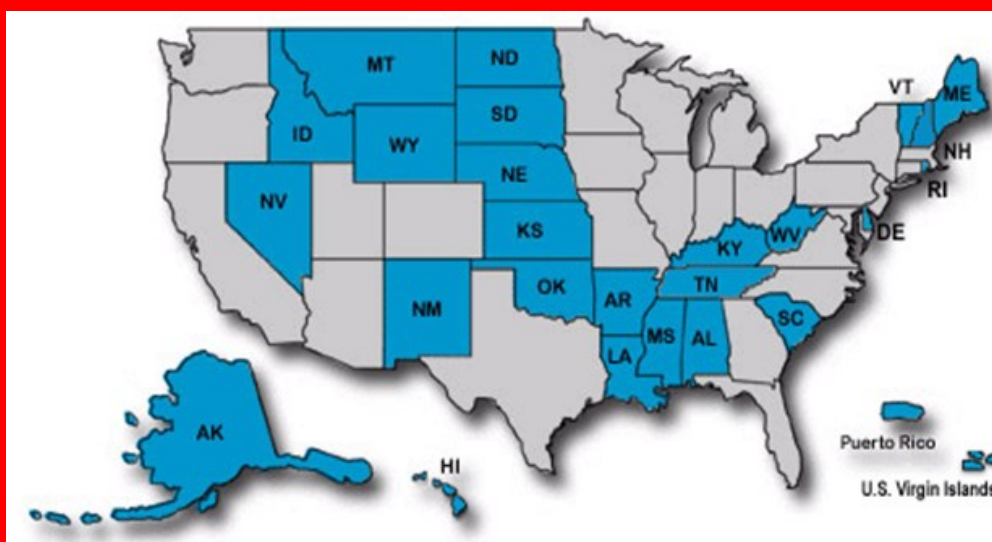


EPSCoR/IDEA

Newsletter

January 2016



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Happy New Year!

The EPSCoR/IDeA programs finished the year quite well, receiving significant increases in overall funding in the Omnibus Appropriations bill. Funding for our programs saw a total increase of more than \$56 million (11 percent) over last year's funding levels, and \$105 million (23 percent) over the President's Budget request! As we begin 2016, we will look to build upon this success to secure additional increases and further strengthen our programs.

The White House has announced that the President will release his final Budget on February 9, 2016. And, given the Presidential election in November, Congressional action will be fast and furious in the first half of the year. In fact, because the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 set discretionary spending levels for Fiscal Year 2017, the Appropriations Committees will begin their work even earlier than in the past and try to wrap up Committee level work by the end of June.

This means we will all need to be engaged earlier and remain vigilant as the process unfolds. Members of the Van Scoyoc team will be reaching out to each of you in the weeks to come to discuss the Coalition's FY 2017 goals, as well as to prepare materials in advance of our February 29 Annual Conference and March 1 Congressional visits.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Annual Conference and am excited about some of the things we will be talking to you about. In addition to our normal legislative work, both the Coalition and Foundation have been discussing some of our internal operations, and I look forward to those continued discussions throughout the year.

Thank you all for your hard work and continued support of the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and Foundation. Your efforts have been the driving force behind the increases we have seen and the programs are stronger because of each of you.



H. Stewart "Stu" Van Scoyoc
President, Van Scoyoc Associates

BUDGET UPDATE



EPSCoR/IDeA programs will see a total increase of more than \$56 million (11percent) over last year's funding levels, and \$105 million (23percent) over the President's Budget request.

- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) saw a significant increase of \$2 billion over its current budget of \$30.1 billion
- Congress provided the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) with \$5.6 billion
- The Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science's budget will increase to \$5.35 billion
- National Science Foundation (NSF) is funded at \$7.46 billion in FY2016 including \$6.03 billion for Research and Related Activities.
- The President's budget is expected to be released on February 9, 2016

