

CSIRO/ NSF Convergence Accelerator Webinar Q&A

Slides and webinar recording here: <https://www.csiro.au/en/work-with-us/International/North-America/National-Science-Foundation-Convergence-Accelerator>

Partners/Teams

<p>Do you plan to have a networking session for US organizations to find partners in Australia?</p>	<p>Researchers in the community have set up a Slack channel to discuss Track I. This Slack channel is not managed by CSIRO, nor by the NSF Convergence Accelerator, but we encourage you to join it to discuss the track topic, find partners, and to form teams.</p>
<p>Can the NSF and/or CSIRO assist Australian submissions in establishing connections with US institutions.</p>	<p>NSF and CSIRO will not be assisting in establishing connections with U.S. organizations; however, researchers in the community have set up a Slack channel to discuss Track I. This Slack channel is not managed by CSIRO, nor by the NSF Convergence Accelerator, but we encourage you to join it to discuss the track topic, find partners, and to form teams.</p>
<p>I am representing a US-based company that we are working on nanoparticle development for sustainability. I would like to connect with the CSIRO or another Australian team responsible for track I or participating. We would like to team up.</p>	<p>Researchers in the community have set up a Slack channel to discuss Track I. This Slack channel is not managed by CSIRO, nor by the NSF Convergence Accelerator, but we encourage you to join it to discuss the track topic, find partners, and to form teams.</p>
<p>How will the IP arrangements work if an Aussie academic team partners with a US company?</p>	<p>The solicitation/BAA requires the submission of IP Management plans at the appropriate stage of the research process, i.e., as part of the Phase 2 proposal submission process.</p>
<p>How should proposals address research infrastructure? Should proposers partner with research infrastructure providers?</p>	<p>There is no expectation of large research infrastructure spending as part of the proposal, especially for phase 1 proposals. However, infrastructure spending – if properly justified and limited in scope – can be funded through awards.</p>
<p>Many of the partners will be from across academia and industry so what is the advice for bridging these fields (and geographic borders) in order to strategically find a team,</p>	<p>Researchers in the community have set up a Slack channel to discuss Track I. This Slack channel is not managed by CSIRO, nor by the NSF Convergence Accelerator, but we encourage you to join it to</p>

including fields that we may not have considered?	discuss the track topic, find partners, and to form teams.
Can we have a consortium?	The solicitation/BAA points out that teams should be multidisciplinary and multi-organizational. There needs to be a single lead organization, but how the rest of the team is organized is up to the team.
I am an overseas final-year PhD student [...] My research focuses on the development of materials for solar cells from sustainable materials, am I eligible to apply for the fund opportunity?	Funding opportunity is for research teams with a lead organization, not to individual researchers.
Can an early-stage researcher in Australia working in sustainable materials for energy area eligible for this accelerator? If yes, must they be collaborated with an industry for the accelerator?	If the team meets the specific funding opportunity requirements, the team is eligible to apply for funding through this call.
Can the application team consist purely of Australian members, or must it have at least 1 US member?	The multidisciplinary team cannot be solely Australian members.
International collaborators that are non-US and non-Australian can be funded?	The call allows funding of international sub-awardees as long as the proposal justifies why the international expertise is needed for the project and cannot be procured in the United States.
Required to collaborate with Industry	Cross-cutting partnerships is a key element of the NSF Convergence Accelerator. Teams are required to form partnerships; however, it may be with industry and/or another sector such as government, nonprofits, etc.
Cost Sharing	Cost sharing is not permitted on NSF awards.
How do we find the best partners?	Researchers in the community have set up a Slack channel to discuss Track 1 . This Slack channel is not managed by CSIRO, nor by the NSF Convergence Accelerator, but we encourage you to join it to discuss the track topic, find partners, and to form teams.

