

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers (FAQs) for [NNH20ZDA010L: Expression of Interest: SMD call for Augmentations and Funded Extensions](#)

FAQ Posted: August 6, 2020

Document History

August 11, 2020:	Answers to Q9 and 10 clarified. New Q12-25 added
August 13, 2020	New Qs26-31 added

Q1: When an institution or individual has multiple awards, do you want one response per award or a summary response with all awards in it?

A1: One response per award, please. NSPIRES will not reject summaries, but SMD may not be able to analyze summary responses. Multiple submissions from the same investigator are welcome, particularly for individuals who are funded by more than one SMD division.

Q2: May Science Mission Directorate (SMD) funded investigators at other federal agencies, NASA Centers and JPL who do not have assistance awards, i.e., grants or cooperative agreements, respond to this EOI? Should they respond to the EOI?

A.2: Yes and Yes. Neither the EOI nor ROSES is restricted to grants, NASA Centers including JPL and other Government Agencies may submit to both or either.

Q3: Does SMD expect that in the forthcoming ROSES element for “Augmentations and Funded Extensions” that there will be a variety of eligible award types, i.e., grants or cooperative agreements, internal NASA funding (RTOPs), inter-agency transfer agreements, contracts, etc.?

A3. Yes, all award types are expected to be eligible.

Q4: The program specific data section asks for estimates within \$1,000, of: a) Direct labor costs for graduate students; b) Tuition costs for graduate students; and c) Benefits costs for graduate students. Do we give a “best estimate” for the extent of impact on students employed on our grant? What time-period should be used for estimates? Do we use spring and summer 2020, the fall and winter? Calendar year?

A4. Yes, provide a best estimate, based on your understanding of the delay in graduate student progress caused by the pandemic. There is a Program Specific Data field to record the period of time to be covered by any requested augmentation or funded extension. In general, try to think of the EOI as a type “landscape survey.” Different places will have different timing. Make your own best estimate. Please follow the steps on NSPIRES to express your interest (not to make an actual request) at

<https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/solicitations/summary.do?sollid=%7B2F320E44-5D23-176F-C195-597F32FBBC9D%7D&path=&method=init>

Per the full NNH20ZDA010L on NSPIRES: "It is not necessary to complete the following "NOI Details" sections: Proposal Summary; Budget; Team members. However, it is imperative that you answer all "Program Specific Data" Questions."

Q5. If I add a draft budget for the "Expression of Interest", does that mean that I have applied for an augmentation to my SMD-funded award(s)?

A5: No. The EOI is a request for preliminary estimates to help SMD budget for the forthcoming ROSES element. SMD will use expressions of interest (EOI) to improve management of the augmentation and extension processes. An EOI must contain the grant number/WBS Element/Inter-Agency Transfer number of the existing award.

NOTE: The number assigned to the original proposal is not useful.

Q6: Where can I find more information about how SMD sets funding priorities? For example, what is the source of the funding for the forthcoming ROSES augmentation/funded extension program? Does this mean there will be fewer funds for NEW proposal(s) to get started, etc.?

A6. Please use the slides available from the [Virtual Community Town Hall](#) on July 9, 2020, and SMD policy document, "[Augmentations and Funded Extensions in Response to COVID-19](#)" to answer questions regarding how SMD sets funding priorities. The underlined words are hyperlinks. Currently, the source of the funding for the forthcoming ROSES augmentation/funded extension program is the same funding that is the source of funding for new awards to be selected from ROSES-2020 solicitations.

Q7: I am an individual with this (details withheld) type of SMD funding, am I eligible to submit to the EOI and the subsequent ROSES program?

A7: Anyone with SMD funding on the day they submit the EOI can submit an Expression of Interest via NSPIRES. For the subsequent ROSES program, the standard NSPIRES submission via an institution requirement will continue. SMD likely will set a limitation that requires proposers to have a SMD-funded award that will not expire within three (3) months of submission. It is premature to discuss eligibility at this point.

Q8: Is the EOI and any successor competition part of a special funding similar to the Research and Recovery Act of 2009 or 2020's Cares Act set by Congress?

A8: No.

Q9: *Early Careers Researchers (ECRs); Augmentations/Funded Extensions and other ROSES program competitions.* SMD divisions use various definitions for **ECR in their ROSES program elements**, will the forthcoming ROSES element use all those

definitions? Due to a series of unfortunate events before COVID-19, etc. I no longer meet any of SMD's definitions for an Early Career Researcher (ECR); will the EOI-related ROSES and other ECR-ROSES program make ECR accommodations; have multiple definitions for ECRs?

