

Microsoft and NSF enable research in the cloud

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Microsoft Corp. and the National Science Foundation (NSF) today announced an agreement that will offer individual researchers and research groups selected through NSF's merit review process free access to advanced cloud computing resources. By extending the capabilities of powerful, easy-to-use PC applications via Microsoft cloud services, the program is designed to help broaden research capabilities, foster collaborative research communities, and accelerate scientific discovery. Projects will be awarded and managed by NSF.

Microsoft will provide [cloud computing](#) research projects identified by NSF with access to Windows Azure for a three-year period, along with a support team to help researchers quickly integrate cloud technology into their research. Windows Azure provides on-demand compute and storage to host, scale and manage Web applications on the Internet through Microsoft datacenters. Microsoft researchers and developers will work with grant recipients to equip them with a set of common tools, applications and data collections that can be shared with the broad academic community, and also provide its expertise in research, science and cloud computing.

"Cloud computing can transform how research is conducted, accelerating scientific exploration, discovery and results," said Dan Reed, corporate vice president, Technology Strategy and Policy and eXtreme Computing at Microsoft. "These grants will also help researchers explore rich and diverse multidisciplinary data on a large scale."

Today, scientists are operating in a world dominated by data, thanks to increasingly inexpensive sensors and a growing trend toward collaborative data projects. Analyzing and synthesizing this mass of data remain a challenge. The goal of the new program is to make simple yet powerful tools available that any researcher can use to extract insights by mining and combining diverse data sets.

"We've entered a new era of science--one based on data-driven exploration--and each new generation of computing technology, such as cloud computing, creates unprecedented opportunities for discovery," said Jeannette M. Wing, assistant director for the NSF Computer and Information Science directorate. "We are working with [Microsoft](#) to provide the academic community a novel cloud computing service with which to experiment and explore, with the grander goal of advancing the frontiers of science and engineering as we tackle societal grand challenges."

More information: More details about funding opportunities are available at <http://www.nsf.gov/dir/index.jsp?org=CISE>.

Provided by National Science Foundation

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