

Annex for Franco-American projects

Lead Agency Procedure (NSF)

Generic Call for Proposals 2024

Important

1. Franco-American projects shall **be evaluated only by the NSF Agency**, according its own terms, through its Solicitation 23-615 [PHY core program, Physics of Living Systems](#). Full information available at the following address:
https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=505058&ods_key=nsf23615
2. This document sets out detailed rules for the submission and funding procedures applicable to French teams working on Franco-American projects.
3. **It is essential to carefully read [work programme 2024, the generic call for proposals \(AAPG\) 2024, the AAPG 2024 guide](#), the rules relating to ANR funding allocation procedures (<https://anr.fr/fr/rf/>) and all of this document before submitting research project proposals.**

In case of any difference of interpretation, the French version of the present annex shall prevail

ANR Contact Information:

aapg.adfi@anr.fr: questions about the administrative and financial arrangements

aapg.science@anr.fr: questions about the scientific aspects of the project proposal

aapg.si@anr.fr: difficulties encountered when entering data or during document submission on the website

The NSF Division of Physics and the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (NSF/PHY and NSF/MCB) contacts:

M. Wilson FRANCISCO wfrancis@nsf.gov

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NSF website: <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2024/nsf24015/nsf24015.jsp?org=MPS>.

IMPORTANT

Before submitting a Franco-American detailed project proposal, scientific coordinators of such projects with a high TRL (Technology Readiness Level) are invited to read an Executive Order (EO) signed by President Biden on July 28, 2023, that, among other objectives, “*encourages the expansion of U.S. domestic production for critical industries while maintaining flexibility to build strong international R&D partnerships.*” Additional information is available in a [public fact sheet about the EO](#).

1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF COOPERATION WITH USA

By establishing bilateral agreements with foreign funding agencies, the French National Research Agency (ANR) allows French researchers to initiate or extend their collaborative work with researchers from other countries. In this way, it hopes to encourage the emergence of European and International teams of excellence.

The aim is to fund innovative bi-national projects that clearly stand out from on-going national projects, demonstrating great synergy between each country's teams and real integration of joint research.

To simplify and streamline the terms of collaboration and to set up borderless research funding areas, ANR (*Agence nationale de la recherche*) and NSF (*National Science Foundation, Division of Physics (PHY) and the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB)*) have decided to enter into a Lead Agency type of agreement. Within this framework, the teams from the two countries prepare a joint project and one single agency (the *Lead Agency*) takes charge of the whole evaluation process (peer review and scientific panel evaluation) of the projects. Transnational projects compete with the national projects of the agency carrying out the evaluation. The partner agency can access all information on the projects. Each agency provides funding for its national teams¹ according to its own terms.

The Lead Agency procedure established between the ANR and the NSF *Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB)* and the *Division of Physics (PHY)* recognizes the NSF as the “*Lead Agency*” for the evaluation and for the selection of the Franco-American PRCI projects.²

The two agencies take turns yearly handling the submission, evaluation and selection of projects according to its own procedures. For 2024, **the submission and evaluation of project proposals will be handled by NSF**. The scientific coordinator and other partners of the French part **must nevertheless provide** ANR with certain administrative information in accordance with procedures described in this Annex.

The purpose of the partnership between ANR and NSF is to support projects in which there is genuine³ collaboration between Franco-American partners. Partners will ensure the

¹ A French team is a partner with an institution or branch in France

² International Collaborative Research Projects

³ Jointly defined objectives, sharing of skills and tasks, sharing of risks and results

complementarity of the scientific inputs of each country and the added value of the international cooperation. Insofar as possible, the French and foreign partners' projects must start and finish on the same dates. For your information, NSF allows project durations of 36 or 48 months.

2. RESEARCH PRIORITIES

One of the major objectives of the agreement between the ANR and the NSF is to strengthen the interfaces between physics and biology (Physics from Molecules to Cells) by developing strong collaborations between French and American research teams.

The emergence, evolution, dynamics, and function of self-organized cellular systems stem from the interaction of biological components and the environment to yield robust, resilient, and adaptive living systems. These processes respond to the laws of physics and chemistry. The biology-physics interface still needs to be strengthened in order to make progress in the understanding of living systems.

To this end, the Franco-American collaborative projects proposals submitted under the PRCI instrument of the 2024 Generic call for proposals will have to use multidisciplinary approaches that emphasize quantitative, predictive and theory driven science aimed at understanding mechanisms underlying these essential life processes at the molecular, subcellular, cellular and tissue scales. Proposals must integrate approaches from theoretical and experimental physics and biology to develop testable and quantitative understanding of biological questions.

Therefore, as one of the major objectives of the agreement between ANR and NSF is to strengthen the interfaces between physics and biology, the research project proposals will have to **correspond both to** one of the scientific axes of the 2024 generic call for proposals listed below **and** to the NSF solicitations mentioned below.

