

**Office of Science
Financial Assistance
Summary of
Funding Opportunity Announcement**

DE-FOA-0000546

**Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research
(DOE EPSCoR) Implementation Grants**

Office of Basic Energy Sciences (BES)

SUMMARY: The U. S. Department of Energy's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DOE EPSCoR) is a federal-state partnership program designed to help the Department lead the world in meeting today's and tomorrow's energy needs by increasing the geographic diversity of competitive capability to conduct energy-related research and development. Positioned within the Department's Office of Science (SC) in the Office of Basic Energy Sciences, and supporting basic and applied research and development across a wide range of DOE Programs, DOE EPSCoR hereby announces its interest in receiving applications for Implementation Grants from the academic or industrial research community in states and territories (hereafter referred to as jurisdictions) eligible for the program.

Specifically, applications are sought for improvement of research competitiveness in key science and technology areas related to DOE Mission(s) identified by the jurisdiction's EPSCoR governing committee or other appropriate organization on behalf of the jurisdiction. Grants awarded under this program are meant to improve research infrastructure and to support a group of scientists and engineers including graduate students and post doctoral fellows working on a common scientific theme within or across one or more than one EPSCoR jurisdictions. These awards are not appropriate mechanisms to provide support for individual faculty science and technology research projects. Since DOE EPSCoR is currently following NSF EPSCoR eligibility determinations, the following jurisdictions will be eligible for this FOA: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virgin Islands, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

LETTER OF INTENT:

Letter of Intent are Strongly Encouraged:

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a letter of intent (LOI). The LOI is to include a cover sheet containing the name and mailing address of the applicant lead institution, the planned title of the application, the estimated cost of the project, the name and e-mail addresses of the PD and PI(s), a listing of the institutions that are expected to be involved, the topical research area(s), the DOE Program Office (this is in addition to the EPSCoR program), the DOE Program Office Scientific/Technical Contact (this is not the DOE EPSCoR program manager and may not be DOE National Laboratory research scientists), a letter of endorsement from the jurisdiction's EPSCoR Committee or its designee and a narrative of up to three pages. The narrative should present the scientific and technical objectives and the research plan. The narrative should also reference the jurisdiction's strategy to develop and utilize the scientific and technical resources and begin to place the research in context of that jurisdiction's infrastructure improvement strategy.

The LOIs will be used to organize and expedite the merit review process. Failure to submit such letters will not negatively affect a responsive application submitted in a timely fashion. The letter of intent should be submitted to: epscor@science.doe.gov. The LOI is due **June 7, 2011, 4:30 PM Eastern Time**.

APPLICATION DUE DATE: June 23, 2011, 11:59 PM Eastern Time

Formal applications submitted in response to this FOA must be received by **June 23, 2011, 11:59 PM Eastern Time**, to permit timely consideration of awards in Fiscal Year 2011. **You are encouraged to transmit your application well before the deadline. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE REVIEWED OR CONSIDERED FOR AWARD.**

IMPORTANT SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The full text of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is located on FedConnect. Instructions for completing the Grant Application Package are contained in the full text of the FOA which can be obtained at: <https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/?doc=DE-FOA-0000546&agency=DOE>. To search for the FOA in FedConnect click on "Search Public Opportunities". Under "Search Criteria", select "Advanced Options", enter a portion of the title "Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DOE EPSCoR Implementation Grants)", then click on "Search". Once the screen comes up, locate the appropriate Announcement.

In order to be considered for award, Applicants must follow the instructions contained in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Where to Submit: Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov to be considered for award. You cannot submit an application through Grants.gov unless you are registered. Please

read the registration requirements carefully and start the process immediately. Remember you have to update your CCR registration annually. If you have any questions about your registration, you should contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 to verify that you are still registered in Grants.gov.

