

## **Partnership for International Research & Education (PIRE)**

### **General**

PIRE is NSF's (National Science Foundation, USA) flagship international programme to support high quality research and education projects across all disciplines. The programme aims to leverage the resources of individual funding agencies towards advancement of knowledge and the individual efforts of research groups cutting across national boundaries. The merit of the proposal is ascertained in terms of distinct advancement of knowledge encompassing creativity, originality and transformational character and the competence of investigating team. Special emphasis is put on the collaborative element.

The next PIRE solicitation has been announced. The final awards to successful applicants will be announced in August, 2015, after going through the overall evaluation process. In this round, NSF expects to generate 10 – 15 awards and contribute about \$ 10-15 million annually over a five year period. NSF provides funds to US researchers under PIRE programme while other collaborators outside US have to arrange funding through their counterpart funding agencies.

SERB (Science & Engineering Research Board, India) has entered into an understanding with NSF to partner the programme. Indian researchers and research groups are encouraged to participate through their US collaborators. SERB will provide necessary financial support to such proposals, on the Indian side, if they are so found support worthy through the merit review system of NSF / SERB. Interested parties are advised to visit NSF website for details at [http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm\\_summ.jsp?pims\\_id=505038](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505038).

### **Eligibility**

All areas of Science and Engineering, including medicine, are eligible for support.

Individual scientists and research groups from academic institutions, research laboratories and stand-alone/non-profit R&D institutions, which are otherwise eligible for normal DST / SERB grants, are eligible for support under PIRE programme. Normally, such institutions should be running PhD level programmes during preceding five years.

### **Duration**

Not exceeding five years

### **Level of Support**

NSF is targeting to support 10 – 15 grants against this call. SERB will consider supporting as many of those grants having Indian participation if they stand the test of overall NSF merit review process. Additional SERB criteria will be applied in terms of its own perspective about national priorities and corresponding impact, specific value creation in the Indian context and overall budgetary constraints.

Due to these additional considerations, there will be an implied internal competition amongst the proposals competing for SERB grant and SERB may decline support to a specific proposal or provide only partial support, on a case to case basis. Nevertheless, a situation of total end of the line divergence is very unlikely since it is a coordinated programme and SERB will remain fully involved in the overall NSF merit review process, all through.

Although SERB is flexible in terms of size and numbers of grants supported by it, we are generally contemplating 3-5 grants with a total commitment of Rs 25 crore over a five year period. The guiding criteria would rather be the scientific challenge in the proposal and the potential impact it will make, in general, and to the Indian science/scientific community, in particular. Hence, the support asked in the proposal should be realistic and fully justified by the technical component of the work.

### **Nature of Support**

The funding under the PIRE grants will be provided under the budget heads applicable for regular DST / SERB grants, namely, manpower, equipment, consumables, travel, contingency and institute overheads. The extent of head-wise allocation as well as any special requirement will be considered on case to case basis.

### **Mode of Application**

The Indian applicant(s) have to apply through their US collaborator(s) by way of a complete and composite application, including the portion of Indian partner(s), directly to NSF. Applicants should visit the NSF website for detailed information on PIRE and corresponding submission guidelines.

No separate application needs to be submitted to SERB. As per the arrangement, SERB will have access to all those applications and other relevant documentation, which involve an Indian partner, directly through NSF.

While a formal application is made to NSF, the Indian applicants are advised to furnish brief information on the proposal, not exceeding three pages, directly to SERB through email. The first page should give name, affiliation and contact details of Indian and US/other collaborators. The second page should provide information on funding requirements (overall as well as Indian side). The third page should give a brief synopsis of the technical work proposed to be done under the project, clearly highlighting novelty and value addition. The roles of Indian as well US/other partners should be suitably identified and synergy and complementariness of individual components as well as multiplier effect of the overall collaboration brought out.

It is suggested that applicants take necessary administrative approval(s) from their parent institutes, while applying for PIRE grant, appropriately. SERB will need an explicit undertaking from the host institution for implementing the grant, for which the applicant(s) will be notified later.

SERB will separately and/or individually notify if any additional information or documentation is required from the applicant(s).