



**REVISED 05/20/2021**

**Collaborators and Other Affiliations (COA) added as item 10 to required sections of the pre-proposal**

## **Call for Letters of Intent and Pre-proposals**

**EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Program Track-1: (RII Track-1)**

**SC EPSCoR Solicitation Number 12-2020**

### **A. Introduction**

As a National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR Jurisdiction, South Carolina is preparing for the next NSF EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Track-1: (RII Track-1) proposal submission. The NSF RII Track-1 program provides support for sustainable improvements in a jurisdiction's academic research infrastructure that leads to increased research capacity and competitiveness. The program aims to improve jurisdictional capacity in areas of STEM research and education that are supported by the NSF and aligned with the jurisdiction's science and technology priorities. The NSF-RII Track-1 is a five-year, \$20M award.

This call for Letters of Intent (LOIs) and Pre-proposals is in anticipation of the solicitation release by NSF and is the first step in the preparation of the submission of a state-wide proposal by the State of South Carolina. The program is administered through the SC EPSCoR State Office to identify the theme(s) and institutions that will be included in the submission to NSF.

### **Program Description**

The science or engineering research program for which improved infrastructure is requested is the central piece of the RII Track-1. The intellectual merit and broader impacts of the proposed activities provide the rationale for the requested infrastructure investments that, in turn, enhance the overall research capacity of South Carolina. These awards are unique in their statewide scope and complexity; in their integration of individual researchers, institutions, and organizations; and in their role in developing the diverse, well-prepared, STEM-enabled workforce necessary to sustain research competitiveness and catalyze economic development. A RII Track-1 award is intended to add specific value to South Carolina's academic research infrastructure not generally available through other NSF funding mechanisms. Essential to EPSCoR's goal of enhancing the competitive position of South Carolina's research and research-based education in science and engineering is alignment of the award with the South Carolina Science and Technology Plan, [\*Vision 2025 Advancing South Carolina Capacity and Expertise in Science and Technology\*](#).

SC EPSCoR welcomes LOIs and Pre-proposals for competition in the selection of the next RII Track-1 topic and project. The LOIs and Pre-proposals should present a clear vision for how the planned effort will substantively enhance Research and Development competitiveness of South Carolina's colleges and universities. This includes detailed plans for how the vision will be implemented with description of how the proposal's goals and objectives will be achieved. The expected outcome is that the Track-1 will: increase success in securing additional, sustainable large-scale non-EPSCoR research support; further effective STEM education and workforce

development opportunities that broaden participation; and strengthen individual and institutional collaborations in South Carolina.

## **Proposal Topics**

Proposals must address topics consistent with the South Carolina [Vision 2025 – Advancing South Carolina’s Capacity and Expertise in Science and Technology](#) and the research themes of NSF.

Activities proposed to be carried out in the Pre-proposal are subject to the restrictions concerning eligible science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines and activities detailed in the [NSF Proposal and Award Policy and Procedures Guide](#) (PAPPG)

The SC EPSCoR State Office is particularly interested in the potential for the Track-1 project to support and provide connectivity of the state’s existing educational and research resources, as well as sustainability of the research program beyond the Track-1 funding period. Proposed activities may include the hiring of a small number of faculty to achieve these goals.

## **Eligible Organizations and Institutions**

Up to three LOIs and the corresponding Pre-proposals may be submitted in response to this call by each of Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina, and the University of South Carolina Columbia (the three Comprehensive Research Universities, CRUs). Only Pre-proposals for which LOIs are submitted will be accepted. Each CRU will establish its own procedure for selecting which LOIs and Pre-proposals are submitted from their institution. The Vice President for Research or Chief Academic Officer of the CRU will provide a brief letter of endorsement for each Pre-proposal submitted.

LOIs and Pre-proposals in response to this call must engage South Carolina’s diversity of institutions of higher education, including the STEM PhD-granting institutions, the Technical Colleges, the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and other predominantly undergraduate institutions (PUIs). Engagement between South Carolina's CRUs, PUIs, and HBCUs is expected in research, workforce development and broadening participation, and is an important review criterion for Track-1 projects.

