



UNIVERSITIES SPACE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
EARTH SYSTEM SCIENCE EDUCATION
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



January 26, 2004

Dear Colleague,

We invite your attention to a continuing opportunity to become part of a community of educators and researchers focused on improving and extending the interdisciplinary study of the Earth system at the college and university level. NASA's Earth Science Enterprise and the Office of Education's Minority University Research and Education Programs, through the Universities Space Research Association, is sponsoring ESSE 21, a program for College and University Earth System Science Education for the 21st Century. ESSE 21 is a collaborative education program offering small grants to engage a diverse and interdisciplinary community of faculty and scientists in the development of courses, curricula and degree programs and sharing of learning resources focused on the fundamental understanding and application of the Earth system for the undergraduate and graduate classroom and laboratory. ESSE 21 supports exchanges and collaborations among faculty and scientists within and among majority/minority educational institutions, and with NASA programs and scientists.

ESSE 21 goes beyond traditional grant programs by proactively engaging participants as part of a community of educators and scientists committed to developing an interdisciplinary understanding of the Earth system in the classroom and laboratory. Participants are given the opportunity to form partnerships with colleagues and NASA researchers and to develop, implement and share learning resources and programs. ESSE 21 provides a basic infrastructure that facilitates cooperation and sharing, resource development and evaluation, and supports long term collaboration by offering travel support to active participants for the duration of the Program.

Proposals are now being solicited to join the third cadre of ESSE 21 participants who will begin efforts in the second semester of the 2004/05 academic year. Two kinds of proposals are solicited:

- 1) Proposals from U.S. academic institutions and their partners seeking funding to form interdisciplinary teams within or among colleges and universities for the purpose of creating and implementing learning resources, courses, curricula and degree programs supporting Earth system science education in the undergraduate classroom and laboratory. Proposals may request up to \$35K/year for each of two years and are due April 1, 2004.
- 2) Abbreviated letter proposals from non-U.S. institutions as well as from academic, government, industry and non-profit organizations seeking to participate as ESSE 21 Associates. Associates receive no direct funding from the Program, but are interested in Earth system science education and desire to contribute to and benefit from the ESSE 21 community by formally participating in team meetings, workshops, and other ESSE 21 activities. Proposals to become Associates may be submitted at any time.

Approximately six teams will be selected for funding from proposals responding to this announcement. The Program is committed to reaching underrepresented individuals and groups. At least three of the teams selected are expected to be from minority institutions.

We invite you to visit the ESSE 21 web site for additional information and updates (<http://esse21.usra.edu>) and hope you will consider submitting a proposal for funding or participating as an Associate. Please feel free to contact us at any time with suggestions or inquiries concerning the program or proposal process.

With best regards,

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