	<p>Submitters should identify partners that are known; however, partners may be added after the letter of intent and even during Phases 1 and 2.</p> <p>The NSF Convergence Accelerator program provides teams a Program Director and coach, who may also suggest partners to collaborate with.</p>
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Alignment with CSIRO Missions

<p>Is the NSF Accelerator program focused only on two missions: hydrogen and plastics? Or can it be aligned with any of the missions?</p>	<p>In order to be eligible for consideration of CSIRO funding proposals can be aligned with any CSIRO Mission that pertains to NSF’s Track I. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to the relevant CSIRO Mission Lead to discuss how their Convergence Accelerator proposal would support delivery against the objectives of the Mission. Contact details for each of the Mission Leads can be found on the CSIRO Missions website.</p>
<p>Are “proto” missions eligible to be supported?</p>	<p>In order to be eligible for consideration of CSIRO, funding proposals will need to be aligned with any of the current cohort of CSIRO Missions that pertains to NSF’s Track I.</p>
<p>Is it the case that only projects aligned with the CSIRO Missions will be approved for phase 2 after the committee has recommended LOIs in phase 1? What if US collaborators are not interested in these CSIRO priorities?</p>	<p>To be eligible for CSIRO funding in both Phase 1 and Phase 2, applications must align with at least one of CSIRO’s Missions.</p>
<p>Tackling AMR is one of CSRO’s core mission plans. Hence, do you think developing newer and sustainable antimicrobials from plant sources be a good fit for this program?</p>	<p>We encourage you to discuss this with the Mission Lead for the Antimicrobial Resistance Mission to determine how the Convergence Accelerator proposal supports delivery against the objectives of the Mission. Contact details for each of the Mission Leads can be found on the CSIRO Missions website.</p>

CSIRO Funding:

<p>If 2 US proposals with an Australian partner are recommended for funding by NSF, what happens if only one AUS partner is funded? What happens to the US team/project whose AUS partner is not funded?</p>	<p>Proposals that are selected for funding by NSF, will be funded subject to budget availability. CSIRO funding may supplement up to one Australian partner. If a second proposal with an Australian partner is accepted, the call does allow funding of international sub-awardees as long as the proposal justifies why the international expertise is essential for the project and cannot be procured in the United States.</p>
<p>Do we need to be affiliated or 'linked' to CSIRO to be considered for AUD255k?</p>	<p>No, any Australian organization is eligible to apply.</p>
<p>If CSIRO is providing sponsorship for one Australian team, does this mean CSIRO wants to first decide which team to sponsor?</p>	<p>NSF will select the recommended proposals for award. Proposals with Australian organizations or members on the team will then be presented to CSIRO for consideration. From that list, CSIRO will select one proposal to sponsor.</p>
<p>How many submissions from Australia will be allowed and sponsored by CSIRO?</p>	<p>An unlimited number of submissions from Australia is allowed. CSIRO will sponsor one proposal to be awarded.</p>
<p>What will happen if two or more teams with Australian participants are recommended for funding? Would CSIRO decide who is funded, providing only one team can be funded?</p>	<p>NSF will select the recommended proposals for award. Proposals with Australian organizations or members on the team will then be presented to CSIRO for consideration. From that list, CSIRO will select one proposal to sponsor.</p>
<p>Is there a funding ceiling to AUS applicants, in other words how AUS applicants would access project costs >250K ?</p>	<p>An applicant's proposal budget may be awarded by NSF up to 750,000 USD for Phase 1. If an Australian organization is part of the awarded team, it is possible that CSIRO may fund up to 255,000 AUD that budget. The total award in either case will be the equivalent of 750,000 USD.</p>
<p>Is CSIRO also providing funding for Track H and Track J?</p>	<p>No, CSIRO funding is only available for Track I: Sustainable Materials for Global Challenges.</p>
<p>International collaborators that are non-US and non-Australian can be funded?</p>	<p>The call permits for funding of international sub-awardees as long as the proposal justifies why the international expertise is needed for the project and cannot be procured in the United States.</p>

<p>It feels like if only 1 Australian team is funded, having an Australian collaborator in a US team, that takes away a portion of the total budget, would be a negative for the budget, or am I misunderstanding something?</p>	<p>An applicant's proposal budget may be awarded by NSF up to 750,000 USD for Phase 1. If an Australian organization is part of the awarded team, it is possible that CSIRO may fund up to 255,000 AUD that budget. The total award in either case will be the equivalent of 750,000 USD.</p>
<p>Will industry partners be asked to contribute in cash to the project?</p>	<p>Cost-sharing is not permitted on NSF awards. What other partners may contribute on their own to the research effort is not considered during the review process.</p>
<p>What co-contribution levels are you looking for in the projects?</p>	<p>Cost-sharing is not permitted on NSF awards.</p>
<p>Clarification - Track J and H are also CSIRO funded? Sorry it's not clear. So Australian universities can also apply as lead or co lead to track J and H?</p>	<p>Only Track I: Sustainable Materials for Global Challenges is co-funded by CSIRO.</p> <p>Australian universities or organizations interested in Track H or J may participate under the regular rules for international participation (it must be justified); however, the organization cannot lead or co-lead the proposal.</p>