Registration Requirements: There are several one-time actions you must complete in order to submit an application through Grants.gov (e.g., obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, register with the Central Contract Registry (CCR), register with the credential provider, and register with Grants.gov). Use the Grants.gov Organization Registration Checklist at <http://www.grants.gov/assets/OrganizationRegCheck.pdf> to guide you through the process. Designating an E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) and obtaining a special password called an MPIN are important steps in the CCR registration process. Applicants, who are not registered with CCR and Grants.gov, should allow **at least 21 days** to complete these requirements. It is suggested that the process be started as soon as possible.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO POTENTIAL APPLICANTS: When you have completed the process, you should call the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 to verify that you have completed the final step (i.e. Grants.gov registration).

Questions: Questions relating to the registration process, system requirements, how an application form works, or the submittal process must be directed to Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Application Receipt Notices

After an application is submitted, the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive a series of four E-mails. It is extremely important that the AOR watch for and save each of the emails. It may take up to two (2) business days from application submission to receipt of email Number 2. The titles of the four E-mails are:

Number 1 - Grants.gov Submission Receipt Number

Number 2 - Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application Number

Number 3 - Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application Number

Number 4 - Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application Number

Questions regarding the content of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) must be submitted through the FedConnect portal. You must register with FedConnect to respond as an interested party to submit questions, and to view responses to questions. It is recommended that you register as soon after release of the FOA as possible to have the benefit of all responses.

More information is available at

https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/PublicPages/FedConnect_Ready_Set_Go.pdf. DOE will try to respond to a question within 3 business days, unless a similar question and answer have already been posted on the website.

Modifications: Notices of any modifications to this Funding Opportunity Announcement will be posted on Grants.gov and the FedConnect portal. You can receive an email when a

modification or an announcement message is posted by registering with FedConnect as an interested party for this FOA. It is recommended that you register as soon after release of the FOA as possible to ensure you receive timely notice of any modifications or other announcements. More information is available at <http://www.fedconnect.net>.

All applications should be in a single PDF file.

GENERAL INQUIRIES ABOUT THIS FOA SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

Technical/Scientific Program Contacts:

Program Manager: Dr. Tim Fitzsimmons
Phone: (301) 903-9830
E-mail: tim.fitzsimmons@science.doe.gov

Merit Review Criteria

Applications will be subjected to scientific merit review (peer review) and will be evaluated against the following evaluation criteria, which are listed in descending order of importance, codified at CFR 605.10(d):

- 1) Scientific and/or Technical Merit of the Project
- 2) Appropriateness of the Proposed Method or Approach
- 3) Competency of Applicant's Personnel and Adequacy of Proposed Resources; and
- 4) Reasonableness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Budget.
- 5) Synergism among the PIs in a program and the programmatic focus of a multi-PI effort; and,
- 6) The likelihood of success of the Implementation grant including:
 - a) How well does the application couple with the jurisdiction's strategy to develop and utilize the scientific and technological resources that reside in its research universities and the jurisdiction's industrial or economic resources.
 - b) Does the applicant have a plan to or has the awardee made competitive faculty hires and retained outstanding faculty within the scope of the implementation award?
 - c) Does the applicant have a plan to attract or has the awardee hired outstanding graduate students and post docs?
 - d) Does the applicant have plans to develop or have they developed as part of the implementation grant unique infrastructure capabilities that are critical to the advancement of science or technology? Alternatively, are they planning to or making unique contributions to DOE oriented capabilities (e.g., building or developing unique capabilities for a DOE experiment or facility)?
 - e) Does the applicant have plans to be or are the grantees on track to a sustained leadership position in their discipline(s)?

- f) Does the applicant have plans to or are the grantees effectively leveraging DOE funding and capabilities with local and regional resources? How has the jurisdiction's EPSCoR Committee planned to and what actions have they taken to maximize the long-term impact of the award?

