

VUMC Limited Submission Opportunity

NSF Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Program

Applications due July 9, 2024

VUMC: These instructions are for VUMC investigators. VU investigators should apply through [InfoReady](#) and address any questions to VU-LSO@vanderbilt.edu.

Overview:

VUMC may submit **up to 4 proposals** to the Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Program.

The [Major Research Instrumentation \(MRI\) Program](#) serves to increase access to multi-user scientific and engineering instrumentation for research and research training in our Nation's institutions of higher education and not-for-profit scientific/engineering research organizations. An MRI award supports the acquisition of a *multi-user* research instrument that is commercially available through direct purchase from a vendor, or for the personnel costs and equipment that are required for the development of an instrument with new capabilities, thereby advancing instrumentation capabilities and enhancing expertise for instrument design and fabrication at academic institutions. MRI instruments are, in general, too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other NSF programs.

MRI provides support to acquire critical research instrumentation without which advances in fundamental science and engineering research may not otherwise occur. MRI also provides support to develop next-generation research instruments that open new opportunities to advance the frontiers in science and engineering research. Additionally, an MRI award is expected to enhance research training of students who will become the next generation of instrument users, designers and builders.

An MRI proposal may request up to \$4 million for either acquisition or development of a research instrument.

*****VU is limited to two submissions in Track 1, one submission in Track 2, and one submission in the newly defined Track 3.**

- Track 1: Track 1 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to \$100,000¹ and less than \$1,400,000.
- Track 2: Track 2 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to \$1,400,000 up to and including \$4,000,000.
- Track 3: Track 3 MRI proposals are those that request funds from NSF greater than or equal to \$100,000 and less than or equal to \$4,000,000 that include the purchase, installation, operation, and maintenance of equipment and instrumentation to conserve or reduce the consumption of helium. ***Institutions may submit no more than one Track 3 proposal. Submission of a Track 3 proposal does not impact limits that apply for Track 1 and Track 2 proposals.***

Cost sharing requirements for new awards in the MRI Program are waived for a period of 5 years beginning with the FY 2023 MRI competition. Institutional submission limits for Track 1, Track 2 and Track 3 proposals remain.

Voluntary cost sharing is not permitted. As such, the maximum total project cost of proposed new projects is \$4 million.

The MRI Program especially seeks broad representation of groups, institutions, and geographic regions that are underrepresented in STEM disciplines. Proposals from women, underrepresented minorities, persons with disabilities and early-career PIs are encouraged, as are proposals that benefit early-career researchers.

Please see [the solicitation](#) for more details.

¹ Track 1 proposals requesting funds from NSF less than \$100,000 will be accepted only from: a) eligible performing organizations requesting instrumentation supporting research in the disciplines of mathematics or social, behavioral and economic sciences;

Internal Application Process:

Anyone interested in being considered to submit one of VUMC's proposals must submit the following (in a single PDF) to LSO@vanderbilt.edu by **5 p.m. on July 9, 2024:**

1. Brief (2 page maximum) project description including summary budget
 - Please identify the Track (1 or 2) to which you are applying
2. Brief statement of support from department chair/center director **including a department or center commitment to the REQUIRED 30% cost-sharing**
3. NIH Biosketch

Any questions about this opportunity may be directed to LSO@vanderbilt.edu.