FY2016 EPSCoR/IDeA Budget Summary

Numbers in millions of dollars

Agency	FY15 Omnibus	FY16 Budget Request	FY16 Coalition Goals	FY16 House	FY16 Senate	FY16 Omnibus
NSF	159.69	169.99	180.0	160.0	160.0	160.0
NIH	273.325	273.325	310.0	311.865	300.0	320.8
DOE	10.0	8.52	20.0	14.3	20.0	15.0
USDA	48.7*	n/a*	67.5*	50.25*	48.75*	52.5*
NASA	18.0	9.0	25.0	18.0	18.0	18.0
Totals	\$509.72	\$460.84	\$602.5	\$554.42	\$546.75	\$566.3

**Figures are not a direct appropriation, rather a percentage of AFRI/competitive funding*

AGENCY UPDATES



NSF EPSCoR UPDATE

FY 2016 Appropriations

In his 2016 budget request, the President sought \$7.724 billion for the [National Science Foundation](#) (NSF)—a 5.2 percent, or \$379.34 million increase, over FY15. In the recently passed Omnibus, however, NSF received only \$7.463 billion—a 1.6 percent, or \$119 million, increase. This contrasts with increases of 6.6 percent for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), 6.6 percent for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), 5.6 percent for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science and 4.0 percent for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). Prescriptive language in the House version of the NSF appropriation was dropped in the Omnibus.

The Omnibus Statement of Managers specified that “no less than \$160 million” would be for the Experimental Program to Stimulate Research (EPSCoR). This is roughly the same as the \$159.69 million appropriated in FY 2015. In addition to EPSCoR, NSF investments in Understanding the Brain and cybersecurity were referenced in the Statement of Managers.

Leading up to negotiations on the Omnibus, Senators Jack Reed (RI), Joe Manchin (WV) and James Inhofe (OK) circulated a Dear Colleague Letter to the Senate Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee in support of the EPSCoR program (*excerpt below*).

Excerpt from EPSCoR state representatives' letter to the Appropriations Committee on the significant impacts of the program

“After agreeing that students in all parts of the country must have access to high-quality research opportunities, the Academies further concluded that EPSCoR had strengthened the national research infrastructure, provided new educational opportunities, and enhanced the science and engineering workforce.”

[Read Reed's press release and full text of the letter here.](#)



Delaware Senators Chris Coons and Tom Carper, above, were among twelve Senators who signed the letter in support of EPSCoR funding mentioned left and above in early 2015.

Recent Solicitations

The RII Track 2 Focused EPSCoR Collaborations (RII Track-2 FEC) solicitation (NSF 16-511) anticipates 6 awards for a total of \$7.5-8 million in two topic areas: Understanding the Brain and Sustainable Food, Energy and Water Systems. Awards are for a maximum of four years and must include at least two EPSCoR jurisdictions. **Letters of intent were due January 11 and full proposals are due on February 4.**

NSF also released the first standalone solicitation for the Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy and Water Systems (INFEWS) program (NSF 16-524). This is part of the anticipated 5-year INFEWS initiative. Some \$50 million is expected to be awarded under this solicitation which is joint between NSF and the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). **Full proposals are due March 22.**

For additional information on NSF's EPSCoR⁶ program, please contact [Ms. Carolyn Fuller](#).

NIH IDeA UPDATE

FY 2016 Appropriations

Both the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the NIH's IDeA program saw significant increases in the recently passed Omnibus. NIH received a \$2 billion, or 6.6 percent increase, which is the largest increase the agency has received since 2003, the year that marked the end of the doubling of NIH's budget. The Omnibus also provided the largest increase the IDeA program has ever received. The \$320.8 million allocated to the IDeA program in the Omnibus is a significant increase above the \$300 million the Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee recommended for the program and the \$311.865 million that the House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee recommended for IDeA, and is a \$47.5 million increase over the FY2015 enacted level.

The agreement [Omnibus] provides a significant increase to the IDeA program in recognition of its success. The agreement anticipates NIH will maintain at least this percentage in subsequent budget requests. —Language from the Omnibus Statement of Managers

NIH Strategic Plan

In December, NIH released *NIH-Wide Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2016–2020: Turning Discovery Into Health*. Page 33 of the plan includes a powerful statement about the IDeA program:

“To ensure that the nation cultivates a thriving and talented next generation of scientists, NIH will seek ways to strengthen the biomedical research work force. Such efforts will include improving the outlook and opportunities for new and early stage investigators through policies and grant mechanisms that are designed to support investigators at the outset of their careers. NIH will continue to take steps to enable exceptional early career scientists to flourish independently by bypassing the traditional postdoctoral training period, to bridge the gap from early- to mid-career investigator, and to normalize grant success rates between early stage investigators and more experienced investigators. For example, within the next four years, NIH will be evaluating its Early Independence Awards program to gauge its success in fostering independent and productive research careers.