ANR:

- Axis B.1 "Physics of condensed matter and of dilute matter" (CES 30)
- Axis C.2 "Characterization of structures and structure-function relationships of biological macromolecules" (CES 11)
- Axis C.3 "Genetics, Genomics, RNA sciences" (CES 12)
- Axis C.4 "Cellular Biology, Developmental Biology and Evolution" (CES 13)
- Axis H.14 "Interfaces: mathematics, digital sciences - biology, health" (CES 45)

NSF:

- Solicitation 23-615 ([PHY core program, Physics of Living Systems](#))

3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

French and American partners must prepare a joint scientific project. Each country's teams must designate a national scientific coordinator.

NSF is in charge of submission and evaluation for both countries.

Project proposals must be submitted by American coordinators to NSF via Research.gov: *NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) guidelines apply. The complete text of the PAPPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg

or

Grants.gov: *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov* guidelines apply (Note: The *NSF Grants.gov Application Guide* is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide).

The deadline for the submission of applications to the NSF (Division of Physics: Investigator-Initiated Research Projects (PHY)) is **12th December 2023, 5 p.m.** (submitter's local time).

French partners:

No registration of intention to submit a project is required by ANR.

However, for administrative reasons, although the submission and evaluation are conducted by the foreign agency, the French participants must submit their proposals to the ANR via the ANR submission site:

- **The same scientific project proposal as that submitted to NSF, in the same format.** Note, the acronym and title of the project provided to each agency must be the same.
- **The administrative and funding information** linked to **both** French and foreign partners:
 - o **The detailed** information is expected from the French partners. The French coordinator has to appear as **scientific coordinator** on the ANR submission website
 - o The **minimum**⁴ information is expected concerning foreign partners: the foreign coordinator (**country referent**)⁵, the name of the Institute⁶, its category (private /

⁴ Simplified entry

⁵ The information is essential for the data crosschecking with the DFG

⁶ Partner as a legal entity

public), and the information concerning, requested funding by foreign partners to their national agency

- **A scientific panel** responsible for the scientific monitoring of the project in case of success (description of the scientific panels is available in the AAPG 2024 text). **Please note:** this choice **cannot be changed** once the closing date and time has passed.

The French coordinator is subject to the rules (in particular of eligibility) to which all national scientific coordinators of the 2024 Generic call for proposals must comply (*see AAPG 2024 Guide, § B.5.2. Eligibility of full proposals*).

The deadline for submitting this information to the ANR is the **December the 13th, 2023, 5 p.m.** (Paris time). Projects proposals must be submitted to both agencies at due time. Those submitted to only one agency will be rejected.

The submission website will open on the October the 13th 2023, the link will be indicated on the ANR website, on the generic [2024 call for proposals page](#).

4. ELIGIBILITY

Each agency decides on the eligibility of a project in accordance with **its own rules**.

ANR verifies the eligibility of the full proposal taking into account the criteria detailed in the AAPG 2024 Guide (cf. *§B.5.2 Eligibility of full proposals*) and detailed below:

- 1) The provisional project proposal duration must be the same for the two country partners.
- 2) The French coordinator of a PRCI ANR-NSF (Life Physics) project currently being funded cannot act as such for a PRCI ANR-NSF (Life Physics) project under the 2024 Generic Call for Proposals

As foreign agencies have their own eligibility criteria, it is necessary to comply with them. The NSF rules PHY can be found at the following address:

- <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23615/nsf23615.htm>

Summary table of the *specific eligibility criteria*⁷

Country (agency)	Submission to the foreign agency	Submission to the ANR	Duration	Participation of a company	Other
USA (NSF)	Yes	copy of the project proposal	36, 48 months	ANR eligible NSF to be checked with NSF eligibility rules	

To be eligible, proposals must meet all of the eligibility criteria of the two funding agencies.

5. EVALUATION

Projects shall **only be evaluated by NSF** in accordance with its own rules.

The NSF will propose a list of projects to be funded by ANR.

The two agencies then jointly validate the list of projects to be funded.

6. FUNDING PROVISIONS

Each agency will cover expenditures for their respective country's teams according to **its own rules**. ANR's funding regulations are available at: <https://anr.fr/fr/rf/>

7. CALENDAR

- Closure for submission proposals on the NSF website: 12th of December 2023, 5 p.m (submitter's local time)
- Closure for submission proposals on the ANR website: 13th of December 2023, 5 p.m (Paris time) **no registration**
- Joint decision and publication of results: October 2024 (indicative date)
- Possible project start date: final quarter 2024 – January 2025 / to be adapted according to the foreign partner constraints.

⁷ In addition to these eligibility criteria are the criteria of the foreign agency (to be checked with the foreign agency).