the Foundation consider proposals that place the new Light Sheet equipment within an existing imaging core facility?

A: Yes, the microscope can be placed within a core imaging facility. The preproposal should still contain up to three research projects that would benefit from and utilize the capability within the core facility.

Q: Will the Foundation prioritize proposals consisting of projects that involve live imaging approaches, or can some or all of the proposed projects involve fixed/cleared samples?

A: The Foundation will accept proposals for live or fixed/cleared sample imaging. However, priority will be given to proposals describing projects which are enabled by the unique capabilities for rapid, three-dimensional imaging inherent to light-sheet microscopy. Projects where the desired information could be obtained, albeit potentially at a slower rate, with other technologies will be given a lower priority.

Q: Can multiple teams in one institution to submit pre-proposals, or will the Foundation only accept one pre-proposal? If multiple pre-proposals are submitted from one institution, would it be possible that the Foundation will invite multiple teams from one institution to submit full proposals?

A: Yes, an institution can submit multiple pre-proposals. The only restriction is that a Lead PI can only submit one pre-proposal, although they are allowed to be members of the team of other pre-proposals. It is also possible that multiple full proposals could be invited from one institution.

Q: The announcement states that the proposal should focus on a biological problem as a basis for the research program. Would a chemistry or materials science proposal be accepted?

A: Yes, the Foundation will extend the requirement for the research program to include chemistry, materials science, or related fields, as long as all other program requirements are met.

Q: The announcement states "\$1.2M per site" - if there are multiple institutions collaborating on a proposal, is that \$1.2M per member of the collaboration?

A: No, the \$1.2M is the total for the award, no matter how many collaborators.

Q: Does the Foundation allow for overhead costs, and if so, at what rate?

A: No, the Foundation will not fund overhead or indirect costs as part of the grant.

Q: How many awards will be made?

A: The final determination of the number of awards will be made by the Board of Directors, so an exact number is not available at this time.

Q: What commitments from the Institutions should be included in the Institutional Endorsements?

A: The Institutional Endorsements should be on letterhead, and the commitments should include:

1. Support for any infrastructure requirements at the Lead Institution
2. Support for the data science collaboration plans
3. If the budget for the acquisition, installation, and research plans exceed the \$1.2M grant amount, a commitment to secure the additional required funding