SPECIAL BSF CALL FOR PROPOSALS IN A JOINT NSF-BSF PROGRAM IN ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The U.S. – Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) is pleased to announce the expected opening of the first round of applications in a new joint funding program in Energy for Sustainability with the Division of Chemical, Bioengineering, Environmental, and Transport Systems of the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)

The terms of this program are as follows:

**General**

1. This 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 these disciplines, with no “special” funds. Clear understanding of it by the US partner is essential before embarking on proposal writing.

2. **Synopsis of the program:**

The goal of the Energy for Sustainability program is to support fundamental research that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources.

Current topics of interest in sustainable energy technologies are:

- **Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy**
- **Photovoltaic Solar Energy**
- **Advanced Batteries for Transportation and Renewable Energy Storage**

**Excluded Areas of Research**

The following areas of research are excluded from this program:

a. **Wind Energy**

b. The following areas related to Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy:
   - Proposals that focus primarily on chemical reactor analysis related to biomass conversion;
   - Proposals related to the combustion of biomass;
   - Proposals that focus on the fundamentals of catalysis or biocatalysis

c. The following areas of research that are related to Photovoltaic Solar Energy:
   - Proposals that focus on the fundamentals of photocatalysis;
   - Proposals that focus on the generation of thermal energy by solar radiation
d. The following areas related to Advanced Batteries for Transportation and Renewable Storage:
   - Fuel-cell related proposals

**NSF/CBET-BSF collaborative proposals on renewable energy topics outside the scope of the three topics of interest will be considered unresponsive and will be returned without review.**


3. **Prior to submission, the U.S. applicant should contact the appropriate NSF program manager to discuss the research focus of his international project.**

4. The NSF accepts applications only from U.S. scientists, and submission to the NSF should be made by the U.S. PI alone (the Israeli does not appear as a formal co-PI on the application). However, in the collaborative applications, the role of the Israeli partner(s) must be described. Furthermore, it should be clearly explained why the contribution of the Israeli PI to the research project is important/essential.

5. **Part of the requirements of the US PI, is to attach to his submitted application a standard letter of collaboration that will be forwarded to the Israeli partner upon request by the BSF office. Please make sure to forward the letter to the US PI.**

6. The program will use a single submission process, without a pre-proposal stage.

7. If awarded a grant, the U.S. scientist will receive a grant from the NSF, while the Israeli scientist will receive a grant from the BSF.

8. The size of the grant to the Israeli will be up to $80,000/year for a maximum of three years (usual length of NSF grants), subject to the availability of funds.

9. **We request any Israeli scientist who wishes to submit to this program to call our office before contacting a potential U.S. partner.**

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 regulations regarding eligibility of the BSF (for the Israeli PI) or the NSF (for the US PI) will apply to this program.

2. A scientist who holds a BSF regular grant, is allowed to submit to this NSF-BSF program, unless the topic of his new application is similar, or highly overlapping his existing grant. However, if he is awarded a grant in this NSF-BSF program, he will not be able to submit a new regular BSF grant, before his grant in the NSF-BSF program ends.

3. A scientist who does not hold a BSF regular grant, or a NSF-BSF grant, and wishes to increase his chances of receiving a grant, will be allowed to submit both to this program, and to the regular BSF program. However, if he becomes eligible for a grant in both programs, BSF will fund only his NSF-BSF application, even if his US partners are different.

4. A scientist who submitted to this program, or has an active NSF-BSF grant, will be allowed to submit to another NSF-BSF program. However, BSF will fund a second NSF-BSF grant, in a different NSF-BSF program, only if it will consider it financially feasible at the time of the award. BSF will not fund two concurrent projects in the same NSF-BSF program.

Evaluation

1. Proposals will be evaluated by the NSF, using its criteria. The BSF will create a small 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.

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 managers 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/](http://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/), which may include issues such as broader impact, data management, etc. that are either missing in BSF and ISF applications, or have a greatly different meaning (particularly the term ‘broader impact’). Failure to appropriately refer to such topics by the U.S. partner may be detrimental to the proposal.

**Submission**

Proposals will be submitted to the program twice:
The Israeli scientist (only) will submit to the BSF, also providing the US scientist information, according to its regulations and submission system: [http://www.bsf.org.il/ElectronicSubmission/GatewayFormsAndGuidelines.aspx?PageId=7&innerTextID=0](http://www.bsf.org.il/ElectronicSubmission/GatewayFormsAndGuidelines.aspx?PageId=7&innerTextID=0). The applicants must submit to the BSF a copy of the PDF of their NSF application, with the added required information.

**Timetable**

Full proposals should be submitted to the BSF no later than 5 pm (Israel time) on October 25, 2015. NSF deadline is on October 20, 2015.

*Applicants are requested to acquaint themselves with the BSF regulations before they submit an application. In particular, they should acquaint themselves with the special document that describes the changes in the submission process from the regular (core) BSF program. The forms and regulations can be downloaded from the BSF website ([www.bsf.org.il](http://www.bsf.org.il)) under ‘Guidelines & 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. BSF will not respond to such inquiries.** Other questions regarding this special BSF-NSF 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 Rozencwajg (orli@bsf.org.il; ext .109).