

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION SUBMISSION

TITLE of COLLECTION: Application for NATO Advanced Study Institutes Travel Award and NATO Advanced Study Institutes Travel Award Report Form (OMB No. 3145-0001)

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. CIRCUMSTANCES MAKING COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) initiated its Advanced Study Institutes (ASI) Program in 1958 modeled after a small number of very successful summer science “courses” that were held in Europe and that sought to rebuild Europe’s science strength following World War II. The goal was to bring together both students and researchers from the leading centers of research in highly targeted fields of science and engineering to promote the “American” approach to advanced learning, spirited give-and-take between students and teachers that was clearly driving the rapid growth of U.S. research strength. Today the goal remains the same; but due to the expansion of NATO, each year an increasing number of ASIs are held in NATO Partner Countries along with those held in the original NATO Member Countries. In the spirit of cooperation with this important activity, the Foundation inaugurated in 1959 a small program of travel grants for advanced graduate students and young postdoctorals to assist with the major cost of such participation, that of transatlantic travel. It remains today a significant means for young scientists and engineers to develop contact with their peers throughout the world in their respective fields of specialization.

The Advanced Study Institutes (ASI) travel awards are offered primarily to advanced graduate students, but include recent postdoctoral students and new science faculty members, to attend one of the NATO’s ASIs held in the NATO-member and partner countries of Europe. The NATO ASI program is targeted to those individuals nearing the completion of their doctoral studies in science, mathematics, and engineering who can take advantage of opportunities to become familiar with progress in their respective fields of specialization in other countries.

The following describes the procedures for the administration of the Foundation's NATO Advanced Study Institute (ASI) Travel Awards, which provide travel support for a number of U.S. graduate students and postdoctoral participants to attend the ASIs scheduled for Europe.

- **ADVANCED STUDY INSTITUTE DETERMINATION**

Once NATO has notified us that the schedule of institutes is final, and we have received the descriptions of each institute, we determine which institutes NSF will support. The ASI travel award program supports those institutes that offer instruction in the fields of science traditionally supported by NSF as published in Guide to Programs. The program will not support institutes that deal with clinical topics, biomedical topics, or topics that have disease-related goals. Examples of areas of research that will not be considered are epidemiology; toxicology; the development or

testing of drugs or procedures for their use; diagnosis or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals; and animal models of such conditions. However, the program does support institutes that involve research in bioengineering, with diagnosis or treatment-related goals that apply engineering principles to problems in biology and medicine while advancing engineering knowledge. The program also supports bioengineering topics that aid persons with disabilities. Program officers from other Divisions in NSF will be contacted should scientific expertise beyond our own be required in the determination process.

- **SOLICITATION FOR NOMINATIONS**

Following the final determination as to which Advanced Study Institutes NSF will support, we contact each institute director to ask for a list of up to 5 nominations to be considered for NSF travel support.

- **EHR CONTACT WITH THE INDIVIDUALS NOMINATED**

Each individual who is nominated by a director will be sent the rules of eligibility, information about the amount of funding available, and the forms (NSF Form 1379, giving our Finance Office electronic banking information; NSF Form 1310 (already cleared), and NSF Form 192 (Application for International Travel Grant)) necessary for our application process.

- **THE FUNDING PROCESS**

Once an applicant has been selected to receive NSF travel award support, his or her application is sent to our Finance office for funding. They electronically transfer the amount of \$1000 into the bank or other financial institution account identified by the awardee.

Our plan is to have the \$1000 directly deposited into the awardee's account prior to the purchase of their airline ticket. An electronic message to the awardee states that NSF is providing support in the amount of \$1000 for transportation and miscellaneous expenses. The letter also states that the award is subject to the conditions in F.L. 27, Attachment to International Travel Grant, which states the U.S. flag-carrier policy.

As a follow-up, each ASI director may be asked to verify whether all NSF awardees attended the institute. If an awardee is identified as not utilizing the funds as prescribed, we contact the awardee to retrieve the funds. However, if our efforts are not successful, we will forward the awardee's name to DGA, which has procedures to deal with that situation.