A9: The Expression of Interest document states that "SMD defines an Early Career Researcher as someone who is within ten years of receiving their terminal degree — usually a PhD." Time taken away from career activities for family (e.g., for the birth or adoption of a child, or for the care of a dependent) or health reasons, or for military service.

However, you do need not be early career 1) to provide an expression of interest or 2) request an augmentation or funded extension. ROSES early career program elements like the New (Early Career) Investigator Program in Earth Science, the Heliophysics ECIP, etc. have different ECR definitions, and these awardees are welcome to submit an EOI.

As defined in the Expression of Interest: “SMD call for Augmentations and Funded Extensions”, non-tenured, *i.e.*, soft money, early career researchers are among the higher priority groups along with Postdocs and graduate students for this funding. The EOI definition of ECR that is discussed in this FAQ and the one that will appear later in the actual ROSES program call for augmentations and funded extensions may differ from what appears in ROSES program elements like the New (Early Career) Investigator Program in Earth Science, the Heliophysics ECIP, etc.

For the purposes of the Expression of Interest and this document, an individual will be considered to be a “non-tenured or soft-money early career researcher” if they met the definition of an Early Career Researcher *when the award to be extended was initially submitted to ROSES.* [Answer clarified August 11, 2020]

Q10: My award ends very soon, e.g., in a few days, weeks or a month. Should I bother to respond to the EOI? Who can help me now regarding a no-cost and ~~at-cost~~ a funded extension? What should I do first?

A10: If you need a no-cost extension (NCE) make sure you have a progress report, even a report saying COVID-19 prevented progress, and submit it on-line at <https://www.nssc.nasa.gov/nocostextension>. First NCEs are essentially automatic.

NOTE: In an extremely rare circumstance, when a Congressional appropriation from a fiscal year prior to 2015 is unspent on an award, those funds may be expiring. No NCE is possible when it relies on expiring or expired funds. In such a case, the NASA Shared Services Center will not allow the NCE.

If you need **to request funding for an a-funded-extension** and do not know the name of your SMD program officer, put your name in as PI and search for the SMD technical officer at <https://www.nssc.nasa.gov/grantstatus>. You can then find the email for the SMD officer at <https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/sara/program-officers-list>

You cannot use the EOI to request a NCE or a funded-extension. There is no requirement to submit an EOI in order to submit an NCE. If you submit a NCE or funded-extension, you may still submit an EOI. The first and most important thing you should do is take care of the funds you have. [Answer clarified August 11, 2020]

Q11: My SMD award doesn't fund my time completely or I have tenure, should I submit an EOI?

A11: Yes. Neither your employment status, nor the proportion of your time covered, nor the amount of your SMD funding should limit your submitting an EOI. If you believe that you may need an augmentation or funded extension for yourself or someone on your team, then please respond to the EOI.

Q12: I have an award from the Biological and Physical Sciences Division (BPSD) that was not part of the Science Mission Directorate (SMD) when the award was made, but BPSD recently become part of SMD. May I respond to the EOI?

A12: Yes, the Director of the new Biological and Physical Sciences (BPS) Division has confirmed that awardees from BPS are eligible, so you may respond to the EOI.

Q13: Are graduate students, ECRs and postdocs *the only ones who should submit an EOI*? I am funded by SMD, but I am outside that career stage. Is it OK to respond to this EOI? What about the submitter eligibility in the EOI's subsequent ROSES program element?

A13. The EOI is not limited to submissions from those three career stages. Yes, please respond to the EOI. Remember to identify the cooperative agreement or grant number, WBS, which refers to internal NASA tracking at Centers and JPL or an interagency transfer agreement number. It is premature to speculate about what, if any, eligibility limits will apply to the EOI's subsequent ROSES program.

Q14: I only have a cooperative agreement number, but the EOI implies I need other types of numbers it says: "2.The grant number/WBS Element/Inter-Agency Transfer number of the existing award. (This is not the number assigned to the original proposal)."

A14: A cooperative agreement is a type of grant. When you see the slashes, please "read it" as the word "or" grant number or WBS Element or Inter-Agency Transfer or contractor, etc. Different types of awards have different types of identifying numbers.

Q15: I applied for SMD funding, as a postdoc, graduate student, or ECR or other at-risk career stage. SMD recently declined my proposal, so I have no SMD funding, may I submit an EOI using the declined proposal number?

A15: No, please do not submit an EOI.

Q16: Is the EOI the equivalent of a) a mandatory Notice of Intent or b) a Step-1 proposal? Aren't we required to explain in the EOI's Proposal Summary the reason for submitting the EOI, because this will then go into the Step-2 after October 1st?