## **Eligibility of Science Director**

Each LOI/Pre-proposal will identify one tenured Full Professor to serve as Science Director and ultimately as one of the co-PIs of the proposed Track-1 project. An individual may serve as a Science Director on only one LOI and Pre-proposal submitted in response to this solicitation. A Science Director may be a co-PI on another Pre-proposal but not as the Science Director of the other Pre-proposal.

Pre-proposals may identify up to three other individuals as prospective co-PIs. Note that NSF limits the number of co-PIs on a Track-1 proposal; the current limit is four. The final determination of the number of co-PIs of the selected Track-1 Pre-proposal is subject to change as the full proposal is developed.

Pre-proposals typically involve multiple CRUs, as well as PUIs and HBCUs. Pre-proposals should also identify at least one collaborator or point of contact from each of the collaborating institutions participating in the project.

### Selection Process Timeline

The timeline for submission and review of Letters of Intent and Pre-proposals is given below. Any revisions to the Timeline below will be posted on the SC EPSCoR website and disseminated widely through other media.

Activity	Deadline
<b>Release Call for LOIs and Pre-proposals</b>	Thursday, December 10, 2020
<b>SC EPSCoR Track-1 Informational Webinar</b>	Friday January 22, 2021
<b>Letters of Intent Due</b>	Thursday, April 1, 2021
<b>Pre-proposals Due</b>	Monday, June 21, 2021
<b>External Review Complete</b>	Monday, August 9, 2021
<b>Presentations by top 3 Pre-proposals</b>	Monday, August 16, 2021
<b>Announcement of Pre-proposal to go forward</b>	Monday, August 23, 2021

While NSF has not yet set the due dates for the NSF RII Track-1 Competition in 2022, SC EPSCoR expects the LOI to be due to NSF during the first week of July 2022, and the full proposal due approximately one month later.

**NOTE:** Individuals engaged in the preparation of LOIs and Pre-proposals in response to this call are strongly encouraged to refer to the current NSF EPSCoR program Solicitation [NSF 20-571](#). Final proposals will be prepared in accordance with the NSF solicitation in effect at the time.

### Submission of LOI and Pre-proposals

The lead CRU should submit its LOIs and Pre-proposals via the [SC EPSCoR Portal](#) (maximum three per institution). If not previously registered in the Portal, please follow the instructions on the main Portal page to register.

### Contact Information

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### **B. Letter of Intent (Due by Thursday, April 1, 2021 by 5:00 PM)**

An LOI is required to compete in the selection of the next RII Track-1 topic and project. An LOI is required from the CRU that proposes to lead the research effort. Because the LOIs will be used to identify potential external reviewers for the Pre-proposals, the Pre-proposal topic should not

deviate from the general subject area of the LOI. Pre-proposals received without a prior LOI submission or with a different subject area from what was submitted in the LOI will be rejected.

## LOI Content

The LOI should include the following:

- **Cover Letter** – The lead CRU must submit a Letter of Endorsement signed by the Vice President for Research or Chief Academic Officer of the institution. The letter should provide the title of the proposed project, identify the proposed Science Director, delineate the institution’s support for the project, and include a commitment to prepare the followon Pre-proposal, and full proposal if selected.
- **Summary (Maximum 4 Pages)** – The summary should:
  - Present the vision and description of the proposed project and impact
  - Describe the proposed project scope; RII Track-1 project organization; research and education activities; and their integration.
  - Present a brief summary of the 1) intellectual merit and 2) broader impacts of the proposed project.
  - Delineate alignment with the South Carolina [Vision 2025 – Advancing South Carolina’s Capacity and Expertise in Science and Technology](#) and the research themes of NSF.
- **Biographical Sketches** – Provide the biographical sketches for the Science Director and the prospective Co-PIs in the current [NSF format](#).

## C. Pre-proposal (Due by Monday, June 21, 2021 by 5:00 PM)

The sections below represent the body of the Pre-proposal. Pre-proposals received without a prior LOI submission or with a different subject area from what was submitted in the LOI will be rejected. Failure to submit the required sections will result in the Pre-proposal being rejected and returned without review. *Note: Where indicated, the number of pages refers to the maximum number of pages allowed and must not be exceeded.*

**1. PROPOSAL COVER (2 Pages).** Use the Proposal Cover form in Appendix A. Provide an informative title.

**2. LIST OF ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS AND PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS.** In addition to the proposed Science Director and co-PIs, a Pre-proposal may describe the engagement of additional educational institutions or other partners. Prepare a list of these additional participants and their organizations as described below.

