

# A Letter to Political Science Colleagues from the Political Science Program at the National Science Foundation

Dear Colleague:

This letter provides information about a recompetition of the American National Election Studies (ANES).

## A Recompetition of The American National Election Studies

On February 14 and 15, 2003 the Political Science Program sponsored an American Electoral Behavior Workshop at the National Science Foundation in Ballston, Virginia. The objective of the workshop was to provide advice on the Program's second recompetition for the study of American Electoral Behavior.

The Workshop participants included members of the American National Election Studies Board and outside (national and international) experts knowledgeable in the methodology and/or substance of survey research and electoral research.

Workshop participants were given a set of discussion points and asked to provide written commentaries related to the discussion points. Participants also were given the option to present their own concerns and visions for the future. The Workshop was transcribed and the comments are available on the Political Science Web page (<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/ses/polisci/aeb/start.htm>). This report serves as the basis for a recompetition of the current American National Election Studies award supported by the Political Science Program (SES-0118451).

In both written and/or spoken commentaries, American Electoral Behavior Workshop participants recommended (among other things) that the NSF Political Science Program address the following methodological and substantive challenges in the next 10 years.

- Continue support of a presidential study that includes a core component.
- Consider using a panel design for the presidential election study.
- Maintain face-to-face interviewing of respondents for the core component.
- Ensure that investigators have the capacity to do pilot research on innovative methodologies and substantive

issues specific to a time and place.

- Consider a dynamic component that captures on-going events of political importance.
- Establish a core national study as a "docking station" for substantive modules submitted by researchers who may not be part of the current ANES community.
- Encourage the research community to seek cooperative arrangements with funding groups, other government agencies (e.g. using census addresses for mail surveys), other surveys (e.g. Bureau of Labor Statistics) and the like.

The ANES recompetition will include three areas of emphasis: a Panel Design; a Core Component; and an Experimental Component.

- The Political Science Program may make **one award** to conduct the American National Election Studies (contingent on the availability of funds). The award will be used for primary data collection that will advance the quality of scientific inquiry and knowledge about election campaigns, electoral choice, election outcomes, and citizen engagement in the United States. The maximum amount of the award is \$7,600,000 to cover the costs of conducting the investigation. The annual amount of the award is expected to be \$1,900,000; the duration of the award will be four years. The expected start date is January, 2006.
- Scholar-investigators who possess the theoretical, methodological, measurement, and administrative skills, as well as the necessary resources, to undertake an important, large-scale, data-collection project on election campaigns, electoral choice, election outcomes, and citizen engagement in the United States are invited to submit proposals.

All project descriptions are limited to 30 pages in length. This deviation is authorized to Program Officers in Chapter 2, Section A (page 17) (see Footnote 12) of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) ([http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04\\_23/nsf04\\_23.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04_23/nsf04_23.pdf)). Appendices will not be authorized. Proposals may refer to supplementary materials, such as questions, competitive survey cost estimates,

pretest and pilot survey results, and other directly relevant information, posted on investigators' publicly available websites. Reviewers will be asked to safeguard their anonymity when accessing these websites.

Project Descriptions should address the following **Scientific Component Objectives**:

### Objective 1: Panel Component

- For example, to implement a panel design for the 2004 election the Political Science Program has recently entered into an Interagency Agreement with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to use their 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Under grant SES-0426448, the Political Science Program now supports questions on this Panel Survey.

### Objective 2: Core-Continuity Component

- Continue support of a presidential study that includes a core component.
- Maintain primarily face-to-face interviewing of the core component.
- Establish a core national study as a "docking station" for substantive modules submitted by researchers who may not be part of the current ANES community.

### Objective 3: Experimental-Innovation Component

- The broad areas for experimentation and innovation may include: 1) Mode switching; 2) New mode and data collection methods; 3) Incorporating formal modeling and cognitive experiments or a mix of the two.
- Ensure that investigators have the capacity to do pilot research on innovative methodologies and substantive issues specific to a time and place.
- Consider a dynamic component that captures on-going events of political importance.

Project Descriptions should also address the following **Administrative** issues:

- Discuss the role of an independent Board of Overseers.
- Discuss the standards for data archiving and acquisition.

- If appropriate, the project description must include a section on Results from Prior Support for principal investigators and co-investigators who have received NSF funding in the last five years. Refer to the GPG for more information.
- All proposals submitted for the ANES recompetition must contain a section titled "Expected Project Significance." This section should address both the intellectual merits and the broader impact of the project. The section must identify how the project will generate new science related to the study of electoral behavior, and how it will enhance the capabilities of people who engage in research and/or education in these areas in the future.
- ANES recompetition proposals must be submitted through NSF's FastLane. The target date for submission of recompetition proposals is **May 6, 2005**.

### Pre-Submission Checklist

ANES recompetition proposals must be in compliance with the GPG and special requirements in this Dear Colleague Letter in order to be considered for review. Proposals not in compliance with these requirements will be returned without review. Please refer to the following checklist to address some of the items for which proposals may be non-compliant:

- Font and margin requirements.
- Paginated pages.
- Project summary that includes a brief description of broader impacts.
- Project description that is 30 pages or less, includes a separate section for Results from Prior Support (if appropriate) and any other separate sections described in the appropriate emphasis area description(s).

- Biographical Sketches for all principal investigators and senior personnel.
- Current and Pending Support statements for all principal investigators and senior personnel.

Questions should be addressed to Dr. Jim Granato or Dr. Frank Scioli, Political Science Program Directors, National Science Foundation. Email: [jgranato@nsf.gov](mailto:jgranato@nsf.gov), [fscioli@nsf.gov](mailto:fscioli@nsf.gov); Phone: (703) 292-7284.