DOE reserves the right to include performance under previous implementation grants and management value added provided by the jurisdiction's EPSCoR Committee as a factor in award decisions. DOE also reserves the right and option to prioritize applications from and involving investigators in tenure-track or tenured positions. Site visits or reverse site visits may be used as part of the evaluation process and in the review of performance from the inception of an award through its completion

The evaluation process will include program policy factors such as the relevance of the proposed research to the terms of the FOA and the agencies' programmatic needs. Note that external peer reviewers are selected with regard to both their scientific expertise and the absence of conflict-of-interest issues. Both Federal and non-Federal reviewers may be used, and submission of an application constitutes agreement that this is acceptable to the investigator(s) and the submitting institution.

Funding

Subject to Congressional authorization and approval of funds in Fiscal Year 2011, it is anticipated that up to \$4,000,000 will be available to support awards to fund collaborative research and human resource development in energy-related science and engineering disciplines. Applicants may request as much as \$2.5 million per year and as little as \$1.0 million per year for a period of three years. Applications requesting less than 1.0 million per year or over \$2.5 million per year will not be considered.

DOE is under no obligation to pay for any costs associated with preparation or submission of preapplications or applications. DOE reserves the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to this FOA.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Department of Energy's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DOE EPSCoR) is a federal-state partnership program designed to enhance the capabilities of designated jurisdictions to conduct sustainable and nationally competitive energy-related research. The program aims to improve the science and technology infrastructure across the Nation through support of a broader geographical distribution of research and development capacity, increased human and technical resources, and training of scientists and engineers. DOE EPSCoR supports the DOE's overarching mission by supporting basic and applied research and development across a wide range of interdisciplinary program offices and non-defense topical areas across the Department, including but not restricted to: Advanced Scientific Computing Research, Basic Energy Sciences, Biological and Environmental Research, Fusion Energy Sciences, High Energy Physics, and Nuclear Physics, in the Office of Science; and may support research relevant to other DOE Program Offices including the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability; the Office of Energy

Efficiency & Renewable Energy; the Office of Environmental Management; the Office of Fossil Energy; the Office of Legacy Management; and, the Office of Nuclear Energy.

In preparation for submitting an application, the jurisdiction's EPSCoR Committee or its designee is expected to have undertaken or adopted a comprehensive analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement of research and development institutions within the jurisdiction in support of the jurisdiction's overall research and development objectives. Applications for this FOA should reference and provide the website for the jurisdiction's strategy to develop and utilize the scientific and technological resources that reside in its research universities and the jurisdiction's industrial or economic resources and describe the relevance of their application within the context of this strategy. Successful applications are likely to be those that are focused on one energy-related research area bringing together multiple researchers. Applications should candidly present the opportunities for enhanced academic research and development competitiveness for the jurisdiction, including the acquisition of sustained non-EPSCoR support. The jurisdiction's infrastructure improvement strategy must have a high probability of realizing stated goals and objectives as judged by the DOE merit review process. It is critical for success of the application that a coordinated effort in managing multiple investigators working on a common theme be demonstrated at submission. In all instances, performance milestones and a timetable for achieving project goals and deliverables are prerequisites for DOE EPSCoR support.

It is highly recommended that the topical research area be identified in the application with respect to the relevant DOE Program Office or Offices (listed below) and the Office's specific program goals. The relevant program office(s) and the associated scientific/technical point(s) of contact on the DOE (and not National Laboratory) staff must be identified on the first page of the application narrative. *Applications not meeting this requirement will be deemed ineligible during the initial screening process.* If the Program Office or the associated scientific/technical point(s) of contact are unknown, please contact the DOE EPSCoR office well in advance of the application due date. As a measure of relevance to DOE missions, DOE EPSCoR will ask the Program Office or Offices to make a meaningful commitment to applications selected for award such as a financial contribution of up to 10% of the support for the proposed effort. While program offices or program office staff may not recommend commitment of funds prior to merit review, prospective applicants should make themselves aware of potential programmatic areas of interest prior to drafting an application. Additional information on the DOE Research Programs is available at the following website addresses:

Department of Energy (General Information):

