

RLI S10 Frequently Asked Questions

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I. Institutional Eligibility

1. What are the institutional eligibility requirements?

Answer: Applicant institutions eligible for funding through this NOFO must be domestic, located in the United States or its territories, and meet these criteria:

- At the time of application, have received less than \$6 million dollars per year (total costs) from [NIH Research Project Grants \(RPGs\)](#) in each of the preceding three fiscal years, calculated using [NIH RePORTER](#); **and**
- award undergraduate (B.S. or B.A.) and/or graduate degrees in biomedical sciences; **and**
- enroll at least 35% of undergraduate students supported by Pell grants (calculated as a yearly average from the past three academic years based on data available from the [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(IPEDS\) database](#) maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics); **or** belong to one of the following categories:
 - Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), (see 20 U.S.C. 1061(2))
 - Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), (i.e., institutions described in [section 5\(e\)](#) of [Executive Order 14049](#))

2. Are medical schools eligible?

Answer: Yes, they are eligible if they meet the above criteria.

3. How many proposals per institution are allowed?

Answer: Applicant organizations may submit more than one application, provided that each application is for a different type of instrument. Applicant organizations are advised to consult with [Dr. Dorothy Beckett](#) before submitting multiple applications.

4. Can a partner institution be undergrad or grad degree granting and the applicant institution not?

Answer: No, the applicant institution must meet all the institutional eligibility criteria.

5. Do kinesiology/exercise science departments meet criteria for "biomedical?"

Answer: They likely do, requested instruments may support biomedical research and education in basic, translational, biomedically-related behavioral or clinical fields. Please reach out to [Dr. Dorothy Beckett](#) to share the goal of the research to be supported to confirm that it is biomedical in nature.

6. The NOFO states: "Applicant organizations may submit more than one application, provided that each application is for a different type of instrument." How "different" does each instrument need to be?

Answer: Applicant organizations are advised to consult with [Dr. Dorothy Beckett](#) before submitting multiple applications.

7. Is it 35% for undergraduate student population or 35% of all enrolled students at the university?

Answer: The criteria are institutions that enroll at least 35% of undergraduate students supported by Pell grants (calculated as a yearly average from the past three academic years based on data available from the [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(IPEDS\) database](#) maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics).

8. Do Minority Serving Institutions such as Hispanic Serving Institutions qualify?

Answer: Any institution that meets the criteria of having received less than less than \$6 million dollars per year (total costs) from NIH Research Project Grants (RPGs) in each of the preceding three fiscal years, and award undergraduate (B.S. or B.A.) and/or graduate degrees in biomedical sciences; **and** enroll at least 35% of undergraduate students supported by Pell grants is eligible. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) must meet the first two criteria to be eligible. Any other institution must meet those criteria and enroll at least 35% of undergraduate students supported by Pell grants.

9. We need a partner institution. Can you provide a list?

Answer: We do not have a list available. You should seek to collaborate with nearby institutions that have shared research interests and will need to use the equipment you are proposing. The applicant institution must meet the eligibility criteria.

II. Principal Investigator Eligibility

1. I see that institutions can submit more than one application; however, can a single individual submit multiple applications for different instruments?

Answer: A single individual from an institution may not serve as the PI/PD on multiple applications for distinct instruments. However, he or she may serve as a PI/PD on one and a Major User on a second.

2. Is S10 grant, a single PI application or multiple PI could potentially submit the application?

Answer: The S10 application is a single PI application.

3. Can multiple PIs submit a single application?

Answer: No, multiple PIs cannot submit a single application because this is a single PI program.

4. Can a PI be a major or minor user for a different S10 grant applications from the institution?

Answer: Yes, a PI for one RLI-S10 application can be a Major or Minor user on another RLI-S10 application.

5. Can a major user have both a research and educational program in the proposal.

Answer: Strictly speaking, the undergraduate or graduate course is, itself, the Major User in education uses of the instrument. Therefore, a Major User can have both a research and educational program in an RLI-S10 application.