Another way in which NIH will aim to ensure that all of America develops and maintains an outstanding biomedical research workforce is through its Institutional Development Award (IDeA) program. By broadening the geographic distribution of NIH funding for biomedical research, the IDeA program fosters health-related research and enhances the competitiveness of researchers at institutions located in states in which the

aggregate success rate for grant applications to NIH has historically been low. Such activities also benefit unique populations—such as rural and medically underserved communities—in Puerto Rico and the 23 states that are currently part of the IDeA program. NIH will also continually evaluate the effectiveness of its scientific training program.”

According to NIH, “This plan outlines a vision for biomedical research to capitalize on new opportunities for scientific exploration and address new challenges for human health.”

Funding Opportunities

In addition to the upcoming January 28, 2016 due date for [Phase 1 COBRES](#), NIH has recently released the following exciting opportunities for IDeA program participants:

[National Institutes of Health Clinical Sites for IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network \(UG1\)](#)

NIH invites applications for institutional research capacity building programs from entities/institutions in IDeA-eligible States that propose to support a team of experts to engage and implement pediatric clinical trials. The program aims to provide research infrastructure as well as supervised professional development in research and clinical trial implementation to assist institutions in IDeA-eligible States in establishing and maintaining pediatric clinical trial teams. The institutions that successfully compete to become an IDeA State pediatric clinical trials site will be integrated with a Data Coordinating and Operations Center (DCOC) to form a research network to conduct multicenter study of pediatric conditions and disease processes.

[National Institutes of Health Data Coordinating and Operations Center for the IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network \(U24\)](#)

The NIH invites applications from investigators willing to participate under a cooperative agreement as the DCOC in a multicenter clinical program—the IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network (ISPCTN)—designed to carry out clinical research in pediatric populations. This Network is being created to investigate any diseases and conditions relevant to the pediatric population, but priority will be given to the four focus areas of the Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Program.

General Information

(for both funding opportunities)

- **Posted Date:** December 7, 2015
- **Open Date:** March 15, 2016 (*earliest submission date*)
- **Letter of Intent Due Date(s):** March 15, 2016
- **Application Due Date(s):** April 15, 2016, by 5:00 PM local time of applicant organization
- **Scientific Merit Review:** July 2016
- **Advisory Council Review:** August 2016
- **Earliest Start Date:** September 26, 2016
- **Expiration Date:** April 16, 2016
- **Topic Priorities:**
 - I. Upper and lower airway disease;
 - II. Obesity;
 - III. Pre-, peri-, and postnatal outcomes;
 - IV. Neurodevelopment

For additional information on NIH's IDeA program, please contact [Mr. Mike Adcock](#).

NASA EPSCoR UPDATE

The FY2016 Omnibus appropriations bill provided the [National Aeronautics and Space Administration](#) (NASA) with \$19.3 billion, a 7.1 percent increase over the FY2015 budget. Congress concentrated the increase in a few key areas—planetary science, space operations, and space technology received the largest increases. The NASA Education Directorate fell 3.4 percent from \$119 million in FY2015 to \$115 million in FY2016.

Despite decreases in the NASA Education Directorate, the NASA EPSCoR program was fully funded at \$18 million. The funding amount represents a 50 percent increase to the program from the President's FY2016 budget request. The Foundation and Coalition will be working with NASA staff this year to address some issues with administrative tax rates on the program.

For additional information on NASA's EPSCoR program, please contact [Dr. Leslee Gilbert](#).

DOE EPSCoR UPDATE

FY 2016 Appropriations

The FY2016 Omnibus appropriations bill provided the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science with \$5.337 billion, \$7 million more than was included in the President's budget request. This brings the Office of Science approximately two percent above pre-sequestration funding levels. The DOE EPSCoR program was funded at \$15 million, an increase of \$6.5 million over the Administration's request. The Foundation and Coalition are currently working with DOE staff to provide a plan of activities for the year.

