

EPSCoR IDeA

MARCH 2017 NEWSLETTER



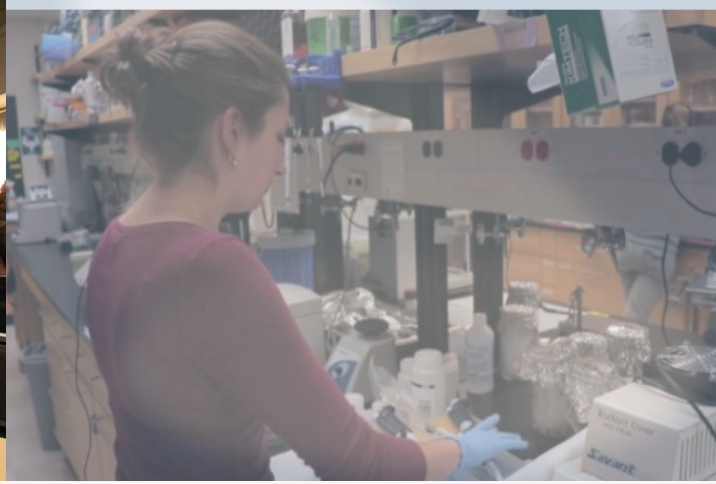
Left, Stu Van Scoyoc, Dr. Michael Khonsari, and Dr. Joe Danek at the 2017 Coalition of States Annual Meeting . Dr. Khonsari is the 2017 recipient of the EPSCoR/IDeA Program's 'Danek Award' for his significant contributions to the science community.
Congratulations, Dr. Khonsari!

Right, Charlotte Quigley, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Maine, and her research are the subject of this month's 'Student Spotlight' on the EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation's website.

Below, Board members and other stakeholders participate in the opening session of the 2017 annual meeting in Washington, D.C. on February 27th, 2017.



MARCH 2017
STUDENT
Spotlight
ON CHARLOTTE QUIGLEY
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE



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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE 2017 EPSCoR/IDEA COALITION ANNUAL MEETING!



Stu Van Scoyoc opens the EPSCoR/IDEA Annual Meeting.



Keynote Speaker Cliff Shannon from the House Science Committee addresses the group.



Dr. Patricia Hand from MDI Biological Laboratory and EPSCoR/IDEA Foundation Board Chairman Dr. Larry Cornett from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.



Mark Pettitt, chief of staff to Rep. Mo Brooks (R-AL-05) and EPSCoR/IDEA Coalition Chairman Dr. Chris Lawson from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.



Senator Shelly Moore Capito (R-WV) with the West Virginia EPSCoR/IDEA delegation. We appreciate Senator Capito joining us and addressing the group.

A NOTE FROM STU VAN SCOYOC



Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in the 2017 EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition of States Annual Meeting. We appreciate your input, guidance, and strong advocacy on Capitol Hill for these important research and development programs.

The House of Representatives has restarted the fiscal year (FY) 2017 appropriations process by approving the Department of Defense Appropriations Act. The legislation has been sent to the Senate where they are expected to incorporate the remaining FY2017 spending bills. The current Continuing Resolution expires on April 28th and both chambers now have five weeks to complete last year's bills.

As many of you have read, the Trump Administration released its FY2018 "skinny" budget titled, "America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again." The proposal would increase defense spending by \$54 billion and offset that by reducing funds from more than 18 other agencies. Some agencies would be hit particularly harder than others.

The proposal calls for cutting the FY2018 budget of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by nearly 20 percent, the Department of Energy's Office of Science by nearly 20 percent, and deep cuts to the research programs at the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Aeronautics and Space Administration's earth science budget. The budget for the National Science Foundation is not specifically covered in the budget documents and will likely be considered under the category of "other agencies," which could see a 9.8 percent reduction.

Many of President Trump's budget proposals are expected to run into strong resistance from lawmakers on Capitol Hill from both parties. House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ-11) has already spoken out against proposed reductions to programs at NIH. Senator Lindsay Graham (R-SC), a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, is strongly opposed to the budget's proposed 28 percent cut to the State Department and declared the budget "dead on arrival." Capitol Hill Democrats have universally panned the budget request.