We also ask the awardee to submit a final report on an NSF Form 250, which we provide as an attachment to the electronic award message.

- **SELECTION OF AWARDEES**

The criteria used to select NSF Advanced Study Institute travel awardees are as follows:

1. The priority of selection is by the status level of the applicant:
 - (a) advanced graduate student, or
 - (b) recent post-doc (Ph.D. received no earlier than three years before the ASI).
 - (c) new faculty with Ph.D.'s received no earlier than three years before the ASI).
2. We shall generally follow the order of the nominations, listed by the director of the institute, within priority level.
3. Those who have not attended an ASI in the past will have a higher priority than those who have.
4. Nominees from different institutions and research groups have higher priority than those from the same institution or research group. (Typically, no more than one person is invited from a school or from a research group.)

Information collected using NSF Form 192 is necessary to verify eligibility and qualifications for the award. For NSF Form 250, information is necessary to verify attendance at Advanced Study Institute and is included in Division annual report.

2. HOW, BY WHOM, AND PURPOSE FOR WHICH INFORMATION IS TO BE USED

Information in NSF Form 192 will be used by the program manager of the Advanced Study Institutes program to verify eligibility and qualifications for the award. Information on NSF Form 250 will be used to verify attendance at ASI and will be used by program manager to prepare narrative and statistical reports to be included in Division annual report.

3. USE OF AUTOMATION

Plans are in place to make these forms available electronically on our website. The cleared forms will be published in the NSF Online Document System and will be available to applicants of the ASI program.

4. EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION

Every year the ASI program provides travel awards to up to five different applicants for each course offered. We try not to select the same people year to year, if possible. Therefore, we need to collect all the information each year for different applicants.

5. SMALL BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS:

N/A

6. CONSEQUENCES OF LESS FREQUENT COLLECTION

As a consequence of less frequent collection, we might not receive the information necessary to verify eligibility for the program and verify attendance at the ASI. Also, we would not have all the necessary statistics for inclusion in our division reports.

7. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR COLLECTION

There are no special circumstances.

8. FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.

The public notice was published in the *Federal Register* on March 6, 2008 at 73 FR 12222, and no comments were received.

OUTSIDE CONSULTATION:

Forms have been reviewed by Division Director and NSF Forms Clearance Officer.

9. GIFTS OR REMUNERATION : N/A

10. CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS:

The information requested of applicants for ASI travel awards is solicited pursuant to the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. Disclosure of all the information is entirely voluntary. Application information supplied will be used and disclosed only in connection with the selection of candidates and for the administration of the program, and will not be disclosed for any other purpose, except as part of statistical reports in a form which would not allow identification of individual applicants. In the event of an award, the application becomes a public document.

11. QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE:

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

12. ESTIMATE OF BURDEN

Form 192 – 1.5 hours
Form 250 – 2 hours

Estimated Number of Responses per Award: 150 responses, broken down as follows: For NSF Form 250, 75 respondents; for NSF Form 192, 75 respondents.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 262.5 hours, broken down by 150 hours for NSF Form 250(2 hours per 75 respondents); and 112.5 hours for NSF Form 192 (1.5 hours per 75 respondents).

ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS: \$2,525

13. CAPITAL/STARTUP COSTS:

There are no capital or startup costs associated with this collection.

14. ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

One administrative staff and one support staff are necessary to complete the process of awarding travel grants. All notifications to directors and nominees are sent electronically using e-mail on computer equipment.

A. Time from receipt of list of nominees to EHR approval to secretary's time to BFA for final approval of grant = 49 hours = \$2600

B. Time from receipt of nominees to award by BFA = 12 days = 96 hours = \$5088

15. CHANGES IN BURDEN:

There are no changes in the burden.

16. PUBLICATION OF COLLECTION:

N/A

17. SEEKING APPROVAL TO NOT DISPLAY OMB EXPIRATION DATE:

NSF requests approval to not display the expiration date as it is anticipated that these forms will not change.

18. EXCEPTION(S) TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT (19) ON OMB 83-I:

There are no exceptions.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS:

Not applicable.

Attachments

NSF 192, "Application for International Travel Grant"

NSF 250, "International Travel Report Form"