

NSF STIMULUS SPENDING UPDATE: 2-26-09

NSF has \$3 billion in stimulus funding -- \$1 billion of this funding is directed to specific programs and the remaining \$2 billion is to be distributed among the research directorates, divisions, and offices. The exact distribution has not been approved by the Office of Management and Budget, but program managers are currently planning what they might do with additional funds.

The latest we've heard about the plans and goals for the NSF research funding are:

Increasing Success Rates: The funding will primarily go to increasing success rates in planned fiscal year FY09 competitions. Many of those competitions are already underway, with due dates past, although some programs, especially core programs, have upcoming due dates. No new research solicitations are planned at this time.

Focus on the Pipeline: As part of the effort to raise success rates, NSF will be focusing particularly on early career researchers. They are also concerned about support for undergraduates, graduate students, and post-docs. This emphasis reflects Congressional concern about the STEM pipeline, as well as jobs in general.

No Supplements with Stimulus Funding: NSF will not be using the stimulus money to make supplemental awards to current grants. This decision reflects the intensive tracking and reporting requirements that agencies and stimulus funding recipients will have to meet (quarterly reports on progress, spend rate, jobs created, etc.). However, the stimulus funding will take some of the pressure off of the anticipated FY09 funds, and program officers will be able to use those funds for supplements, if they so desire.

Researchers' Actions: Researchers should be sure they are applying to all relevant competitions and can touch base with program staff on highly-rated but unfunded proposals from this fiscal year (i.e. since October 1, 2008) as well as the potential for supplements with FY09 funds.

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