



# STUDENT *Spotlight*

**SURESH DAMODARAN**

**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**



Doctoral candidate Suresh Damodaran is working in the Subramanian lab at South Dakota State University to identify how nodules develop in roots of leguminous plants such as soybeans.

[Read more](#) about Suresh's research on the Foundation webpage.

# EPSCoR

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# IDeA

**FY<sub>2018</sub> PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST**  
**MAY 2017**



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# A NOTE FROM STU VAN SCOYOC



President Donald Trump's first budget request would seek \$3.6 trillion in spending cuts over the next 10 years. While the budget claims to balance within a decade, it relies on a tax plan for which the administration has provided little detail and the elimination of programs with strong bipartisan support on Capitol Hill.

The president proposes to spend a total of \$4.1 trillion in fiscal year (FY) 2018, while projecting to collect \$3.65 trillion in revenue, resulting in a \$440 billion deficit. The president's proposal would fulfill his campaign promise of leaving Social Security retirement benefits and Medicare untouched while increasing national security spending. He's also proposing severe cuts to foreign aid and tighter eligibility for tax cuts that benefit the working poor while also seeking to reduce funding for food stamps and disability insurance.

The budget does call for some new domestic spending, including \$25 billion over 10 years for nationwide paid parental leave and continuing the expansion of the Pell Grant program for low-income students that began in the FY2017 Omnibus. The Department of Homeland Security's budget would increase by \$3 billion over last year and the defense budget would increase by about \$6 billion.

The president's plan would also cut domestic agencies by about 10 percent in FY2018. The "skinny" budget released back in March provided a preview to some of the Administration's reduction proposals, now, the full details are available. There are significant cuts proposed for the federal departments and agencies that fund basic research. For instance, the proposal calls for sharp reductions in science and technology programs, including 11 percent from the National Science Foundation (NSF), 22 percent from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and 44 percent from the Environmental Protection Agency's science and technology programs. Furthermore, the budget proposal seeks to greatly scale back or outright eliminate the EPSCoR/IDeA programs!

The budget details have, for the most part, been received poorly on Capitol Hill which is not uncommon for a president's budget request. Lawmakers from both parties have been publicly signaling their continued support for research and development programs in the FY2018 budget process and reminding the White House that the Constitution gives Congress the power to make spending decisions.

The FY2018 appropriations process is underway on Capitol Hill and the House and Senate Appropriations Committees will be advancing their own versions of the twelve spending bills soon. It is expected that the House will begin moving bills as early as next month while the Senate's Committee will work a few weeks behind.

We are in a very difficult budgetary environment this year and the budget cuts proposed for the EPSCoR/IDeA programs are unprecedented. We will need your support to continue to the great successes of the EPSCoR/IDeA programs into FY2018!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stu". The signature is stylized and cursive.

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

# BUDGET UPDATE



## FEDERAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SNAPSHOT

### FY 2017 Omnibus Highlights

- The Omnibus fully funds the IDeA program at 1 percent of the total NIH budget
- Congress continued its strong support of basic research at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science by appropriating \$5.392 billion, a slight increase above FY2016
- Omnibus provides \$6 billion for Research and Related Activities at NSF, equal to FY2016 funding levels
- The Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy received a \$15 million increase to \$306 million
- The Omnibus provides \$2.89 billion for agriculture research programs, including the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
- The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is funded at \$3.1 billion, an increase of \$160 million over FY2017

### EPSCoR/IDEA BUDGET SUMMARY

*Numbers in millions of dollars*

Agency	FY15 Omnibus	FY16 Omnibus	FY17 Coalition Goals	FY17 Omnibus	FY18 Coalition Goals	FY18 Budget Request
NSF	159.69	160.0	170.0	160.0	170.0	100.0
NIH	273.325	320.8	331.14	333.4	1% of NIH Budget	288.0
DOE	10.0	15.0	20.0	15.0	20.0	0
USDA	48.7*	52.5*	56.25*	56.25*	15% Language	**\$52.35
NASA	18.0	18.0	25.0	18.0	25.0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>509.72</b>	<b>566.3</b>	<b>602.39</b>	<b>582.65</b>		<b>440.35</b>