A16. No. The EOI is not equivalent to a mandatory NOI or to a Step-1 proposal. An EOI submission is not required nor will it limit the submission of a future proposal. Try to think of the EOI as a planning study for SMD or as a response to a Request for Information. The EOI is a request for preliminary estimates to help SMD budget. SMD will not link an individual's EOI to a future proposal.

Q17: This question relates only to NASA Centers funded by SMD in accordance with ISFM-- Internal Scientist Funding Model. May an ISFM respond to the EOI?

A17: No. Recipients of ISFM directed-work packages (DWP) should contact the Research and Analysis (R&A) Lead for the Headquarters (HQ) Division that issued the DWP to seek changes to its funding. SMD's Divisional R&A Leads are listed at the following address <https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/sara/program-officers-list>. The ISFM's purpose is to enable authority in Branch Chiefs at the Centers, and HQ R&A Leads, to set research directions. DWP leaders please directly talk to your Center management and relevant HQ R&A Lead to regarding possible funding changes.

If, however, the ISFM has a separate non-ISFM WBS, i.e., another award from SMD, then yes, you may submit an EOI for that award. Please keep in mind the ISFMs are not one of the funding priority groups.

Q18: Is this EOI looking for timelines that are only for Fiscal Year 2021? Alternatively, can we submit a time line outside of 2021? What about FY 2023 or later?

A18: Please read the SMD policy document, "[Augmentations and Funded Extensions in Response to COVID-19](#)". The time line specified is FY 2021 and FY 2022

Q19: We understand that the Astrophysics Division considers grants and awards to NASA Centers to be "level-of-effort" activities, such that schedule impact is not a priority rationale for requesting an augmentation. Does that mean that an Astrophysics augmentation request will be denied without consideration? Do I have to wait until the next Strategic Astrophysics Technology (SAT) call in December 2021, and would it be appropriate to propose a COVID-related funded extension to the next SAT call? Or do we propose to the forthcoming ROSES element for "Augmentations and Funded Extensions?" Should we submit an EOI?

A19: Please direct specific questions about a grants program to the appropriate SMD Program Officer. SMD's Program Officers are listed at the following address <https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/sara/program-officers-list>. In the specific case of

the SAT program, please contact: Mario Perez (mario.perez@nasa.gov). If you want to help inform the design of the forthcoming SMD-wide (*i.e.*, cross-Divisions) “ROSES Augmentations and Funded Extensions” program, then please submit an EOI.

Q20: My ROSES award includes no students, postdocs, and other early-career researchers, but COVID-19 significantly impacted my project. Should I submit an EOI and fill in only the fields for “other individuals on the team” or “any other direct costs”?

A20: If you want to help inform the design of the forthcoming SMD-wide (*i.e.*, cross-Divisions) ROSES Augmentations and Funded Extensions” program, then submit an EOI. Note that the SMD policy document “[Augmentations and Funded Extensions in Response to COVID-19](#)” places lowest priority on the extension of awards that lack graduate students, Postdocs and non-tenure track or soft-money early career researchers. Nevertheless, if you want to help inform the design of the forthcoming SMD-wide (*i.e.*, cross-Divisions) “ROSES Augmentations and Funded Extensions” program, then please submit an EOI even if your award does not support graduate students, Postdocs, or non-tenure track, soft-money early career researcher.

Q21: I am a NASA Co-I on a funded project, and the PI is affiliated with an external institution. Should I respond to the EOI or inform the PI of the impacts at my Center or other NASA facility with the understanding that the PI will roll up the impacts and respond?

A21: Please have the project PI submit an EOI for the entire project.

Q22: I work at NASA, as a civil servant, contractor, or via a NASA Postdoctoral Fellow (NPP) award. Do I need approval from my Center to submit to the EOI? Am I eligible to submit an EOI? What about my eligibility to the forthcoming ROSES Augmentations and Funded Extensions” program?

A22: This is a variation of Q&A#7. It is premature to speculate regarding eligibility limits in the forthcoming ROSES element. If you have an SMD-funded award, *i.e.*, WBS Element or contract number, then submit an EOI if you desire. Please try to submit an accurate cost estimate in your EOI response and that might mean you have to talk to someone at your Center. There is no “institutional” or “center” pre-approval requirement in the EOI.