6. What is the eligibility of the PI. Must a PI be a U.S. citizen to receive a research grant award?

Answer: The PI must be a full-time employee of the applicant institution but does not have to be a US citizen.

7. Does the PI have to have a minimum percentage effort? I understand that no salary support is given. However, does percent effort in kind need to be listed.

Answer: No there is no effort requirement for the PI on an RLI-S10 application.

8. Can a PI who previously held an S10 apply again?

Answer: Yes, an individual who was the PI on a previous S10 application or award can serve as PI on an RLI-S10 application.

9. We applied for and received a BIG award in 2022 (under PAR-22-081). Are we eligible to apply?

Answer: Yes, you are eligible to apply for an RLI-S10 award.

10. We plan to apply for a BIG award by the June 1, 2023, deadline. Are we eligible to apply for the RLI S10 program (PAR-23-138) that is not overlapping?

Answer: Yes, as long as there is no overlap, you may apply for both a BIG S10 and an RLI-S10 award.

III. Instrument Uses/Users

1. Are both research and teaching goals required?

Answer: No, although research and educational uses are allowed, both research and teaching goals are not required. Moreover, purely instructional equipment that cannot be used for research purposes is not allowed.

2. What about an integrated clinical application with research and teaching?

Answer: Use of an instrument in clinical trials is not allowed for applications to this NOFO. However, use of an instrument to develop or teach a clinical test may be allowed. Please contact [Dr. Dorothy Beckett](#) with questions that you may have relative to this point.

3. What is the difference between Minor and Other Users?

Answer: Minor and Other users are identical.

4. Can multiple courses be considered multiple users? For example, Biology I is a user and AP2 is a second user?

Answer: A single instrument may be used in multiple laboratory courses, and each course is considered a distinct user. Additionally, it is acceptable for a course to be either a Major or Minor user.

5. Is there a minimum number of minor/other users required?

Answer: There is no requirement for a minimum number of minor users. However, the inclusion of minor users will be considered during the review process.

6. Does a graduate course without a laboratory course qualify as an educational major user? Example being a special topics course.

Answer: If a graduate course usage proposes significant usage of the instrument in the course and integrates this usage into the learning goals, it may be considered a major user.

7. Can there be more than three major users?

Answer: Yes, there can be more than three major users. Three is the minimum number of major users.

8. Can the major and minor users be from nearby institutions that do not satisfy the [applicant institution eligibility criteria](#), such as a nearby non-HBCU institution?

Answer: Major and minor users can be drawn from nearby institutions that do not meet applicant institution eligibility criteria, such as non-HBCU institutions. However, the instrument must be housed at the applicant, in this case HBCU, institution.

9. When you're looking into departments/programs that could be supported, we would be interested in whether or not the program could support instrumentation to be used in radiologic sciences and respiratory care.

Answer: Requested instruments may support biomedical research and education in basic, translational, biomedically-related behavioral or clinical fields. Patient care is not a permitted instrument use.

10. Can you define major users and how much of the use time these three major users should be utilizing the instrument?

Answer: There is no specific amount of instrument time that must be devoted to Major Users in either research or teaching projects. However, in the description of research and educational activities provided in the Research and/or Education Projects all Major Users must provide an explicit need, including number of usage hours per month. Reviewers will evaluate the "Justification of Need" based on these numbers and other information provided in the project descriptions.

IV. Instrument Housing

1. Can the instrument be housed in a shared BSL3 facility?

Answer: Technically yes. However, such an arrangement may not be the best scenario for instruments intended for use in teaching. Careful consideration of the required biosafety and protections versus how the instrument will be accessed for shared use will be critical to the review of the application.

V. Allowable Instruments

1. Can we apply for multiple instruments within the budget for which functionality are co-dependent?

Answer: An institution can submit multiple S10 applications, with each application requesting funds to purchase a single instrument that is allowed per the PAR-23-138. An individual PD/PI can only apply for one piece of instrument or an integrated instrumentation system.

