**NSF LEAPS-MPS General Guidelines**

**About**

 Launching of Early-Career Academic Pathways in the Mathematical and Physical Sciences (LEAPS-MPS) supports the launch of the careers of pre-tenure faculty whose research is in Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) fields at institutions that do not traditionally receive significant amounts of MPS funding, namely those not classified by the Carnegie Foundation as R1, such as Carnegie Research 2 (R2) universities, minority-serving institutions (MSIs), predominantly undergraduate institutions (PUIs). Principal Investigators must hold a doctorate in a discipline supported by the Directorate of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, have a tenure-track faculty appointment, and have not served as PI or Co-PI on an NSF research award previously.

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| General Information |
| NOFO | [NSF-25-535](https://www.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/launching-early-career-academic-pathways-mathematical/nsf25-535/solicitation)  |
| Due Dates | Submissions are due the fourth Thursday in January. |
| Project Period | 2 years |
| Budget Limit | LEAPS-MPS awards provide up to $250,000 over 2 years, including indirects. |

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| Formatting Information |
| Document | PDF only |
| Font type and size | Arial, Courier New, Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger; or Times New Roman or Computer Modern, 11 points or larger. |
| Margins | Minimum 1 inch on all sides. |
| Other formatting  | [Link to additional formatting instructions.](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22_1/index.jsp) |

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| Required Proposal Documents |
| Project Summary | (1 page) Concise description of the project including sections for titled Overview, Intellectual Merit, and Broader Impacts.1. Overview: Provide a description of the project’s activities along with a statement of the project’s objectives and methods.
2. Intellectual Merit: Explain the innovative nature of the project, how it will advance knowledge in the research field, and describe how success will be assessed.
3. Broader Impacts: Explain how the research will more broadly benefit society. This could include detailing contributions to STEM education, enhancement of research infrastructure, preparation of the scientific workforce, or improvement of scientific literacy.
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| Project Description | (15 pages) The Project Description section should contain a well-argued and specific proposal for research activities that are scientifically compelling and set the PI on a path toward future funding opportunities, such as an NSF CAREER award or other research grant awards. The Project Description should include:* a description of the proposed research project, including preliminary supporting data where appropriate, specific objectives, methods and procedures to be used, and expected significance of the results;
* a description of the relationship between the proposed activities and the PI's long-term research goals;
* a discussion of how the proposed activities will facilitate the development of a subsequent research proposal;
* a plan for activities that could increase the participation in STEM of members of communities underrepresented and/or under-served in STEM and the number of members of these communities that can serve as role models for the future scientific workforce. Proposers must articulate the characteristics and needs of the population of students they are trying to serve and the rationale based on data or other evidence for the potential impact of the proposed activities on this population; and
* results of prior NSF support, if applicable.

*Broader Impacts* – Must include a section on the broader impacts of the research. Broader impacts of research can be achieved through the research itself or through related and complementary activities. The NSF values both scientific advancement and contributions to society, including full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in STEM, improving STEM education and public engagement, enhancing individual well-being, strengthening the STEM workforce, fostering partnerships, boosting national security and economic competitiveness, informing public policy, and advancing research and education infrastructure.See the solicitation and [PAPPG](https://nsf-gov-resources.nsf.gov/files/nsf24_1.pdf?VersionId=ImnVCR.NDkOKTGKuDHHmterZQY3cXEDn) for further guidance. |
| References Cited | (no page limit) Complete listing of the references cited in the Research Strategy. |
| Biographical Sketches | (5 pages per person) Required for the PI. No Co-PIs are permitted in LEAPS-MPS proposals. Should include both research and educational activities and accomplishments. Must adhere to [specific biosketch formatting requirements](https://www.nsf.gov/funding/senior-personnel-documents#biographical-sketch-0bd). Should be prepared using [SciENcv](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/).  |
| Synergistic Activities | (1 page) Required for the PI. Must include a list of up to five distinct examples that demonstrates the broader impact of the individual's professional and scholarly activities (both research and education) that focus on the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as its creation.Examples may include:* innovations in teaching and training;
* contributions to the science of learning;
* development and/or refinement of research tools;
* computation methodologies and algorithms for problem-solving;
* development of databases to support research and education;
* the participation of groups underrepresented in STEM;
* participation in international research collaborations;
* participation in national and/or international standards development efforts;
* and service to the scientific and engineering community outside of the individual's immediate organization.
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| Current & Pending Support | (no page limit) Required for the PI. Should adhere to [specific formatting requirements](https://www.nsf.gov/funding/senior-personnel-documents#current-and-pending-other-support-5db). Should be prepared using [SciENcv](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/). |
| Collaborators and Other Affiliations | Provide information about collaborators and other affiliations for the PI. Must use [COA template](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/coa/coa_template.xlsx). |
| Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources | (no page limit) A detailed description of the facilities (lab, computer, animal) and resources (supplies, space, time, funding) that support the capability to complete the proposed research.  |
| Budget | The LEAPS-MPS award provides up to $250,000 for the 2-year duration, including indirects. Inclusion of voluntary cost-sharing is prohibited. Budget should include funds for travel to a LEAPS meeting in Washington DC. Budgets should be drafted by the PI, refined and approved by ORSP, and submitted to the NSF by ORSP.  |
| Budget Justification | (limit 5 pages) Provides a detailed breakdown of proposed spending in each category as well as a justification supporting the numbers provided in each budget category. |
| Data Management Plan | (limit 2 pages) Detail how the data generated by the proposed research will be managed. Specifically describe the types of data expected, policies for accessing the data, and plans for archiving the data. |
| LEAPS-MPS Impact Statement | (no less than two (2) pages and not more than three (3) pages) The statement should provide information that will help a reviewer assess the potential of the proposed project to impact i) the institutional research environment, especially in terms of enhancing research capabilities, ii) the career of the PI, and iii) the ability of the PI's department to prepare students for entry into advanced-degree programs and/or careers in STEM, including any provisions for increasing the participation in such endeavors of members of communities underrepresented and under-served in STEM. |
| Departmental Letter | (limit 2 pages) Letter from the Department Chair or College Dean. The letter should not evaluate or endorse the proposed project. Must include the administrator’s name, title, and signature. Must contain the following elements:* Address the PI's eligibility regarding early career status in a tenure-track or tenure-track equivalent position for the anticipated duration of a LEAPS award.
* Include the following statement: "If the proposal submitted by Dr. [full name of the Principal Investigator] entitled [proposal title] is selected for funding by NSF, I, [full name and title of the letter writer], attest to the general support of the proposed activities and the availability of the resources detailed in the Project Description and the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources sections of the proposal."
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| If Applicable/Optional Proposal Documents |
| Mentoring Plan | (1 page) Required for proposals requesting funding support for post-docs or graduate students. Must describe the mentoring activities that will be provided to all post-docs and graduate students supported by the proposal if awarded. |
| Letters of Collaboration | If the project involves collaborative arrangements of significance, these arrangements should be documented through letters of collaboration. Letters of collaboration should be limited to stating the intent to collaborate and should not contain endorsements or evaluation of the proposed project. Letters of collaboration should follow the single-sentence format:“If the proposal submitted by Dr. [insert the full name of the Principal Investigator] entitled [insert the proposal title] is selected for funding by the NSF, it is my intent to collaborate and/or commit resources as detailed in the Project Description or the Facilities, Equipment or Other Resources section of the proposal.” |