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

\*\*Represents 15 percent of AFRI budget request

# PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FY 2018

## National Institutes of Health

NIH would be subject to a \$7.3 billion cut under President Donald Trump's budget plan, reducing its funding to \$26.9 billion from its \$34.3 billion appropriation in FY2017. Much of that savings would come from cutting approximately \$1 billion from the NIH's two largest divisions, the \$5.6 billion National Cancer Institute, and the \$4.9 billion National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Most of the two-dozen institutes would be similarly subject to cuts of around 20 percent, except for a \$72 million Fogarty international health research center that would be eliminated entirely. Instead, the office of the NIH director would receive \$25 million to coordinate global health research activities.

In a recent Capitol Hill hearing, long-time NIH supporter and House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK) said he prefers "regular increases" for the biomedical research agency and is "disappointed" with the proposed multi-billion-dollar decrease. Letters supporting higher funding levels for NIH have also been circulated in both chambers.

Notably, the NIH budget promises "a major reorganization of NIH's Institutes and Centers to help focus resources on the highest priority research and training activities" and consolidation of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality within NIH, among other unspecified changes.

### NIH IDeA

The IDeA budget is assumed to be \$288 million, a proposed reduction of \$45.4 million from the enacted FY2017 funding level. At this time, funding tables have not yet been posted by NIGMS. It is important to note that the same week that the budget was released, NIH Director Francis Collins praised the program during a House hearing (covered on page 11).

FY2015 Enacted	FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Enacted	FY2018 Request	FY2018 Coalition
273.325	320.8	333.4	288.0*	1% of NIH Budget

*(numbers in millions)*

*\*Unofficial pending NIH documents*

### Indirect Costs

The NIH budget continues the Administration's focus on "Indirect Costs" and states: "Increasing efficiencies within the NIH remains a priority of the Administration. The FY2018 Budget changes reimbursement of indirect costs for NIH grants, which will be capped as a percentage of total research, in order to better target available funding toward high priority research. In addition, Federal research requirements for grantees will be streamlined to reduce grantee burden through targeted approaches as proposed by NIH."

# PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FY 2018

## National Science Foundation

The President's FY2018 Budget Request includes \$6.653 billion for the National Science Foundation, a proposed \$819 million cut from the FY2017 enacted level. According to the budget documents, the FY2018 request would support 8,000 new research grants which translates into a 19 percent funding rate. By comparison, NSF funded 8,800 new research grants in FY2016 with a 21 percent funding rate.

The Trump Administration is proposing to reduce Research & Related Activities by \$672 million below FY2017 to \$5.4 billion. Among the NSF directorates, the Biological Sciences directorate is cut the least at 7.1 percent. The Computer and Information and Science Engineering, Social and Behavioral and Economic, and Geosciences directorates are all cut by more than 10 percent. The Engineering directorate would sustain a 9 percent cut while Mathematical and Physical Sciences is slated for a 10.6 percent cut.

A bipartisan group of 162 House members recently sent a letter urging the House Appropriations Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee to fund NSF at an \$8 billion level, about 7 percent more than FY2017.

### NSF EPSCoR

The steepest cuts in the NSF Budget Request are allocated to the Office of Integrative Activities which sees its budget slashed by 26 percent. OIA oversees the Established (formerly Experimental) Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, which is cut by \$60 million or 37.5 percent.

According to the budget documents, NSF EPSCoR funding in FY2018 will focus on Research Infrastructure Improvement Track-1 awards and investments in NSF-supported areas of science and engineering that are aligned with science and technology priority areas as identified by the jurisdictions.