Which topics are eligible for Track I: Sustainable Materials?

<p>Do/can sustainable materials include lignocellulose-derived?</p>	<p>Yes, this may potentially include lignocellulose-derived materials. Submitters will have to provide more details in their proposal to make the argument of sustainability.</p>
<p>Would developing alternative and new antimicrobials from plant sources be a good fit? if yes, for which track?</p>	<p>This could be a potential fit for Tracks I or J. However, which track your research question best fits into is for you to determine given the language of the solicitation/BAA and the workshop reports that led to the tracks.</p>
<p>If an existing project with collaborators covering 2 or more tracks wants to expand</p>	<p>Proposals will be judged by the content of the proposal, and they will only be awarded per track –</p>

its research scope to the international arena, will that be considered as a potential application?	not across tracks. What matters is that the proposal meets the solicitation requirements and is competitive during the review process, given all the review criteria.
Will aquaculture topics be considered within the food Track?	It might. However, which track your research question best fits into is for you to determine given the language of the solicitation/BAA and the workshop reports that led to the tracks.
When will Tracks H and J be announced? Are the other tracks of NSF already closed for call, e.g., Track J Food and Nutrition Security?	Tracks H and J were announced simultaneously with Track I, and all three tracks have the same deadlines. For additional information see https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/convergence-accelerator/updates/funding-opportunity-nsf-convergence-0

Application Logistics

Is the LOI submitted in Australia and the USA at the same time	Yes. One letter will be submitted to the NSF, (either through the BAA or through the Solicitation). That same letter must be sent to CSIRO at globalapplications@csiro.au All applications need to be submitted by 31 May 2022 at 5pm in the submitter's local time zone.
Is the LOI submitted in Australia and USA the same? Or we need two separate letters?	One letter will be submitted to the NSF (either through the BAA or through the Solicitation). That SAME letter will be sent to CSIRO at globalapplications@csiro.au All applications need to be submitted by 31 May 2022 at 5pm in the submitter's local time zone.
Can we add partners after the LOI deadline? Or they all need to be named in the LOI.	Yes, you may add partners after the LOI. The LOI is used solely to allow NSF to coordinate a thorough and effective review process. The LOI is not taken into consideration during the review process.
Could we confirm whether the funding is USD or AUD?	NSF awards are in USD. CSIRO awards for Australian teams, if any, will be in AUD.

<p>Is there a go/no go or review after the LOI is submitted?</p>	<p>The LOI is not reviewed. It is essential so that reviewers and the number of review panels can be defined, and so that potential conflicts of interest can begin to be identified.</p>
<p>Is it required to identify partners on the team when submitting the LOI?</p>	<p>Applicants should identify partners that are known, but partners may be added (and we anticipate will be added) after the LOI. Partners are added throughout Phase 1 also.</p>
<p>Are you able to circulate a template for the LOI?</p>	<p>There is no template, but clear instructions are included in the Solicitation and the Broad Agency Announcement.</p>
<p>How long does it take to register the organization on SAM.GOV, so as to get the Unique Identity ID?</p>	<p>It takes about 2 weeks to register with SAM.GOV for the unique identifier. US companies that have applied for US government funding will already have the identifier so teams could use this. The lead who submits the LOI needs the unique identifier.</p>
<p>Can we have a quick dot points list of the sequence, i.e., get SAM ID, use it to upload the very first Aussie BAA proposal, which consists of Phase 1 by 31 May...allowing us 2 weeks to settle on partnership participants across USA and Australia</p>	<p>Please see the NSF solicitation for full instructions for how to apply. The SAM ID is not required in order to submit the LOI.</p>