Instructions and Related BSF Regulations for Online Submission of NSF - BSF Applications

Please note: Masculine pronouns are used throughout this manual, but the content applies to both male and female applicants.

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Cooperative Research

Cooperative research is a fundamental requirement for the BSF and is viewed by the Foundation as active collaboration between Israeli and American scientists. A joint research program must be presented in the form of a single, coordinated application, in which the roles and tasks of the respective partners are clearly defined. Each application should have at least two principal investigators (but not more than six), one from an Israeli institution and one from a U.S. institution.

Cooperation should involve joint planning of research and evaluation of results, and may take the form of:

- Joint research activities where interdependent projects of a single program are conducted in different laboratories and may involve shared funding or different sources of funding.
- Provision of research facilities, materials, equipment and/or services to cooperating scientists.
- Exchange of personnel.

Although not mandatory, the BSF expects that if the research leads to publications, they will be authored jointly by the Israeli and American PIs, expressing the collaborative nature of the work.

The BSF also expects that the PIs from both countries will be involved in preparing the application, particularly the research plan. When it is apparent that this was not the case, it is considered to indicate a lack of cooperation and it hinders the chances of the application to be funded.

Prior cooperation between the PIs is not a prerequisite, and the establishment of new research teams is welcomed by the BSF.
Eligibility

1. For the BSF submission: Israeli and American principal investigators must have obtained a PhD, MD or an equivalent degree, and must be faculty members or the equivalent of the submitting institutions. Graduate students or postgraduate fellows are not eligible to submit applications.

2. Scientists who wish to apply for grants must submit their applications through a legal entity. The BSF accepts research applications from non-profit organizations only, including institutions of higher learning, government research institutions and hospitals. Although applications cannot be submitted by for-profit or industrial organizations, one of the principal investigators may be affiliated with such an organization. However, the research performed by the investigator affiliated with a for-profit organization will not be funded by the BSF, unless specified differently.

3. According to the agreement between the U.S. and Israeli governments, projects sponsored by the Foundation may not be conducted in geographic areas which came under the administration of the Government of Israel after June 5, 1967 and may not relate to subjects primarily pertinent to such areas. Furthermore, the BSF reserves the right to reject applications involving, directly or indirectly, the Arab-Israeli conflict, if in its sole discretion it deems such applications not to be consistent with the mission of the foundation. In addition, any application that is related to any aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict should be discussed with the BSF staff before submission.

4. The following additional rules apply to this program:
   - A U.S. scientist submitting an application with an Israeli colleague to the NSF, is only subject to the NSF eligibility rules.
   - Each Israeli scientist is allowed to submit up to two NSF-BSF applications/year. The second submission is allowed if, at least, one of them is to any of the NSF-BSF programs that have no deadline.
   - An Israeli with an active BSF research grant is allowed to submit an application to any of the NSF-BSF programs.
• An Israeli with an active NSF-BSF grant is allowed to submit an NSF-BSF application, if either the grant or the new submission, is to one of the NSF-BSF programs that has no deadline. Otherwise, a submission is allowed only in the last year of the active grant.

• It is allowed to submit both to an NSF-BSF program and the regular BSF program, including similar applications. In the event that grants are awarded in both programs, both will be funded, unless the research applications are mostly similar, or significantly overlap, in which case only the NSF-BSF program will be funded by the BSF.

• In case of similar NSF-BSF and regular BSF applications, in which the NSF evaluation of the NSF-BSF application was not completed by the time the regular BSF awards are made, the BSF will defer its decision regarding a possible grant to this application, until the NSF-BSF awards are announced.

Selection Process

1. Proposals will be evaluated by the NSF, using its criteria. The BSF may create a small screening panel to quickly examine the role of the Israelis in the application, and ascertain that it is meaningful, and that he has the knowhow and facilities to perform his part in the research. This panel will also evaluate the budget requests but not evaluate the scientific merit of the applications. However, Israelis may possibly take part in the NSF evaluation process as panel members and/or external reviewers.