The "skinny" budget proposal does not represent the final funding details for FY2018. The Administration will release their full budget request in May which is expected to include specific, program level details for all programs including EPSCoR/IDeA. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees have begun their budget oversight hearings and I expect that we will hear much discussion and debate about the important research programs jeopardized in the budget request that have historically enjoyed support from members of both parties on Capitol Hill. The final product produced by Congress should look significantly different than the "skinny" budget released last week.

The Trump Administration's budget release shows how important your advocacy is and the critical role that your Congressional Delegations play in the budget and appropriations process. I urge you to stay engaged through the process and do not hesitate to engage anyone from the Coalition staff if you need additional help with your Representatives.

Sincerely,

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

FY17/18 BUDGET UPDATE



FY2017/2018 FEDERAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT BUDGET STATUS

- On March 16, 2017, the Trump Administration released a “skinny” budget outline. The release did not provide program-level detail for the EPSCoR/IDEA programs
- The “skinny” budget was received poorly on Capitol Hill with members from both parties opposing many of the proposed reductions to important research and development programs
- A more complete budget request is expected from the Trump Administration in May 2017
- The FY2017 Appropriations process has restarted with the House approving a modified version of the FY2017 Department of Defense Appropriations Act. The Senate is expected to follow with legislation to address the remaining FY2017 spending bills

FY2017 EPSCoR/IDEA BUDGET SUMMARY

Numbers in millions of dollars

Agency	FY15 Omnibus	FY16 Omnibus	FY17 Budget Request	FY17 Coalition Goals	FY17 House	FY17 Senate	FY17 Final	FY18 Goals
NSF	159.69	160.0	162.13	170.0	170.7	160.0	TBD	170.0
NIH	273.325	320.8	320.84	331.14	333.3	333.4	TBD	1% of NIH budget
DOE	10.0	15.0	8.5	20.0	10.0	20.0	TBD	20.0
USDA	48.7*	52.5*	N/A	56.25*	56.25*	56.25*	TBD	15% Language
NASA	18.0	18.0	9.0	25.0	18.0	18.0	TBD	25.0
Totals	509.72	566.3	500.47**	602.39	588.25	587.65	TBD	

* Represents 15 percent of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) budget.

** Figure does not include AFRI funding.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



The Trump Administration's "skinny budget" made no mention of the National Science Foundation (NSF), although it proposed substantial reductions in NIH funding and in Department of Energy Office of Science funding. The full budget request for FY 2018, which begins October 1, 2017, is expected in May.

The Views and Estimates from the House Science, Space and Technology Committee, submitted to the House Budget Committee, did, however, give some indication of issues the House authorizing committee expects to pursue during the 115th Congress. In that document, the Committee indicated that it would require that 70 percent of NSF research funding be allocated to the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Directorate, the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate, the Biological Sciences Directorate, and the Engineering Directorate.

The document also indicated that the Committee "expects to reauthorize key federal science agencies", including NSF. Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX-21) elaborated on this during hearings on NSF before the Committee's Subcommittee on Research and Technology. Chairman Smith suggested that last year's American Innovation and Competitiveness Act authorized activities and priorities but not funding levels.

The House Science, Space and Technology Committee's Subcommittee on Research and Technology opened a set of NSF hearings on March 9th and March 21st to address the agency's future opportunities and challenges. Although Chairman Smith acknowledged NSF's improvement in several areas, he cited the most recent Inspector General report to Congress that noted several areas that continue to need attention, including management of rotator personnel, the new NSF headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, the U.S. Antarctic Program management, and grant administration and ethical research conduct.

Dr. France Córdoba, Director of the NSF, testified that the agency makes up 24 percent of federal research support for colleges and universities in the U.S., despite receiving four percent of the total federal budget for research and development.

At the second hearing, Chairman Smith stated, "I hope to hear how NSF keeps up with the pace of rapidly evolving science as well as recommendations for how the Foundation can do better." He said that research reproducibility is an area of concern. Dr. Joan Ferrini-Mundy, NSF's Chief Operating Officer, reported that NSF is working on a strategic plan for 2018-2022, which is expected to be submitted with the FY 2019 budget.