FY2015 Enacted	FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Enacted	FY2018 Request	FY2018 Coalition
159.69	160.0	160.0	100.0	170.0

*(numbers in millions)*

# PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FY 2018

## Department of Energy

In total, DOE under President Donald Trump's budget would receive \$28 billion, a reduction of \$2.8 billion from the FY2017. Those numbers echo the steep cuts outlined in the Administration's "skinny budget" released in March. Congressional appropriators responded to that proposal by boosting research spending levels in the FY2017 Omnibus for many of the DOE programs targeted by the Administration.

### Office of Science

The Trump Administration seeks to reduce funding for DOE's Office of Science by \$930 million, from \$5.4 billion to \$4.43 billion in FY2018. Almost all of the program within Science would see reductions.

### Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE)

Among the hardest hit program areas in the Trump DOE budget is the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, which would see a 70 percent reduction in funding from \$2.1 billion in FY2017 to \$636 million. The Obama Administration had pushed the EERE program as central to its strategy to combat climate change, setting up the research as essential to its Mission Innovation push.

### Fossil Energy Research and Development (FER&D)

The Administration also seeks to significantly reduce funding for FER&D programs, proposing \$336 million, a reduction of \$332 million below what was just enacted in the FY2017 Omnibus. The budget documents state that the FY2018 Budget Request is "guided by the reassertion of the proper federal role as a supporter of early-stage R&D—in which the private sector has less incentive to invest—and an increased reliance on the private sector to fund later-stage R&D including demonstration and commercial deployment."

### Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E)

The Trump Administration is proposing to eliminate ARPA-E with operations winding down in FY2018 and the office shutting down in FY2019. At which point, remaining monitoring and contract closeout activities would be transferred elsewhere within DOE. ARPA-E has funded over 580 projects with approximately \$1.5 billion through 39 focused programs and open funding solicitations.

### DOE EPSCoR

The budget request confirmed our earlier intelligence that the Trump Administration would seek to eliminate the DOE EPSCoR program. The budget documents state that through their own analysis, DOE is providing significant investments in several EPSCoR states outside the DOE EPSCoR program.

FY2015 Enacted	FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Enacted	FY2018 Request	FY2018 Coalition
10.0	15.0	15.0	0	20.0

*(Numbers in millions)*

# PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FY 2018

## National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NASA's budget request for FY2018 is only slightly lower than the \$19.7 billion provided in the FY2017 Omnibus but includes many changes for the agency. The White House budget has requested that Congress to appropriate \$19.1 billion in FY2018, a small reduction when compared with other science and technology programs. However, the budget proposes eliminating five Earth science missions and the Office of Education.

NASA acting Administrator Robert Lightfoot said in a statement that the funding levels and policy would allow the agency to "keep innovating and creating the technologies that will take us to deep space and improve the aeronautics systems." But he added that "hard choices are still there, and we can't do everything."

The budget request includes \$5.7 billion in funding for numerous science missions to explore the universe, \$8.6 billion for human exploration, \$678 million for space technology, \$624 million for aeronautics research, \$37 million for education and \$2.8 billion for safety, security and mission services.

That funding would keep NASA's launch of a rover to Mars on track for 2020, keep the James Webb Space telescope on schedule to launch in 2018 and continues funding for the International Space Station.

### Office of Education and NASA EPSCoR

The budget request provides for the "full costs associated with NASA's education activities within the Office of Education, which include labor, travel, procurement, test and fabrication costs. The budget proposes the termination of the Office of Education and its portfolio of programs and projects." **NASA EPSCoR is currently funded through the Office of Education.**

The budget further states that "the Office of Education has experienced significant challenges in implementing a focused NASA-wide education strategy and lacks sufficient outcome measures to assess the effectiveness of its programs." While the Budget no longer supports the formal Office of Education programs, NASA budget documents state that it "will continue to use every opportunity to support the next generation through engagement in our missions and the many ways that our work excites and encourages discovery by learners and educators."