Provide an alphabetical (by last name) list of additional participating faculty investigators (faculty level and equivalent and anyone named in the Pre-proposal. Give the full first and last names and organizational affiliations of all such individuals. List only those individuals who are named and have roles specified in the Pre-proposal.

List of Participating Organizations. Provide a list of all organizations (including, but not limited to: academic and research institutions, companies, government agencies, and non-profit organizations) that will participate in, contribute to, or directly benefit from the proposed project. Give the full name and place of business (city, state) of all such organizations. List only those organizations that are named and have roles specified in the Pre-proposal.

This list should identify the proposed roles of the participating organizations as follows:

- Prospective Subawardees: any organizations funded through a subaward;
- Prospective Subcontractors: any organization that will contract with the project;
- Unfunded: any prospective organization named in the Pre-proposal that will provide facilities or support including access to laboratory equipment or internships, but that will not receive funding or other payment.

**3. PROJECT SUMMARY (1 Page).** Each Pre-proposal must contain an NSF-compliant summary of the proposed project of no more than one page in length. Provide a clear description of the proposed project and its potential impact. Briefly describe the proposed scope and the RII Track-1 project organization, activities in research and education and their integration. The summary must also include a statement on the intellectual merit and a statement on the broader impacts of the proposed project.

**4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Up to 18 pages for Sections 4.1 to 4.8 below).** The project description is the centerpiece of the RII Track-1 Pre-proposal. The project description must include clear and succinct goals, objectives, and activities for proposed research, education, workforce development, and sustainability beyond the project period. This section of the Pre-proposal should present the activities to be facilitated by the RII Track-1 project in a clear, compelling way and describe how the requested NSF support will enable successful pursuit of the project goals and lead to increased and sustainable competitiveness for NSF (non-EPSCoR) funding.

**The project description must contain of the following sections:**

**4.1 Status and Overview (Up to 1 Page).** Describe the status of South Carolina's academic R&D enterprise as it relates to the theme of the Pre-proposal, including the strengths, barriers, and opportunities for development of the academic institutions in support of overall R&D objectives. The Pre-proposal narrative should provide a convincing rationale for the project's scientific vision and indicate how the overall strategy, proposed implementation mechanisms, and infrastructure support will mitigate the identified barriers and improve academic research competitiveness. The discussion in this section must explicitly describe the alignment of the proposed research with the STEM research priorities of South Carolina's S&T Plan.

**4.2 Research Program (Up to 8 pages).** The Research Program is the project's central focus, the nucleus that links all other project elements. It is the primary element that will be judged during the merit review process, both for its intellectual merit and its broader scientific impacts. For each topical area proposed, the Pre-proposal should provide a concise description of the research goals and intellectual focus and describe the planned activities in sufficient detail to enable their intellectual merit and broader impacts to be assessed. The proposed research in each topical area should be presented in the context of other efforts in the field (with appropriate references), stating the major challenges and

current gaps in knowledge, and discussing the novelty and/or originality of the proposed approach. The narrative must contain sufficient details regarding the scientific hypotheses, goals, and research and training methods (laboratory, field, theoretical, computational, or other) such that experts in the field of the proposed research, or closely related fields, can accurately judge the plan's intellectual merit and broader impacts.

In addition to providing clear and concise evidence for intellectual merit and broader impacts of the research activities, this section should:

- Identify the proposed senior leadership and estimate the numbers of postdoctoral, graduate, and undergraduate research participants.
- Briefly outline the key resources (available and planned) required to accomplish the research goals.
- Clearly establish the means of developing a coordinated, collaborative approach involving multiple investigators and organizations. Describe interactions with other groups and organizations within South Carolina and (as appropriate) at the national and international levels. The Research Program description must clearly demonstrate how each research topical area and approach contributes to the state's strategy for the advancement of future research, education, and innovation. In particular, the narrative should demonstrate how the proposed research activities are aligned with the South Carolina S&T Plan STEM research priorities, and how they will advance the frontiers of knowledge and South Carolina's future competitiveness in the proposed research areas.
- Clearly articulate the plan to engage PUIs, HBCUs, and technical colleges in the proposed research. This should include a description of existing research capacities at these institutions, which can be leveraged into the research thrusts to both expand faculty and undergraduate involvement and advance the research goals of the project.