Ferrini-Mundy outlined other NSF efforts to develop a long-term research and education agenda. NSF released the "Ten Big Ideas" in August 2016, which include: Enhancing Science and Engineering through Diversity; NSF 2050: The Integrative Foundational Fund; Understanding the Rules of Life: Predicting Phenotype; Work at the Human-Technology Frontier: Shaping the Future; Mid-scale Research Infrastructure; Windows on the Universe: The Era of Multi-messenger Astrophysics; Navigating the New Arctic; Harnessing Data for 21st Century Science and Engineering; The Quantum Leap: Leading the Next Quantum Revolution; and Growing Convergent Research at NSF.

Ferrini-Mundy also touched on NSF's 2015 data-sharing effort, "Today's Data, Tomorrow's Discoveries," which includes requirements that NSF-funded investigators share with other researchers primary data and other project materials created or gathered for NSF-funded projects.

In January, NSF released a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) asking for information on Future Needs for Advanced Cyberinfrastructure to Support Science and Engineering Research. The DCL requests information in three areas: research challenges, cyberinfrastructure needed to address the research challenges and other considerations (including workforce). Responses are due April 5th. The EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation is preparing a response that will cover research, infrastructure needs (networking, advanced computing and data analytics) and workforce. Please let us know of any concerns or suggestions that you would like included in the EPSCoR response. The word limits are 1,200 for each question, which dictates a concise reply.

For more information on NSF's EPSCoR Program, please contact Ms. Carolyn Fuller at cnfuller@vsadc.com.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH



The Trump Administration's FY2018 "skinny budget" proposes cuts to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by a total of \$5.8 billion, or nearly 20 percent of its current \$30.3 billion discretionary budget. The plan "includes a major reorganization" of NIH's 27 institutes and centers and would eliminate the Fogarty International Center, a \$69.1 million program dedicated to building partnerships between health research institutions in the United States and abroad. The Trump plan would also move the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, a unit of the Department of Health and Human Services that analyzes and evaluates health-care programs, into NIH.

Until more details are made available in May, it will remain unclear what kind of reorganization the administration envisions at NIH. The agency awards 80 percent of its funds to more than 300,000 researchers at universities across the country and abroad, and has hundreds of researchers conducting studies in labs at its campus in Bethesda. Despite the uncertainty, we are encouraged that Dr. Francis Collins has been asked to stay on as NIH Director. Dr. Collins has been a steady hand and an effective advocate for more resources for biomedical research.

The skinny budget is at direct odds with the consensus that has formed within Congress over the last several years to prioritize funding for NIH, even in a tight budget environment. From 2003 to 2015, NIH lost 22 percent of its research capacity due to budget cuts, sequestration, and inflationary losses. In 2016 a 5.9 percent budget increase for NIH was

the beginning of an effort to recover NIH research capacity. The 21st Century Cures Act enacted late last year called for a \$3 billion increase to NIH in FY2017 and was supported by 300 members of Congress. The FY2017 appropriations bills that are still pending in Congress include substantial increases for the base NIH budget: \$33.3 billion in the House and \$34.1 billion in the Senate version.

Funding for the IDeA program has mirrored the upward trend of the overall NIH budget. \$320 million was included for IDeA in the final FY2016 appropriations package. Both House and Senate Appropriations Committees included substantial increases for IDeA in FY17: \$333.3 million in the House and \$333.4 million in the Senate. The committees continue to work toward a resolution of the FY2017 budget and have until the end of April to complete action on a LHHS funding bill. However, if Congress fails to complete negotiations on its 2017 Labor-HHS-Education (LHHS) funding measure, NIH will be funded for the remainder of FY2017 at its 2016 level.

For FY2018, the Coalition will push for at least \$334 million for the IDeA program, which is roughly one percent of funding for NIH included in the FY2017 House and Senate appropriations reports. Our objective is to continue to grow the program and ensure that the IDeA program receives at least one percent of total NIH funding.

Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle have indicated that they do not support the President's suggested cuts to research funding, specifically, biomedical research at

NIH. House Appropriations LHHS Subcommittee Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK-04) condemned the cuts to NIH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stating, "There are things that are really important to the country as well as defense spending. You're more likely to die in a pandemic than you are in a terrorist attack."

We can expect more clarity on the FY2018 budget in May, but must remain engaged with our congressional champions to continue the progress the Coalition has made in recent years to grow the IDeA program. Now more than ever, our congressional delegations need to be aware of the kinds of projects funded by IDeA as well as the economic impact of the program in our states. IDeA is representative of the EPSCoR/IDeA underlying theory that good science can happen anywhere, and breakthroughs in precision medicine, cancer genomics, and immunotherapy should not be subject to geographic or institutional constraints.

For more information on NIH IDeA, please contact Mr. Mike Adcock at madcock@vsadc.com.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

President Trump has proposed reducing DOE spending overall by as much as \$1.7 billion, 5.6 percent from current levels, to \$28 billion. The National Nuclear Security Administration budget would see an increase by 11.3 percent under the "skinny budget" proposal while the rest of DOE would see reductions of 17.9 percent. While not specifically mentioned in the budget proposal, it is important to note, last year's Heritage Foundation budget, which has had a major influence on the Trump Administration's budget, called for a significant rollback or elimination of programs several programs including DOE EPSCoR.

Your advocacy this year
for DOE EPSCoR is more
important than ever!

The president's proposal seeks to shrink the Office of Science by \$900 million from its current funding level of about \$5.3 billion. This is the largest reduction sought by an Administration for the Office of Science in the last 40 years. The proposed reductions could impact research at more than 300 universities and 10 of the nation's 17 national labs. The budget request would also seek to eliminate the popular Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-

E). Both the Office of Science and ARPA-E are popular programs on Capitol Hill among Republicans and Democrats.

The White House has also proposed to save \$2 billion through unspecified funding cuts to the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, the Office of Nuclear Energy, the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, and the Fossil Energy Research and Development program, as the Administration emphasizes early applied research work.

The Senate approved former Texas Governor Rick Perry to become the new Secretary of Energy on March 2nd by a vote of 62 to 37. Secretary Perry now faces many difficult issues over regulations, DOE's activities to slow climate change and potentially deep cuts in manpower and spending. As Texas governor, Secretary Perry presided over a boom in all kinds of energy production, including wind power and shale drilling. Many of his supporters cited that record as evidence that he could help a similarly wide variety of energy interests.

For more information on DOE EPSCoR, please contact Mr. Tom Quinn at tquinn@vsadc.com.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION



The FY2018 “skinny” budget only seeks a small reduction for NASA, about 1 percent of current spending. However, the reductions come almost entirely from Earth-

observing and education programs, suggesting that the president aims to make good on campaign promises to shift NASA's focus away from Earth studies. The budget also directs NASA to find ways to collaborate with the commercial space industry. It makes no mention of the Journey to Mars, which is likely to add to speculation that the president wants to shift NASA's focus to the moon.

As you know, the Office of Education houses NASA EPSCoR as well as other important higher education focused programs. The Coalition has been meeting with Hill offices on this proposed cut, and advocating the importance of NASA EPSCoR. Initial discussions have gone well, and we appreciate all of the state-level efforts to advocate on behalf of the program, including supporting Member letters of support and appropriations forms for NASA EPSCoR.

Overall, the president proposes to reduce funding for NASA to \$19.1 billion from about \$19.3 billion. The largest portion of funds would go to the agency's human exploration division, with \$3.7 billion for the Orion crew vehicle and Space Launch System (SLS) jumbo rocket, spacecraft that NASA says will one day get humans to Mars. The outlined budget also instructs NASA to “investigate approaches for reducing the costs of

exploration missions to enable a more expansive exploration program.”