2. Selection at the NSF is done in two stages. The first stage is by panel evaluation, possibly with some external/ad hock reviews. The panel recommendations are passed to a series of program officers at the NSF or at the other U.S. participating organizations, who are in charge of the various sub-disciplines. They make the final recommendations, which are then passed for approval by the senior staff at the relevant U.S. organizations. Israelis should be aware that program officers introduce additional considerations, and do not necessarily follow the panel decisions, which are based on
merit. Such considerations may be the level of support that a specific area of research is already receiving (with the aim of having a balanced program), the need to support existing infrastructures, availability of funds from other NSF/NIH/USDA sources (such as special funds to support less developed U.S. states or groups), etc. BSF has no influence on this second stage. Thus, occasionally, applications with excellent reviews are turned down, and in this case the applicants may consider resubmission in the next round.

3. Israeli PIs should be aware of NSF requirements that may be strictly enforced, and are not common in Israel. These may include a Broader Impact section (that may require PostDoc and student involvement in the research program, communal activity, etc., at least at the U.S, side), Data Management Plan, etc. Based on our experience, we have compiled a list of tips for Israelis. You can download it here: http://files.bsf.org.il/data/FormsToDownload/tips_for_israelis_presentation.pdf

Submission Dates and Hardcopies

**Submission Dates**

Each program has a different submission date. Please check the Call for Proposals, or the BSF website for the deadlines. In general, the deadline for submission to the BSF of an NSF-BSF application, is about one week after the NSF deadline.

**Submission of Hardcopies**

No hardcopies are needed.
Submission Process of the Full Application

The submission forms of this NSF-BSF application are the same as for the regular BSF research grants program. However, a number of sections in this universal submission process, and their corresponding forms, are not relevant in the NSF-BSF submission. Therefore, you must carefully read this file, which describes the submission of an NSF-BSF application to the BSF, using the universal BSF submission forms.

Applications should be written in English.

Applications not meeting BSF guidelines will not be accepted.

In order to submit an application, all the investigators must be registered in the BSF system. (See section 5. Registration and Update of Personal Information in the User Manual)

Only the Israeli investigator needs to open an application. He will be referred to as the Initiator. The initiator has to upload all relevant information regarding his U.S. collaborator. He also has certain privileges over the other investigators during the submission process, although all investigators are considered by the BSF to be Principal Investigators (PIs).

Information supplied in BSF applications comes from two main sources: (1) Information that the investigator enters on the BSF website forms and (2) documents that exist on his computer and are uploaded through the website in their original format (allowed formats are: DOC, PDF or JPEG).

Each application requires the following information to be entered through the website:

- Cover page
- Collaborating investigators
- Abstract
- PDF of the NSF submission
- A short description of the project in lay terms (for PR purposes)
- Work schedule
- Budget details of the Israeli investigator
- Signatures and approvals

Cover Page

Information that needs to be entered in the online form for the cover page:

- The NSF proposal number
- Full titles
- Area of Research - Applicants should indicate the most relevant area of research from the list given in the forms.
- Keywords - Applicants are requested to list keywords that best describe the proposed research.
- Number of years of the proposed project. This number should be similar to that in the proposal submitted to the NSF.

Please note that the NSF-BSF application cannot be defined as startup\ continuation \ resubmission of a previous submission. Even if the application is in-fact a resubmission of a previous application, the NSF treats it as a completely new application, and therefore you cannot submit it to the BSF as “resubmission”.

Collaborating Investigators

The Israeli PI should be the one who opens the application.

The U.S. PI should be added as a PI 'Not requesting funds'.
Files to be uploaded per application

Abstract

Please upload the project summary file that was uploaded to the NSF system. However, please also include the word 'Abstract' at the top, and add the full title of the proposed application, the BSF and NSF application numbers (supplied by the BSF and NSF systems), and the names and affiliations of the principal investigators.

Research Plan

Upload the PDF of the NSF submission as your “Research Plan”

The U.S. PI receives a PDF file from the “Fast Lane” submission system of the NSF, which includes all of the submission information. The Israeli PI will need to receive this document from his U.S. partner, and upload it to the BSF system as their Research File. This file should contain the NSF Proposal Number (at the upper right corner). See the example below.
References

Not required. *(It is already part of the NSF file)*

Progress Report

Not Required.

Resubmission Letter

Not Required.

Broader Impact Statement

Not Required.

Letter from Consultant

Not Required.

