



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

**NSF 24-122**

## Dear Colleague Letter: NSF 75th Anniversary: NSF STEM Day

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August 30, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

This Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) encourages the submission of supplemental funding requests to engage the public in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programming and activities that showcase existing exhibits, films, maker experiences and other public science communication efforts funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF). This DCL is led by the NSF Directorate for STEM Education (EDU), in partnership with the Office of Legislative and Public Affairs (OLPA), and is open to current Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) and Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) award recipients in EDU's Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings (DRL).

### **BACKGROUND**

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May 10th, 2025 is the U.S. National Science Foundation's 75th Anniversary and NSF seeks to amplify the visibility and impact of its investments for the public. This DCL highlights NSF's interest in supporting a nationwide "NSF STEM Day", a recognition of public STEM engagement and learning in commemoration of NSF's 75th anniversary. This DCL builds on NSF's long-standing investments in public engagement with STEM through a wide range of informal STEM learning experiences and environments that make lifelong learning a reality. The goal of NSF STEM Day is to inspire public engagement with STEM by highlighting NSF's support for informal STEM learning across the country on its 75th Anniversary.

To support this endeavor, NSF seeks submission of supplemental funding requests from current AISL and ITEST award recipients that will, on May 10, 2025, 1) highlight and augment existing informal STEM experiences to emphasize the role of NSF funding in their development; and 2) gather the public in person to engage in the wonders of STEM and STEM learning. NSF strongly encourages supplemental funding requests that will showcase innovative informal STEM learning experiences; emphasize the impact of NSF funding on informal STEM learning; and feature plans for engaging diverse public audiences, including

evidence of a well-rounded understanding of the focal learners and their communities.

Award recipients are encouraged to collaborate with local informal STEM institutions, local community groups, expired AISL-funded informal STEM recipients, and EPSCoR-based or small informal STEM learning (ISL) organizations to broaden the impact. AISL seeks to make many supplements to support organizations across the nation to participate in the event.

Supplemental funding requests up to \$99,000 can be used to support a variety of in-person activities with the public on May 10, 2025, related to the topics above. Activities may include:

- Highlighting existing informal STEM learning experiences previously funded by the NSF, such as, but not limited to: exhibitions at science and technology centers, zoos, aquaria, libraries, public spaces, or nature centers; showing giant screen films, documentary films, and television series; planetarium programs; science cafés; and makerspaces.
- Supporting free or reduced-cost participation and engagement (e.g., entrance fees, transportation).
- Advertising and staffing the event; printing related materials.

Those organizations that receive supplemental funding will also receive NSF-developed communication materials for the 75th Anniversary NSF STEM Day event (e.g., press kit and adaptable/printable templates). Additionally, NSF will leverage its social media platforms to highlight participating organizations and their events, increasing public awareness and participation. Organizations may also be featured in NSF's outreach campaigns, highlighting each award's unique contributions to STEM education.

## PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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When responding to this DCL, please include "DCL: NSF STEM Day" in the Summary of Proposed Work section of supplemental funding requests.

**Supplemental funding requests must align with the [AISL solicitation](#) Goals for Proposals #1 *Learning STEM in Informal Experiences and Environments* and #6 *Support Learners' Participation in and Understanding of STEM Practices*, as well as solicitation evaluation requirements. Requests must also follow current NSF policies, including the technical guidance provided below, and must be submitted via Research.gov.**

The original award must be funded through the AISL or ITEST programs, and supplemental funding requests should be submitted to those awards. Supplemental funding requests should not exceed 20% of the original award size or \$99,000, whichever is smaller.

Each supplemental funding request must follow the guidance specified in the [NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide](#) (PAPPG) Chapter VI.E.5) and must address the following areas in no more than five pages:

- Summary of the active award, including original research vision, goals, activities, and accomplishments, spanning Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts;
- Compelling summary of the proposed work;
- Justification for how the proposed supplemental work will reach increased numbers of learners;
- Work plan describing the supplemental activities, along with the related goals, timeline, milestones, and anticipated outcomes;
- A plan to assess the processes and outcomes of the proposed supplemental activities.

**Supplemental funding requests should be submitted by November 1, 2024.** After the submission of the supplemental funding request, Principal Investigators (PIs) should alert the cognizant program officers by sending an email to [DRLaisl@nsf.gov](mailto:DRLaisl@nsf.gov) with the number assigned to the supplemental funding request. If the original award expires within a year after the start date of the proposed supplemental activity, the PI should provide this information at the time of submission to [DRLaisl@nsf.gov](mailto:DRLaisl@nsf.gov) and the cognizant program officer for the original award. Supplemental funding requests submitted in response to this DCL will be subject to internal NSF review only, unless they require external review as mandated by the PAPPG.

Supplemental funding requests will be evaluated based on their plans to contribute to NSF STEM Day and their potential to 1) highlight and augment existing informal STEM learning experiences to emphasize the role of NSF funding in their development and 2) gather the public in person to engage in the wonders of STEM and STEM learning. Feasibility and alignment with the AISL program and NSF's mission will also be considered. Funding decisions are subject to the availability of funds and the intellectual merit and proposed broader impacts of requests received.

For further information, please contact the AISL Program Team at [DRLaisl@nsf.gov](mailto:DRLaisl@nsf.gov). We look forward to receiving your innovative and exciting supplemental funding requests.

Sincerely,

James L. Moore III, PhD  
Assistant Director  
Directorate for STEM Education (EDU)