**4.3 Education and Workforce Development (Up to 2 pages).** The scope of RII Track-1 efforts must include specific STEM education and workforce development activities including undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral education. These activities should be integrated with the Research Program, showing how they will contribute to the preparation of a new cadre of competitive researchers, innovators, and educators developed within the participating CRU, PUI and HBCU campuses. Plans should include opportunities for faculty development (particularly for early-career faculty) and for student training (which may occur at any level of the STEM education continuum). Efforts that focus on high school and undergraduate education should describe their relationship to the research program. The narrative should indicate synergies between proposed workforce development activities and other NSF investments in the South Carolina that focus on strengthening STEM workforce development, especially in the research focus areas of the RII Track-1 project.

RII Track-1 projects may support the hiring, retention, and mentoring of a limited number of new faculty; in such cases the role(s) of such faculty in the proposed Research Program must be clearly described. Awarded RII Track-1 projects are expected to follow through on all proposed new faculty hires.

**4.4 Broadening Participation (Up to 1 page).** Broadening participation in STEM among all levels of higher education – including technical colleges, HBCU and PUI campuses, and the CRUs - is essential to building capacity within South Carolina, and

ensuring that available human and institutional resources play a meaningful role in the pursuit of the goals of the project. Meeting this need includes diversity of all types – individual, institutional, and geographic. Describe the basis, including relevant literature, for the Pre-proposal’s strategic choices for broadening participation. NSF encourages activities that facilitate the entry of women, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities into STEM careers. Providing opportunities for the economically disadvantaged, rural populations, and/or first-generation college students to engage in STEM may also be appropriate when such strategies are responsive to South Carolina’s needs.

**4.5 Partnerships and Collaborations (Up to 1 page).** Partnerships allow leveraging of resources and promote sustainability. Partnerships may seed science, engineering, and education collaborations that promote innovation and STEM-pipeline development and can range in scope from intra-jurisdictional to inter-jurisdictional, regional, national, or international. Proposed activities should demonstrate how the anticipated partnerships and collaborations directly contribute to the attainment of project goals (including integration with the Research Program), increase research competitiveness, build and strengthen the STEM pipeline, provide opportunities for commercialization of research and education products, or pave the way for economic development. Proposed partnerships and collaborations may involve unfunded partners or stakeholders in the project. All partnering activities should be detailed with clearly articulated goals. The Partnerships and Collaborations section should specifically articulate partnerships with large NSF or other federally funded projects, including research infrastructure resources, if applicable. Letters of Support are not required for the LOI or the Pre-proposal.

**4.6 Sustainability (Up to 2 pages).** RII Track-1 programs are catalytic, state-wide investments in research and education infrastructure. A credible path to long-term sustainability of the proposed activities and infrastructure (physical, cyber, and intellectual) beyond the lifespan of the project is required. The sustainability plan should anticipate how activities and infrastructure supported through the RII Track-1 project will be prioritized for sustainment and subsequently supported post-RII funding. While it is not expected that all elements can or should be sustained, this plan should demonstrate the potential for enhancing research capacity and competitiveness in the long term through strategic plans for sustaining key investments of the project.

This section should address both sustainability of project activities and the opportunities for post-RII Track-1 funding.

**4.7 Results from Relevant Prior NSF Support (Up to 1 Page).** A section on results from prior NSF support must be included. If applicable, the relevance of the prior support to the proposed activities must be explained.

**4.8 Management; Communication and Dissemination; Evaluation and Assessment (Up to 2 Pages).** Pre-proposals must include a plan for management, communication and dissemination, and the evaluation and assessment of the RII Track-1 project.

**4.8.1 Project Management Team.** The project management team is responsible for implementing the proposed activities and managing all aspects of the project. It

is critical that the proposed management team be assembled with sufficient breadth (in terms of number, diversity, and levels of expertise) to enable full technical and administrative oversight for the achievement of project milestones.