The total cut to the Earth-science budget is \$102 million, or 5 percent of the program's annual budget, and it almost exclusively targets missions aimed at understanding climate change, the ocean monitoring program PACE, the Orbiting Carbon -Observatory-3, the Deep Space Climate Observatory, and the CLARREO Pathfinder, which measures heat in Earth's atmosphere.

Moreover, on March 21, 2017 President Trump signed the NASA Transition bill of 2017. This authorization bill includes \$115 million for NASA's Office of Education, and includes language supporting the prioritization of NASA EPSCoR within the Office of Education. The Coalition worked closely with House and Senate authorizers on this legislation. As this was intended to be a “messaging” bill to the new administration, we wanted to ensure that NASA EPSCoR was prioritized moving forward. This authorization bill helps our efforts to protect and grow funding for the NASA EPSCoR program in the FY2018 appropriations process.

For more information on NASA EPSCoR, please contact Dr. Leslee Gilbert at lgilbert@vsadc.com.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



The Trump administration is seeking to cut 21 percent of USDA's

discretionary budget, though it has not detailed what precisely will be cut. Vulnerable programs include rural development and research grants but exclude food stamps and crop subsidies. USDA will also reduce staff by an unspecified amount at various service center agencies around the country. The "skinny" budget does not include details related to USDA EPSCoR.

Like the other EPSCoR programs, USDA EPSCoR is tied up in the FY2017 bills, but we are well-positioned and do not foresee any surprises in an end of the year spending package following the CR. Both the House and Senate FY2017 Agriculture appropriations bills contain our 15 percent set-aside language for the AREA program including USDA EPSCoR, and both bills contain \$375 million for AFRI, an increase of \$25 million over FY2016. For FY2018 we will request the 15 percent language and funding for AFRI at least at the FY2016 level.

Senator John Hoeven from North Dakota has replaced Senator Jerry Moran from

Kansas as the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Agriculture subcommittee. The Coalition sincerely thanks Senator Moran for all of his strong support of USDA EPSCoR during his time as Chairman and we look forward to working closer with Senator Hoeven on this program. Please note, for the 115th Congress, there is one less member on both the House and Senate Agriculture appropriations subcommittees from USDA EPSCoR states, so our advocacy efforts remain extremely important.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) recently updated the list of states that are eligible for the USDA EPSCoR program for FY2017. Connecticut no longer qualifies; Vermont is now eligible. Eligibility for the program is determined every year based on a three-year rolling average of AFRI funds, excluding funds awarded through EPSCoR.

The President's nomination for Agriculture Secretary, Sonny Perdue, has not yet been confirmed. Perdue was the last cabinet member announced by the Trump Administration, and his confirmation hearings began on March 23rd. NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy remains at the agency.

For more information on the USDA EPSCoR Program, please contact Ms. Allie Dodd at adodd@vsadc.com.

WEBINAR

ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2017, THE TEAM AT AFRI IS PRESENTING A WEBINAR ON HOW THE AFRI FASE & EPSCoR PROGRAM WORKS AND HOW IT IS IMPLEMENTED AT NIFA. THIS WEBINAR WILL SERVE AS AN ORIENTATION FOR THOSE NEW TO THE PROGRAM AND AN UPDATE FOR RETURNING APPLICANTS. THERE WILL ALSO BE A BRIEF QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION.

WHEN: APRIL 12, 2017, 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. EST
NUMBER: 888-844-9904
ACCESS CODE: 1466552

***USDA ASKS THAT YOU PLEASE MUTE PHONES UNTIL THE Q&A SESSION.**

***THE AFRI TEAM ASKS THAT LOCATIONS WITH TWO OR MORE INDIVIDUALS JOINING THE WEBINAR, USE A SINGLE CONNECTION POINT IF POSSIBLE.**

***SLIDES ARE AVAILABLE [HERE](#) VIA ADOBE CONNECT.**

2017 DANEK AWARD PRESENTATION

CONGRATULATIONS

At the Coalition's Annual Meeting on February 27, 2017 Michael Khonsari was presented with the Danek Award. The Danek Award was conceived by former Coalition Board Chairman Bill Gern to recognize an extraordinary contributor in the EPSCoR community who "has established a long-term commitment to the ideals and goals which EPSCoR represents befitting for awarding of the prize." Through his many years of service on both the Coalition and Foundation Boards, his stature



