**NSF-MRI Downselect FAQs**

***Do I need to fill out the entire form?***

Yes. All fields are required.

***Who reviews my application?***

The applications are reviewed by relevant college research deans (or designated representative), institute directors and the interim assistant vice president for research.

***Why is a Notice of Intent (NOI) required for the downselect competition?***

The NOI is used to ensure appropriate representation on the review team for your application.

***What is the NSF Workshop?***

Any faculty member or team that has submitted an NOI is advised to attend the NSF MRI Workshop on August 29th at 2:00 pm in 404 Old Main. Information about best practices for proposal success will be presented by SIRO. The workshop may include advice from successful NSF-MRI awardees, MRI panelists and/or Penn State facilities managers.

***Will I get feedback on my application, win or lose?***

Yes. It will be distributed to you and copied to your research dean at the competition conclusion.

***If I am selected in the downselect as one of the proposals to go forward to NSF, which unit will work with my team on development and submission?***

The Strategic Interdisciplinary Research Office (SIRO) will be your submitting unit and will contact you within 1 week of your selection. SIRO offers a full range of proposal development services including proposal development coordination, budget development, match coordination, document editing, graphics support, and Red Team review. If you wish to contact SIRO first, you may send an email to Justin Whitmer ([jaw978@psu.edu](mailto:jaw978@psu.edu)).

***How long will it take for a decision?***

Generally a decision on which teams go forward is made within 1 month from application due date. In this year’s competition a decision is projected for mid to late September.

***I submitted an application in the downselect previously and was not selected to go forward. Should/May I resubmit to the downselect?***

Yes. The competition is not restricted to first-time applications. However, it is helpful to have a conversation with your research dean about how to improve the application.

***How many applications for the MRI program are usually submitted to the downselect competition?***

Depending on the year, the number of downselect applications has ranged from 5 to 15. Generally, more applications are of the acquisition type than development type.

***How will the 30% NSF-required match be covered this year?***

Central will cover the 30% NSF-required mandatory match on proposals that are clearly shared across a broad community across Penn State. A match request must be developed and processed to secure this 30% match.

***What about costs not covered by the proposed NSF budget?***

This NSF program will not support costs associated with construction, renovations or maintenance (service contracts). Should such ineligible costs be identified as essential to the proposal, a separate cost-share budget will be developed and processed in the traditional manner with the Associate Dean/Institute Director working with the PI and budget administrator to identify funding sources and shares.

***What is the budget period for an acquisition or development proposal?***

Acquisitions are budgeted for up to 3 years and development are budgeted up to 5 years.

If you have further questions on how to best answer questions on this form, you are encouraged to refer to the [current solicitation](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2015/nsf15504/nsf15504.pdf).