Please note, however, that NPPs funded through the Universities Space Research Association (USRA), are not considered to be PI or Co-Is on “individual awards.” Individual NPPs should not submit to the EOI. Nor should NPP advisors or Center Representatives. If NPP advisors have questions regarding extending an individual, NPP Fellow’s funding, then the advisor should contact the R&A Lead for the Headquarters (HQ) Division that funds the NPP. Keep in mind that SMD at Headquarters only considers the extension of individual NPP funding on a case-by-case basis when the Center does not have the funding to extend the Fellow. Outside of this EOI SMD is looking at how and when to increase the total number of NPPs.

Q23: Will the forthcoming SMD-wide (i.e., cross-Divisions) ROSES Augmentations and Funded Extensions” program be added to ROSES-20, ROSES-21, ROSES-23, etc., for how many years does SMD plan to offer this new element?

A23: The forthcoming element is an emergency response to a unique, national crisis. SMD will not speculate on how many times it will be offered following the initial release.

Q24: May NASA Postdocs Program Center advisors who fund Fellows via ROSES submit an EOI. If they don’t submit an EOI, can they still propose to the forthcoming ROSES Augmentations and Funded Extensions” program?

A24: These questions are variations of questions already answered. See for example Q&A22.

Q25: Due to my status as <details withheld> according to these new FAQs I should not have submitted an EOI. If I cannot withdraw it, will I be at risk in some way?

A25: If you submitted an irrelevant EOI, there is no risk to you.

Q26: Should a PI with only non-NASA subawards submit the EOI on behalf of all project team members and Co-Is? Or do the non-NASA subawards submit separate EOIs? What if the award has both NASA and non-NASA subawards?

A26: Ideally, submit only one EOI for an entire project that includes all types of subawards. Neither non-NASA nor NASA subawards should submit independent EOIs. The PI should submit the EOI. In the absence of the PI, and in order to make the due date, a Co-I may submit the EOI that identifies the PI and NASA award number. See Q&A25.

Q27: If NASA Pathways graduate students or recent graduates, i.e., civil servants at a NASA Center, work on SMD-funded research projects, is it OK to request support for Pathways graduate students in the forthcoming ROSES Augmentations/Funded Extensions program? Will Pathways be a priority? What about reporting Pathways in the EOI?

A27: It is premature to speculate how the forthcoming ROSES program will prioritize Pathways civil servants (See <https://www.nasa.gov/careers/pathways-program>). For NASA Pathways student(s) funded now on an existing project, the PI’s EOI should include them as graduate students or early career. If the PI is outside NASA, the NASA Co-I should make sure the PI is aware of the Pathways graduate students and early career researchers. Please note that many federal agencies offer a Pathways career track, so if there are interagency agreements outside of NASA that are supporting Pathways civil servants with SMD funding, please report that.

Q28: Should the EOI include part-time Master's degree students who work at NASA or JPL or work outside NASA as support staff/technicians for one or more SMD project(s)?

A28: If the SMD award is paying for the part-timers, then the PI's EOI should report part-time graduate students with the appropriate budget.

Q29: In the forthcoming ROSES program will SMD-funded contractor early-career laboratory support staff working at NASA Centers, facilities or JPL *and* whose duties are similar to those of graduate students and postdocs, have a similar funding priority as graduate students or early-career soft-money researchers outside NASA?

A29: It is premature to speculate how the forthcoming ROSES program will address the priority status of the NASA laboratory support staff in the event they do not meet the definitions in SMD policy document, "[Augmentations and Funded Extensions in Response to COVID-19](#)".

Q30: What if an SMD project has been granted an extended period of performance, i.e., COVID-19 has paused the research; the project got an augmentation already, or there's no way to predict when COVID-19 will permit moving forward, is it correct that the PI should still submit an EOI? If the SMD funding division already knows about these issues, do we still submit the EOI? What if we granted ourselves the extension under OMB COVID-19 Flexibilities for grantees, do we still submit an EOI?

A30: Just because the NASA Shared Services Center and the funding program manager at HQ may know the complexities of a project, does not mean NASA can integrate case-specific knowledge into the analysis of EOI responses. If the PI believes there is a possibility that a future funding request is possible, then please submit an EOI. If this is not money related, i.e., no-cost extension, then do not submit an EOI.

Q31: How do I figure out what date I should use to estimate for my start and end dates in the EOI?

A31: The dates in the EOI are non-binding estimates. If you expect to request a funded extension, then use the first day after the end of the current performance period. If you expect to need funding before your current period of performance ends, then give that date. In rare instances when the appropriation is not expired, a total period of performance could be 10 years or even longer. It is much more common to have a three-year award extended two more years.

Still have EOI questions or comments? Please email sara@nasa.gov and use as the subject line "SMD call for Augmentations and Funded Extensions: NNH20ZDA010L".