Former Coalition Chairman Dr. Bill Gern with the 2017 Danek Award winner and former Foundation Chair, Dr. Michael Khonsari.

at LSU, his respect within the state of Louisiana and through his national recognition, Dr. Khonsari has helped to ensure the success of the EPSCoR program. Dr. Khonsari most recently served as the Foundation Board Chairman from 2014-2016. A brief biography which serves as a snapshot of his many achievements states that:

"Michael Khonsari earned his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. all in Mechanical Engineering from The University of Texas at Austin. He is holder of the Dow Chemical Endowed Chair and Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Louisiana State University (LSU). Prior to joining LSU, he spent a number of years as a faculty member at The Ohio State University, University of Pittsburgh, and served as the Chairman of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Energy Processes at Southern Illinois University. Professor Khonsari has also served as a research Faculty Fellow at NASA Lewis (now Glenn) Research Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force laboratories, and the U.S. Department of Energy. In February 2003, Professor Khonsari was appointed as the Louisiana Experimental Program for Stimulating Competitive Research (EPSCoR) Project Director and Associate Commissioner for Sponsored Research & Development Programs at the Louisiana Board of Regents. He maintains his professorship at LSU while serving in these positions."

NOMINATION FOR NATIONAL SCIENCE ADVISOR

The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition Supports the Nomination of Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier to become the President's Science Advisor.



The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and Foundation Boards were proud to join our colleagues at APLU, AAU, and other organization in sending a letter to President Trump to strongly endorse and support the nomination of Dr. Kelvin K. Droegemeier to become the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology /Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). We believe that Dr. Droegemeier, more than any of the other potential nominees for Science Advisor, will seek to implement a strong research and development portfolio for the entire Nation.

An excerpt from the letter follows:

“Dr. Droegemeier, the Secretary for Science and Technology for the State of Oklahoma, is uniquely qualified for this position. He was appointed to the National Science Board by two presidents from different parties and has enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress during both confirmations. As a member of the National Science Board, he chaired or participated in a number of key committees and task forces on cost sharing, administrative research regulations, and transformative research.

Dr. Droegemeier is a national leader in the creation of partnerships among academia, government and industry. He is also a job creator. In 1999, he founded Weather Decisions Technology, a private company employing almost 100 people. He also led a \$10.6 million research alliance with Williams Energy Marketing and Trading Company which is the largest such partnership between a university and a private company in the field of meteorology. He has served as a consultant to Honeywell Corporation, American Airlines, the National Transportation Safety Board, and Climatological Consulting Corp. He has testified numerous times as an expert witness in commercial airline accidents and in front of congressional committees. In his more than 30 years at the University of Oklahoma, Dr. Droegemeier has generated over \$40 million in external research funding, authoring or co-authoring more than 80 refereed journal articles and over 200 conference publications.”

We ask that you continue to reach out to your Congressional Delegation to request that they also weigh in with the White House with their support of Dr. Droegemeier’s nomination. Thank you as always for your support. If you have any question or need any additional information on this initiative, please contact Mr. Tom Quinn at tquinn@vsadc.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 5 - 8, 2017

25th NSF EPSCoR National Conference

Missoula, Montana

Details available [here](#).

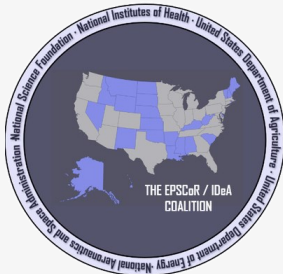
DECEMBER 5 - 6, 2017

Coalition and Foundation Board Meetings

Washington, D.C.

Details to follow.

**FOLLOW THE EPSCoR/IDEA
COALITION ON TWITTER AT
[@EPSCoR_IDEA](#).**



**THE COALITION HAS A NEW WEBSITE!
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AND OTHER INFORMATION FROM
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WWW.EPSCORIDEACOALITION.ORG.**

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