A Short Abstract in Lay Terms

Please upload a short abstract with the name of the project in lay terms, the names and affiliations of the PIs, and a short description of the project, also in lay terms. Be sure to include the reasoning behind the proposed research, its significance and its impact, if successful, on humanity, the environment or on
the scientific field. **This abstract must be written in a way that non-scientists will understand the main facts.**

This abstract will be used by the BSF only if a grant is awarded. It will be uploaded to our website and may be used for other public relations purposes.

**Publication in Press**

Not Required.

**Miscellaneous**

Not Required.

**Additional Letters**

Not Required.

**Work Schedule**

The investigators should list on the provided form the project's main research activities and show, where possible, the estimated schedule for conducting each activity. Any explanatory notes should be given in the space below the table. If the research does not lend itself to such scheduling, a narrative description should be provided on the bottom half of the page.

While the application should be carefully prepared in accordance with the investigators' detailed plans, the BSF realizes that the plans may require modification during the course of the research.
Information Needed for Each Investigator

**Curriculum Vitae**

Not Required.

**Investigator’s Publications**

Not Required.

**Cooperation Letters**

Not Required.

**List of Joint Publications from a Previous BSF Grant**

Not Required.

**Budget Details (Required only for the Israeli PI)**

The size of the grant to the Israeli is expected to be larger than traditional BSF grants, possibly up to $80,000/year for experimental studies and $55,000/year for theoretical and computer based studies. These sums are subject to the availability of funds. If more than a single Israeli group is involved in the research, the budget may be increased by up to 50%.

Payments to the Israeli PI will be made in NIS, but in the application the budget should be presented in U.S. currency, using cost estimates prevailing at the time of preparation. The BSF only supports research
conducted in adequately equipped laboratories. The BSF will not fund infrastructure or purchasing of standard equipment.

*The total allowable budget for the Israeli PI in the NSF-BSF programs is $80,000/year for experimental program and $55,000/year for theoretical or computer based program (including 15% overhead), over the period of the grant. Grant period for the Israeli will follow that requested by his U.S. partner.*

BSF support may cover the following expenses:

**Salaries:**

The BSF may audit payments made to individuals working in the framework of the grant. Accordingly, the applicant should consult his institution and, if necessary, the institution should have such employees sign a salary disclosure.

**Principal Investigators:**

Principal investigators are not entitled to receive any part of their salary or supplement to their salary from the BSF. *This rule applies also to Research Associates who draw their salaries from external sources.*

**Other Scientists:**

No scientist on the full-time paid staff of the grantee institution may receive any salary, or supplement to salary, from a BSF grant. In the case of a scientist employed part-time by the institution, a salary may be paid commensurate with the time to be devoted to the project, provided that such salary, together with the institution's salary, does not exceed 100%.

A consultant is not allowed to receive part of his salary from the grant if he is a permanent employee of a research institution.
The names of senior scientists for whom salary is requested should be given, and their proposed role and proportion of time to be spent on the project should be indicated.

**Auxiliary Personnel:**

The salaries of technicians may be paid in proportion to the time devoted to the project. Their proposed roles in the project should be outlined and names given when known. For technicians who are full-time permanent employees, grantee institutions may charge the grant for time spent on the project, up to 50% of the technician’s salary.

**Permanent Specific Equipment:**

Applications to the BSF may include requests to purchase specific equipment required for the proposed project. The term “specific equipment” implies non-general purpose or non-purely instructional equipment. Equipment purchased with BSF funds belongs to the BSF and should be marked accordingly. Upon termination of a project for which equipment is purchased, the BSF will leave the equipment in the institution where the research was conducted. The BSF does not have a separate allocation for equipment and the BSF will not fund grants where the main expenditure is equipment.

The BSF may share in the purchase of specific equipment with the grantee institution, or with other granting agencies.

**Supplies:**

Requests for supplies should be stated in general terms with a listing of the estimated cost. Where substantial funds are requested, a more detailed breakdown is required.