**4.8.2 Communication and Dissemination.** Communication and dissemination are essential for successful collaboration, development of a diverse, well-trained STEM workforce and a scientifically informed citizenry. The dissemination of scientific results to stakeholders and citizens builds scientific literacy and strengthens educational and research capacity throughout jurisdictions. Effective communication also promotes the people and institutions of South Carolina. The Communication and Dissemination section should have a strong connection to the Research Program; activities should be linked to specific project goals. It should indicate mechanisms for communication among project teams, activities that promote sharing of data and findings, and ways to broadly disseminate results. The Pre-proposal should clearly describe plans for two-way communication with stakeholders, and broad dissemination of the project's results and impacts.

**4.8.3 Evaluation and Assessment.** The project design should incorporate mechanisms to evaluate, assess, monitor, and provide meaningful feedback on progress, outcomes, and impacts of the project. This section should summarize proposed milestones and metrics that the project team will use to assess and evaluate progress and achievements of all required elements of the proposed project during the award period and beyond. Research goals, objectives, milestones, and metrics are an important aspect of the evaluation and assessment plan and these should be clearly specified. The description should include annual metrics and milestones that will be used to assess progress.

**5. REFERENCES CITED. (No page limit)** Reference information is required in the format required by NSF. Each reference must *include the names of all authors* (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.

**6. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.** Provide the biographical sketches for the proposed Science Director and the Co-PIs in NSF format. See the following link for more information on [NSF format](#).

## **7. PRELIMINARY BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION.**

The SC EPSCoR State Committee does not require a detailed budget at the Pre-proposal stage. Past experience indicates that detailed negotiations and budgeting planning will take place during the writing of the full proposal. Also, NSF historically has required significant activities that are directed out of the SC EPSCoR State Office and funded in part with cost-share funds. We ask that each Pre-proposal include a summary budget table below, showing direct costs only of \$3M/year, or \$15M total for five years. These limits are based on current Track-1 experience and are neither floors nor ceilings. These totals include expenditures at the lead institution and at collaborating institutions, specifically including the HBCUs and PUIs.

Proposers should provide a concise budget narrative explaining where investment is needed to support the project. Salaries and fringe benefits should be estimated for current academic faculty



and research staff, as well as any new hires essential to the project. Salaries should also include amounts estimated for research personnel including post-doctoral scholars, graduate student stipends, and undergraduate researcher salaries for the academic year and summers. Graduate student tuition should be estimated based on the number of graduate students to be supported.

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Research Thrust 1</b>					
Salaries including fringe benefits					
Materials, supplies, travel, other					
Major Equipment					
Graduate Student Tuition					
<b>Research thrust 2</b>					
Salaries including fringe benefits					
Materials, supplies, travel, other					
Major Equipment					
Graduate Student Tuition					
<i>Add rows if needed for additional thrusts</i>					
<b>TOTALS</b>					
<i>Show direct costs only, not to exceed a 5-year total of \$15M</i>					

At this time, the SC EPSCoR State Committee believes that the next Track-1 will have less emphasis on new hires and greater emphasis on research results leading to a sustainable long-term infrastructure and greater research funding for the state.

8. **CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT.** Provide Current and Pending Support for each person whose biographical sketch is submitted. Use the [current NSF formats](#) for Current and Pending Support.
9. **FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER RESOURCES (3-page maximum).** Relevant facilities, equipment, and other resources that are currently available for use to accomplish the goals and objectives of the proposed project may be described.
10. **COLLABORATORS AND OTHER AFFILIATIONS (COA) FORMS (No page limit).** Provide a completed COA form for the proposed Science Director and each of the Co-PIs utilizing the SC EPSCoR Pre-proposal COA template provided on the SC EPSCoR web page. Complete this template, save as a PDF file, and upload to the SC EPSCoR Submission Portal with other pre-proposal materials. Do not print and scan to PDF for upload. We need the file to be a searchable PDF.



## D. Pre-proposal Review Process

Pre-proposals will be reviewed by a panel of experts external to the state of South Carolina. Their expertise will be sought based on the topics identified in the LOIs. The external review will utilize the Merit Review Criteria of NSF, with additional EPSCoR-specific criteria as explained below.

The purpose of the external review will be to assist the SC EPSCoR State Committee in identifying the top three Pre-proposals that will be invited for oral presentations in the summer of 2021 (see the tentative timetable above.)