2. Is it allowed to propose 5 sets of same portable instruments (\$5000/set) for education purpose?

Answer: Only if the 5 sets of devices belong to an integrated system package and that the cost is eligible under this NOFO. Please note, the number of sets must be justified to ensure the educational goal is met while commensurate with optimal usage of the system.

3. Is GPU-based server considered as instrument?

Answer: Yes, GPU-based server is one type of the qualified computer systems under this NOFO. However, the server system must be solely dedicated to research and/or education.

4. Is it possible to request more than one instrument in the given proposal?

Answer: Unfortunately, this is not allowed. This NOFO only supports the purchase of a single instrument or an integrated instrumentation system. For example, it will support a combined HPLC and mass spectrometry system (LC-MS).

5. Is it possible to enhance an existing instrument through this mechanism?

Answer: This will depend on the particular nature of the request. For example, the purchase of a new probe for a nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer is allowable. Please check with [Dr. Dorothy Beckett](#) with specific questions about instrument upgrades.

VI. Budget

1. Can reagents for the instruments be included in the budget?

Answer: Allowable costs are for the purchase of the instrument, extended warranties, and service contracts for the instrument only. Costs for technical personnel or supplies are not allowable. [However, there may be some instruments in which reagents are bundled with the instrument package. In this case, they may be acceptable.](#)

2. Can you use this grant to pay a core facility manager/trainer?

Answer: Salaries for core facility managers can't be charged to this award.

VII. Institutional Letters of Support

1. Who should write the letter of support?

Answer: Required letters are from the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) documenting the institutions eligibility, commitment to housing of the instrument, and any other support for personnel, and maintenance. Letters of support from high-ranking institutional officials may provide additional information on long-term funding commitment or assurance of access to the instrument on a shared basis.

VIII. Review

1. Will these be reviewed in special emphasis panels or in regular S10 study sections along with regular S10 grants?

Answer: Applications will be reviewed in special emphasis panels along with other applications submitted in response to this specific NOFO by reviewers with required expertise. Reviewers will be instructed not to compare applications to the RLI-S10 program with S10 applications submitted under other NOFOs.

2. For which criteria will reviewers give criterion scores?

Answer: Discussed applications will receive a final Overall Benefit score from all panel members who voted and 5 criterion scores (Justification of Need, Technical Expertise, Research and Education Projects, Administration, and Institutional Commitment) from assigned reviewers. Not-discussed application will only receive the 5 preliminary criterion scores from the assigned reviewers without the Overall Benefit score.

IX. Award and Instrument Installation

1. What if we receive an award, but must delay delivery because of construction?

Answer: The institution can request a one-year no-cost-extension for the S10 award; and the instrument could be purchased during the next 12 months. The budget would not change, and a second no-cost extension is very unlikely.

X. Management and Reporting Requirements

1. Are there any reporting requirements for the use of the shared instrument after it is installed?

Answer: Yes, there are reporting requirements. This report will contain, as applicable, information about the usage and operation of the instrument, description of research and educational activities that benefited from the instrument, and a summary of research and educational outcomes as documented by publications and any benefits to student learning or instruction.

2. Can you speak more to the 'equipment oversight advisory committee'?

Answer: The Equipment Oversight Committee is an institution oversight committee for all shared instruments in the applicant institution. The committee oversees institutional research infrastructure and equipment. The plans should help coordinate use and maintenance, and ensure broad access to the instrument.

XI. General Question

Listening to your discussion, I feel that there may be aspects of the guide that need interpretation. Under these circumstances, who would decide if a proposal follows the guide or does not fit within the call? It is the program officer, reviewers or the panel? At what stage would the proposal be disqualified? Could you elaborate on the review and decision process.

Answer: Please read PAR-23-138 very carefully before preparing an application. The text of the Notice of Funding Opportunity clearly states the expectations of the application, the Principal Investigator and the institution. Provided that the instructions are followed, an application should not be disqualified. If, for example, a quote is not included in the application, the application will be disqualified and withdrawn without review. For additional questions contact Dorothy Beckett at dorothy.beckett@nih.gov.