**Industrial Subcontractors:** Industrial subcontractors who supply services for the research are allowed if the expense is part of the approved budget.
Travel Expenses Abroad:

The BSF was established to enhance the cooperation in research between American and Israeli researchers. We believe that in order to advance the cooperation and to advance the joint research it is important for the scientists to meet in person. Therefore, the BSF will allocate money for travel of an investigator, or a member of his research team, to the other country; that is, travel funds will be provided to allow investigators to work together at one of the institutions, or meet at a conference, but only in the U.S. or Israel. In order for the meeting to be supported by the BSF it must be substantial. Only meetings of at least two full days, not including weekends and holidays, will be supported. Meetings at conferences or other locations outside of the investigator’s institutions require prior written approval of the BSF. In the NSF-BSF program, the allowance may be used only by members of the Israeli research team. The application should indicate for whom a proposed trip is intended. BSF approves travel in economy class only, and will cover per diem expenses only for the days spent together at the approved locations. Please note that if an Israeli PI requests travel money only, he should not submit a separate budget request form, but add this travel amount to the initiator's budget (these travel expenses will be reimbursed through the initiator's institution). The BSF will not pay for travel to countries other than Israel and the U.S., unless stated in the research proposal and specifically approved by the BSF prior to travel. The BSF will not pay the costs of conference registration. BSF policy is that only cheapest economy tickets with fixed-date fares may be charged to the grant.

Because the BSF encourages meetings of the PIs, money budgeted for travel is restricted to travel and cannot be used to cover other budget line items without prior approval of the BSF.

Other Expenses:

Page and color charges, up to $500 per grant, will be allowed for joint publications of the applicants. Miscellaneous expenses are considered by the BSF on a case-by-case basis.

Overhead (OH):

A total of 15% overhead on all budget items is allowed.
Price Increases:

Anticipated price increases should **not** be taken into consideration when preparing the budgets for subsequent years. This applies to all items, including salaries. The BSF will calculate increases according to its own scales when preparing second- and third-year budgets, taking into consideration the availability of BSF funds.

Budget Justification:

Investigators are requested to justify in detail all major items (including travel) for which funding is requested.

List of Potential Reviewers

Not Required.

A Check List for Final Submission

Not Required.

Approval of the Application (required only for the Israeli PI)

Submission is considered completed only after all Principal Investigators as well as the Research Authority of the initiating investigator have approved the application online. **Please note that the Initiator is the last one to approve among the PIs.** All approvals of Israeli (only) Research Authorities of investigators **who request financial** support need to be submitted as well, before the end of the
submission process. The Initiator’s Research Authority administrator must approve the application online, and is the last one to do so. This last approval will mark the submission of the application.

**Investigators**

- Only the Israeli scientists need to enter the BSF system with a **personal UserID and password** and approve the application (See “The Main Menu of the Application”). Investigators may approve the application only after all their details have been entered. The U.S. scientist doesn’t need to approve the application. If there are other Israeli scientists, they need to enter and approve the application online.
- The initiating investigator (who is the first to open the online application) can approve the application only after all other investigators have approved it and after all sections are filled in. The initiator can make changes to all sections in the application anytime, as long he did not yet approve it, even if all other investigators have already approved.
- After the initiating investigator approves the application, it is automatically sent for approval to all research authorities whose investigators requested financial support other than for travel. Once this is done, the system will not allow any changes to the application.
- If need, the initiator’s research authority can re-open the application, so that the initiator will be able to make changes. This is done by removing the initiator’s approval. When ready, the application must be approved again by the initiator before continuing.

**Research Authority**

- The Research **Authority** is the **official body** responsible for handling the institution’s research projects (i.e. Research & Sponsored Programs, Research & Development). The Research **Administrator** is the **individual** within that office/department who will personally oversee your research grant.
- **The Initiator’s Research Administrator must approve the application online.** This online approval option is available only if the research administrator is registered and was selected as the research administrator of the investigator in the BSF system and has an active
User ID and Password. (See sections 2. Approval of the Application and 5.4. Research authority and research administrator, in the User Manual).

- If there is another Israeli PI on this application besides the initiator, his authority approval is needed.
- The Research administrator can approve the application online (after logging into the system) by pressing the "Approve" button on the relevant Form (see Manual for Authority Administrators).

The online approval can be done only after the application has been approved by all Israeli applicants (first, by the other Investigator(s) and finally by the Initiator). The application can be approved by the Research Authority Administrators any time before the deadline.

Please note that the application can be "unlocked" for revisions by the Initiator’s research Administrator, as long as it has not been finally approved online by him.

The application is considered as being submitted after it has been approved online by the institution of the initiating investigator, but if any other authority approvals are missing, they will still need to be submitted to the BSF office.