**Merit Review Criteria.** All Pre-proposals will be evaluated through use of the two National Science Board-approved merit review criteria. The two merit review criteria are listed below. Both criteria will be given full consideration during the review and decision-making processes; each criterion is necessary but neither, by itself, is sufficient. Therefore, proposers must fully address both criteria.

When evaluating the Pre-proposals, reviewers will be asked to consider what the proposers want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the Pre-proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. To that end, reviewers will be asked to evaluate all Pre-proposals against the two NSF criteria:

**Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and

**Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The following elements should be considered in the review for both criteria:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to:
  - a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
  - b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
4. How well-qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
5. Are there adequate resources available (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

## **Additional Solicitation-Specific Review Criteria**

Reviewers for the RII Track-1 Pre-proposals will also consider the following specific aspects of intellectual merit and broader impacts, as applicable:

**Research Capacity** – What is the potential of the project to advance the relevant fields of science and engineering while simultaneously enhancing research competitiveness and developing research capacity and infrastructure (including physical, cyber, and human resources) in South Carolina? How will the proposed activities contribute to the national and international recognition of the project participants and participating organizations? What is the potential of the project to increase the capacity of the participating organizations and capability of project participants to propose and implement research activities in the future? How will the diversity of institutional types within South Carolina benefit from the proposed enhancement of research capacity?

**Jurisdictional Impacts** – How well-aligned are the project's research activities with the STEM research priorities described in South Carolina's S&T Plan? What is the potential to achieve meaningful and sustained impacts within and throughout South Carolina with respect to education capacity (including workforce preparation), economic development (including innovation, technology transfer, and potential commercialization), and quality of life? How do the proposed activities promote organizational connections and linkages within South Carolina, as well as between private and public sectors? How well do the proposed partnerships and collaborations advance the project goals? How well does the project leverage past accomplishments and existing resources, especially those from prior RII funding and NSF, state, and regional investments?

**Workforce Development** – What is the potential to enhance research and education capacity through the recruitment, mentoring, and professional development of students, junior researchers, and faculty (including early career)? How effectively will the range of project participants (including diverse populations and organizations) be engaged in the research and education activities? What is the potential to prepare a new cadre of competitive researchers, innovators, and educators, especially in the proposed area(s) of research? What novel and effective ways are proposed to broaden the participation of women and minorities underrepresented in STEM (also: persons with disabilities, students who are in the first generation of the family to attend college, or those from economically disadvantaged or rural populations), especially in the proposed area(s) of research? How well will the project enhance participation and research capacity at non-research intensive and PUIs, HBCUs, and 2-year institutions.

**Integration of Project Elements** – How well are the project elements (especially education, workforce development, and diversity) aligned and integrated with the research activities? What added value and benefits can be realized through the integration of the project elements with research as part of an RII project? What is the potential of the project to reach its education and workforce development goals and objectives as a result of the proposed research, and vice versa? What is the level of integration among shared facilities and research partners? In addition, reviewers will be instructed to consider the feasibility of the proposed activities, and whether sufficient and accurate baseline data have been provided regarding the proposed project goals.

## **Scoring Table**

As part of the external evaluation, reviewers will be asked to score the various sections of the Preproposal according to the Rating Points listed below. The SC EPSCoR State Committee will use these scores to help identify the top three Pre-proposals to be invited for oral presentation, and

to identify potential weaknesses in the selected project that warrant further development before the final proposal is submitted to NSF.

Project Description and Budget Sections	Rating Points (out of 100)
Status and Review	5
Research Program	60
Education & Workforce Development	8
Broadening Participation	8
Partnership and Collaboration	3
Sustainability	8
Results from Relevant Prior NSF Support	2
Management, Communication and Dissemination Plan	3
Budget	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

### Review and Selection Process

External Reviews will be used to evaluate Pre-proposals submitted in response to this solicitation. The Director of the SC EPSCoR State Office will provide the results of the external review to the members of the SC EPSCoR State Committee who will subsequently authorize the Director to notify the applicants of the review results and the three Pre-proposal to be selected for oral presentations.

**REFERENCE:** Proposers may wish to examine the current NSF EPSCoR Track-1 solicitation, [NSF Solicitation 20-571](#).