<http://www.energy.gov/>

Office of Science:

<http://science.energy.gov/>

Basic Energy Sciences:

<http://science.energy.gov/bes/>

Biological and Environmental Research:

<http://science.energy.gov/ber/>

Advanced Scientific Computing Research:

<http://science.energy.gov/ascr/>

Fusion Energy Sciences:

<http://science.energy.gov/fes/>

High Energy Physics:

<http://science.energy.gov/hep/>

Nuclear Physics:

<http://science.energy.gov/hep/>

Office of Scientific and Technical Information

<http://www.osti.gov/>

Energy Information Administration

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/>

National Nuclear Security Administration:

<http://www.nnsa.doe.gov/>

Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability

<http://www.oe.energy.gov/>

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy:

<http://www.eere.doe.gov>

Office of Fossil Energy:

<http://www.fe.doe.gov>

Office of Environmental Management:

<http://www.em.doe.gov>

Office of Nuclear Energy:

<http://www.ne.doe.gov>

The objectives of the DOE Implementation Grants are to:

- Improve the capability of EPSCoR jurisdictions to conduct sustainable and nationally competitive energy-related research.
- Support a group of scientists working on a common scientific theme across the jurisdiction. Collaborations involving institutions in different EPSCoR jurisdictions are permitted. (These awards are not meant to support individual faculty working on individual science and technology themes).
- Jumpstart infrastructure development in the jurisdiction(s) through increased human and technical resources.
- Promote partnering with other universities, industry and DOE national laboratories with strong participation by students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty from EPSCoR jurisdictions.

Though not required for application, it is recommended that Implementation Grants work toward building beneficial relationships between institutions in EPSCoR jurisdictions and the 10 world-class laboratories managed by the Office of Science, leveraging capabilities of DOE national user facilities, and increasing intellectual collaboration throughout the DOE system of laboratories and facilities. DOE EPSCoR reserves the right to give priority to applications that propose to develop new research areas rather than those that propose to enhance or continue research areas that have previously been funded under EPSCoR. Applications proposing research similar to that funded under previous Implementation Grants will not be considered.

Funding limitations, Continuation of funding, possibility of renewals:

While DOE EPSCoR funding will not be provided to Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) nor awarded to non-EPSCoR jurisdictions, consulting and other arrangements with FFRDCs for necessary expertise may be used on a limited basis. Continuation funding for the awards will be contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds and progress of the research. After the initial three year period of funding, renewal applications will be considered for one additional three year period, subject to continuing meritorious performance and progress in the previous award period, continuing program office need, program office commitment to the effort, and the availability of funds.

Subcontracts:

The lead organization may submit only one application that includes other organization(s) as a lower-tier participant(s) or sub-awardee(s) who will be responsible for a smaller portion of the overall project. If an application is approved for funding, DOE will provide the total DOE project funds to the lead organization that will then provide funding to the other participant(s) via a subcontract arrangement. The application should clearly describe the role to be played by each organization, specify the managerial arrangements and explain the advantages of the multi-organizational effort.

Principal Investigator, Project Director and Jurisdiction EPSCoR Committee Roles:

It is recommended that the Principal Investigator (PI) be the lead technical director for the application and have affiliation with the lead institution or organization. S/he should work with a specified Project Director (PD), such as the DOE EPSCoR state director, who will assist in the management of the award and the coordination of the award to meeting the jurisdiction's goals. The PD should provide a letter of commitment from a responsible member of their institution's administration confirming that s/he and the PI will be making a significant time commitment to administering the project should it be selected for an award. **The jurisdiction's EPSCoR Committee is responsible for selecting the one applicant submitting on behalf of the jurisdiction.** A letter of endorsement from the jurisdiction's EPSCoR Committee or its designee should accompany both the letter of intent and application.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this program is 81.049, and the solicitation control number is ERFAP 10 CFR Part 605.

Posted on the Office of Science Grants and Contracts Web Site
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