A group of Democratic senators led by Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), who chair the Senate Career and Technical Education Caucus, wrote to the Administration protesting their proposal to eliminate the NASA Office of Education.

FY2015 Enacted	FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Enacted	FY2018 Request	FY2018 Coalition
18.0	18.0	18.0	0	25.0

*(numbers in millions)*



# PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FY 2018

## United States Department of Agriculture

The Trump Administration's FY2018 request seeks \$17.9 billion in funding for USDA, a cut of \$4.7 billion from its FY2017 enacted level. The programs facing cuts fall under "discretionary" spending, which includes food safety, rural development and conservation funding, research grants and international food aid. The cuts will not affect mandatory spending programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP, also known as "food stamps" — and crop subsidies for farmers.

The FY2018 budget request includes \$993 million for the Agriculture Research Services but no funding for buildings and facilities. This is a \$277 million or 27 percent cut from the FY2017 level. The budget request also includes direction to close 17 laboratories, locations, or worksites and terminate lower-priority and extramural research projects.

### USDA EPSCoR

The USDA EPSCoR program's 15 percent set-aside is a congressional add and not traditionally included in the president's budget request. However, the FY2018 budget request includes \$349 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, \$26 million below the FY2017 level. This proposed reduction could result in a lower USDA EPSCoR program if appropriators were to follow the recommendation.

FY2015 Enacted	FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Enacted	FY2018 Request	FY2018 Coalition
48.7	52.5	56.25	52.35	15% Language

*(numbers in millions and represent 15 percent of AFRI)*

# NIH DIRECTOR SUPPORTS IDEA!

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On May 17<sup>th</sup>, the House Appropriations Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee held a hearing on Advances in Biomedical Research with NIH Director Francis Collins. Congressman Steve Womack (R-AR-03), a longtime supporter of the IDEA program asked Dr. Collins about what he is doing to ensure that the IDEA states are remaining competitive when they're applying for funding.

**Dr. Collins responded:**

*Well, we're very much a fan of that program. We know there's talent all over the country, and that includes in all 50 states even though not all 50 states happen to have research institutions that are in the top 10 in the country, but talent exist all over.*

*And so the IDEA program provides an opportunity for the states in that group, 24 of them, to have a capability of being supported through special programs like the Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence, so-called COBRE programs, and the Network of Biomedical Research Excellence, the INBRE programs.*

*And when we look at the productivity of those and we look closely, we're very pleased with what we see. And many times that has provided an opportunity for an investigator to get funding and then come back in a fully competitive application to NIH and receive funding for that as well. We've got a lot of success stories, we can tell in that regard. We're pleased to see that in the FY17 budget that you all approved, there's an additional increment for the IDEA program.*

*Another thing we're excited about is the creation of an IDEA States Pediatric Clinical Research Network, which is part of the ECHO program, the new program that's looking at childhood illnesses and particularly environmental influences, and having the opportunity to put this in place has been really quite exciting because this greatly enlarges our opportunity when there's a chance to look at asthma or a childhood cancer. We've got a broader array of network participants than we would have had before. So we are very much in this space.*

**Congressman Womack followed up by asking about how the IDEA Networks are assisting in the broader biomedical research efforts. Dr. Collins responded with the following:**

*So the networks are state specific and... INBRE is an opportunity to give an award which brings together the research institutions in a particular state and convinces them of the value of working as a collaborative venture as opposed to isolated institutions.*

*And if you talk to many of them, I've not been to Arkansas, but I went to Louisiana and heard the stories there. This has been real glue, a glue with money attached to it, to encourage that kind of network building and sharing a disciplinary expertise in projects.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

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**JULY 12-14, 2017**  
**EPSCoR/IDEA COALITION AND FOUNDATION**  
**BOARDS OF DIRECTORS RETREAT**  
**RENO, NV**

**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.**

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