While energy-related research has been a significant point of contention between the Obama administration and Republicans in the House of Representatives, the spending bill resulted in nearly \$2 billion more for the Energy and Water Subcommittee, with more than 10 percent of that amount going into the Office of Science, which has been relatively flat funded in recent years.

Funding Opportunities

As most of the EPSCoR/IDeA community is aware, applications for the DOE EPSCoR Building EPSCoR-State/National Laboratory Partnerships program are due on January 28, 2016. DOE has posted a "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)" document that may be helpful in your preparations. General information on the solicitation can be found both right and below.

The Department of Energy National Laboratory Partnerships

The U. S. Department of Energy's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DOE EPSCoR) hereby announces its interest in receiving applications for building EPSCoR-State/DOE-National Laboratory Partnerships.

These partnerships are to advance fundamental energy-oriented scientific and engineering research collaborations with the DoE Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (DOE FFRDCs), hereafter referred to as the National Laboratories.

For additional information on DOE's EPSCoR program, please contact [Mr. Tom Quinn](#).

General Information

- **Issue Date:** 10/14/2015
- **Letter of Intent Due Date:** Not Applicable
- **Pre-Application Due Date:** 5:00 PM ET, 11/12/2015
- **Encourage/Discourage Date:** 5:00 PM ET, 12/18/2015
- **Application Due Date:** 11:59 PM ET, 1/28/2016
- **Estimated Total Program Funding:** \$3,000,000
- **Award Ceiling:** \$200,000
- **Agency Name:** Office of Science

USDA EPSCoR UPDATE

FY2016 Appropriations

The FY 2016 Omnibus appropriations bill included the following language: “The agreement continues to direct that not less than 15 percent of the competitive research grant funds be used for USDA's agricultural research enhancement awards program, including USDA-EPSCoR.”

The Coalition was pleased to see the 15% set-aside for USDA EPSCoR specifically mentioned in the Omnibus. Both the House and Senate versions of the Agriculture appropriations bill included 15% set-aside language, so its inclusion in the Omnibus serves to emphasize the Committees’ support for the USDA EPSCoR program.

Eligibility

[The National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#) (NIFA) has released an [updated list](#) of states eligible for the [U.S. Department of Agriculture’s](#) (USDA) Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) program for FY2016. Alabama, Arizona, and Kentucky graduated out of the program, while Louisiana, New Jersey, and Oklahoma now qualify.

FY 2016 USDA EPSCoR STATES

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| • Alaska | • Connecticut | • Idaho |
| • Louisiana | • Maine | • Mississippi |
| • Montana | • Nevada | • New Hampshire |
| • New Jersey | • New Mexico | • Oklahoma |
| • Rhode Island | • South Carolina | • South Dakota |
| • Utah | • West Virginia | • Wyoming |

Data collection

The USDA EPSCoR program staff has collected cumulative funding information per the request of the EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation. Similar data has been collected for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Institutional Development Award (IDeA) program and the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) EPSCoR program.

Webinar

The USDA EPSCoR program office is planning to hold another webinar for EPSCoR states similar to the one held in December 2014. The purpose of these webinars is to identify funding opportunities and programmatic information for interested researchers in EPSCoR states. A date for the next webinar remains to be determined but will likely take place in the spring of 2016. [View a PDF summary of the previous USDA webinar here.](#)

For additional information on the USDA EPSCoR program, please contact [Ms. Allie Dodd](#).

EPSCoR/IDeA EVENTS

REVIEW: Coalition and Foundation Joint Board Meeting December 8th, 2016—Washington, D.C.

