FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

Q. Can organizations other than the reserves apply for a science transfer grant?
A: Yes. Organizations other than the NERRS are eligible to apply for a science transfer grant if they have the support of the reserve(s) they will be working in partnership with.

As stated in the 2015 NSC Science Transfer RFP:

*Projects must be directly related to at least one reserve, address at least one or more reserve priorities in the context of the NSC priorities, and must have the full support of the relevant reserve manager(s), as demonstrated in the reserve manager proposal assessment. This funding opportunity is open to NERRS staff working in partnership (as appropriate) with applicants from the United States (U.S.) academic, private, or public sectors. Each proposal must designate a fiscal agent. The person in this role must be a project team member from the agency, institution, or friends group that will receive the award, if granted. A NERRS staff member may be (but does not have to be) the fiscal agent on the project. Researchers from institutions outside the U.S. may be included on the project but cannot serve as the fiscal agent. Researchers from institutions outside the U.S. may only be included in the budget if they meet certain requirements for receiving federal funds. Federal employees and institutions are not eligible to receive funding from this RFP, but they can participate as unfunded project team members.*

Q: Can one reserve submit multiple (different) science transfer proposals? Will we be competing with ourselves if we do so?
A: There is no limit on the number of proposals that a reserve may submit. Likewise, there is not a limit on the number of grants awarded to each reserve. Each proposal will be competing equally against all of the proposals submitted under the funding announcement, including others from the same reserve.

Q: I am interested in submitting a transfer grant to transfer findings to the rest of our state, not to other reserves. The transfer grant would help the reserve by changes in statewide regulations, policy and outreach. Would this approach be considered eligible for funding?
A: Yes. As stated in the NSC science transfer RFP, the NSC solicits proposals for funding from the NERRS network for the transfer of existing information, approaches, and/or techniques within the NERRS and with partners outside of the reserve system. All science transfer proposals must
be directly related to at least one reserve, address at least one or more reserve priorities in the context of the NSC priorities, and have the full support of the relevant reserve manager(s), as demonstrated in the reserve manager proposal assessment.

**BUDGET AND TIMELINE**

**Q: Should the total project cost (e.g., all expenses across all categories and years) be calculated anywhere in the budget template?**

**A:** On March 18, 2015, the Budget Template on the application site was replaced with an updated version that has a "Total Project" column that automatically calculates total project costs across both categories and years. Both versions of this template will be accepted.

**Q: Is there a cap on overhead?**

**A:** The request for proposals does not include a cap on overhead. We will honor your institution's federally negotiated indirect cost rate.

**Q. How should a subcontract that will be open for bid (i.e., not yet itemized) be displayed in the budget?**

**A.** If a proposal budget includes an estimate for a subcontract, the budget should include a summary and estimate of the subcontract services. If the subcontract estimate is not yet itemized (e.g., by personnel, supplies, equipment, etc.), use the "other" line in section F of the budget for the subcontract summary and estimate (if there are multiple subcontracts, add additional “other" lines as needed to enter separate estimates for each of the subcontracts). If the project is selected for funding, exact costs must be provided before the funding is awarded; otherwise, contractual expenses will be capped at the amount listed in the budget.

**Q: What types of subcontractor services are acceptable?**

**A:** A proposing team may choose to subcontract any service necessary for the successful completion of the project if either they do not have the capacity to accomplish the task themselves or it would be more cost effective to hire an external entity to complete the work.

**Q: For two reserves that are co-participating and spending against a single transfer grant, does there need to be only one fiscal agent? Or, are there other options for the second reserve to manage and receive these funds? This could help reduce the additive indirect costs of one reserve subcontracting another. Any clarification on whether one partnered reserve in a grant could invoice the program administrator directly for their salary/services would be appreciated.**

**A:** It is our policy to allow just one fiscal agent per project unless there is a compelling technical reason to do so otherwise. For example, some reserves have difficulty accepting external funds, which can make subcontracts even more challenging. However, even in this situation we encourage applicants to work with a Friends group or other project partner to the extent they are able so that there is one fiscal agent for the project. This also ensures that one organization is responsible for project implementation and that there is accountability within the project.
Q. How should the various indirect rates of project partners in the budget of a multiple-reserve project be displayed?
A: If funded, the award will be made to the group or reserve named as the fiscal agent. The budget template should therefore be completed using the direct and indirect costs for the fiscal agent. Expenses budgeted for the other partners or reserves should be treated as subcontracts, and indirect costs should be folded into the itemized subcontract expenses.

Q: Do we need to break the budget down into different years, as is shown on the budget template?
A: Yes, please follow the budget template and break costs down by project year.

Q: Why do the project year columns on the budget template have an ending date of 08/31?
A: For our contractual purposes, the contract "year" will end on August 31 of each year; though projects may have varying start dates, the annual, renewable contracts under which the grants will be issued will have a start date of September 1 and an end date of August 31.

Q: Where in the budget should costs be listed for meeting hosting, e.g., venue rental, refreshments, etc.?
A: Please include costs associated with meeting hosting under the budget category "other" in the budget template.

Q: In the timeline template, there are cells for each month of each year; should we put an “x” in each of the cells that each project task and deliverable relates to?
A: Yes, please put an “x” in the cells/months that each project task and deliverable relates to.

Q: The science transfer RFP states a funding announcement (if successful) of July 2015, which is a few months away but in the 2016 fiscal year. However, the budget template has start dates of August 2016 (2017 fiscal year) or later, at least one year after that announcement and close to a year and half from now. Does that mean that a project start before the August 2016 date is not possible?
A: We anticipate making science transfer funding announcements in July 2015. As per the RFP, projects should plan for a start date of September 1, 2015 or later. The column in the budget template that you are referring to is for project expenses incurred from the project start date through 8/31/2016. The actual project start date will vary from project to project, but for our contractual purposes, the contract "year" will end on August 31 of each year. In other words, funded projects may begin anytime September 1, 2015 or later, but their budget "year" must end on August 31 of each year.
Q: Can you please explain what is meant by “signed approval from each sub-award and contractor’s institution is also required”. Is there a form for this approval?
A: The fiscal agent's home unit and institution should provide letters of support approving their proposal submission, including approval of any subcontracts included in the proposal. There is no standardized form for this letter.

Q: Do we need a signed approval of the budget narrative from our fiscal agent?
A: Proposals do not need to include a separate approval for the budget narrative, just an approval for the entire submission.

OTHER
Q: What is the deadline for the reserve manager science transfer proposal assessment forms?
A: The deadline for reserve manager science transfer proposal assessments is Friday, April 3, 2015. The original deadline was April 1 but was pushed back to Friday, April 3, 2015 to provide reserve managers some additional time to complete the form.