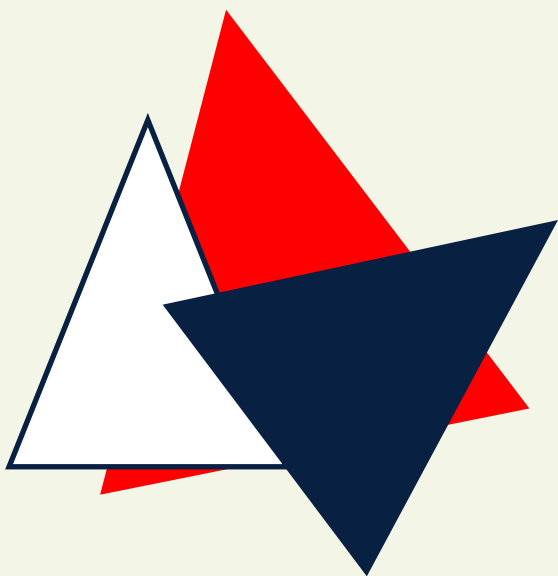
The Coalition and Foundation Boards of Directors met in a joint session. Board members discussed both of the organizations' upcoming goals, activities and initiatives—many of which will be shared at the 2016 Annual Conference.

During the meeting, Board members listened to presentations from Dr. Denise Barnes on the NSF EPSCoR program, Dr. Fred Taylor on the NIH IDeA program, Dr. Nancy Cavallero and Dr. Peter Johnson on the USDA EPSCoR program and Dr. Jeppie Compton on the NASA EPSCoR program. Board members also heard a presentation from Dr. William Kramer, Project Director/Principal Investigator of the VSA project at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Above, Denise Barnes, head of NSF's EPSCoR Program Office, speaks about the program.

If you are interested in receiving a copy of any of these presentations, please contact [Mrs. Jessica Molesworth](#).



UPCOMING: Conference Call on EPSCoR/IDeA Program in the President's FY2017 Budget February 9, 2016—2:00 PM ET

The President's budget request is expected to be released on February 9, 2016. The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition will hold a conference call on Friday, February 12, at 2pm (EST) to discuss the President's FY2017 budget and its impact on the EPSCoR/IDeA programs. Please share this information with any interested faculty.

VSA will provide a reminder and call-in information closer to the call.

UPCOMING: The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition's Annual Conference

February 29-March 1, 2016—Washington, D.C.

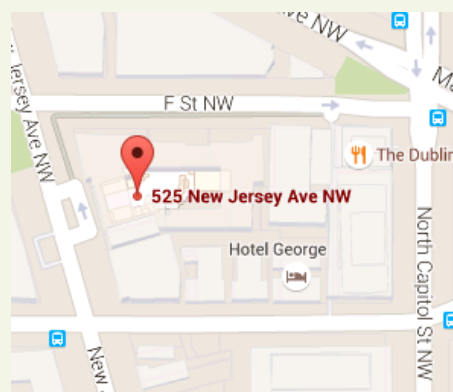
The Conference serves as the Coalition's annual advocacy "kick-off" for the calendar year and has proven to be essential to the success of EPSCoR/IDeA programs over the years.

This meeting is not limited to Board Members, in fact, we encourage you to bring EPSCoR/IDeA PDs/PIs, junior investigators, government affairs representatives and anyone else in your states who will help your advocacy efforts on the Hill and/or who will benefit from hearing about the activities of the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and Foundation. **All attendees are required to fill out the attached spreadsheet and return it to [Scott Keller](#) by COB on February 12, 2016.**

[Washington Court Hotel](#)

525 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-628-2100

*Click on the map to the right for
directions to the hotel.*



A room block has been set aside for the nights of February 28—March 1, 2016 for the Conference. To secure your reservation, you must call the hotel directly at (202) 628-2100 and reference the "EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition Annual Conference" group name to receive a special rate. **Attendees will only receive this rate by calling the hotel and making a reservation. Reservations must be made by COB on February 1, 2016 in order to receive the group rate.** We will provide a formal agenda in the coming weeks but the proposed agenda is as follows:

Monday, February 29, 2016

<u>8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.</u>	Registration	<u>4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</u>	Meeting of
<u>9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</u>	Annual Conference		Government Affairs
	Opening Session		Working Group
<u>11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</u>	Travel to Capitol Hill	<u>5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</u>	Cocktail Reception
<u>12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.</u>	Luncheon on Capitol Hill		<i>(open to all attendees)</i>
		<u>7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</u>	Joint Board and Voting
<u>1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.</u>	Travel back to hotel		Member Dinner
<u>2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.</u>	EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation		
	Board Meeting		
<u>3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.</u>	EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition Board Meeting		

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Hill Visits