

EPSCoR/IDeA

OCTOBER 2015 NEWSLETTER



There are several updates since our June newsletter we would like to share with you. During the week of September 28th, 2015, both the House and Senate passed a continuing resolution, or CR, that funds the federal government through December 11, 2015 and avoids a government shutdown. With the threat of a government shutdown averted for the time being, all government agencies will continue to operate at current funding levels. Negotiations between the White House and congressional leaders have begun but many questions remain about how a new budget compromise will be reached. The situation was further complicated by the unexpected withdrawal by Kevin McCarty from the election for the next House Speaker.

I had the pleasure of attending the Northeast Regional IDeA conference last month and was truly amazed, inspired and energized by what I saw and learned there. It is remarkable how much the IDeA program has grown and how much the program has benefited all types of researchers. It was also wonderful to see how much the IDeA program is supported by Dr. Lorsch and his excellent program officers at NIGMS.

I look forward to seeing the Coalition and Foundation Board members in Portsmouth, New Hampshire for an informal dinner on Halloween followed by a joint Board meeting on November 1. We have a lot to discuss as we look to planning the Boards' final meeting of the year in December 2015 and our agenda for 2016.

As always, I would like to thank you for your great advocacy efforts on behalf of the EPSCoR/IDeA programs. Your contributions are valuable to us, and we could not maintain the success of the programs without insight and support from the community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stu'.

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

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FY 2016 EPSCoR/IDeA Budget Summary

Numbers in millions of dollars

Agency	FY14 Enacted	FY15 Budget Request	FY15 Omnibus	FY16 Budget Request	FY16 Coalition Goals	FY16 House	FY16 Senate
NSF	158.19	159.69	159.69	169.99	180.0	160.0	160.0
NIH	273.325	273.325	273.325	273.325	310.0	311.865	300.0
DOE	10.0	8.52	10.0	8.52	20.0	14.3	20.0
USDA	31.6*	15%	48.7**	15%	67.5**	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
NASA	18.0	9.0	18.0	9.0	25.0	18.0	18.0
Totals	491.115	450.535	509.715	460.835	602.5	504.165	498.0

*10 percent language: figures are not a direct appropriation, rather a percentage of AFRI/competitive funding

**15 percent language: figures are not a direct appropriation, rather a percentage of AFRI/competitive funding

AGENCY UPDATES





National Science Foundation

Currently, the entire federal government is operating on a Continuing Resolution which will be in effect until December 11, 2015. Thus, the National Science Foundation (NSF), like other agencies, will be funded during that period at its current level. For the EPSCoR program, that is slightly less than \$160 million.

NSF Reauthorization

As noted in the previous newsletter, the House-passed version of the America COMPETES Act reauthorization contains a provision directing the National Science Foundation to continue operating a robust EPSCoR program.

Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John Thune (R-SD) tasked committee members Cory Gardner (R-CO) and Gary Peters (D-MI) with developing recommendations for America COMPETES reauthorization. The latter two Senators then [sought public comments](#) through the committee website. These were due on August 21, 2015. The EPSCoR Coalition filed comments on the NSF EPSCoR program.



Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation
Chairman John Thune holds a hearing.

In an [op-ed](#) piece, Senators Thune and Gardner noted, "We hope to better understand what reforms can be made so that more of every dollar goes toward research, for example, instead of being wasted on onerous administrative burdens. We also want to learn how to strengthen the partnership between academia and the private sector to facilitate greater research commercialization and investments." They also emphasized the importance of "proven and effective" STEM policies in ensuring a trained workforce.

Several EPSCoR states with Senators on the Commerce Committee have recently provided those Senators with updated background on the importance of the EPSCoR program to their states and the nation. If you would like assistance in crafting a message for a member of the committee from your state, please let us know.

Track 2 RII Awards

On August 6, 2015, the NSF made eight Track 2 Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) awards, totaling \$42 million. The awards included institutions in twelve EPSCoR states and covered a variety of research topics, including gathering weather data using drones, dam management policies, brain imaging and using sunlight to split water to produce fuels and synthetic fertilizers.

Track 1 RII Submissions

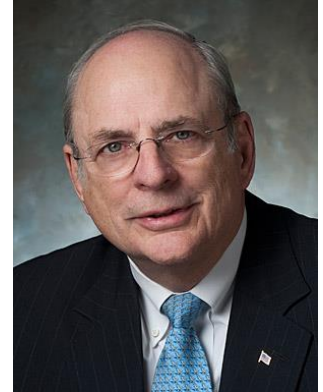
The deadline for submitting proposals under the current year's Track 1 Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) solicitation was August 4, 2015. Our current understanding is that there were nine submissions.

NSF Partnerships in International Research and Education (PIRE)

In a September 25, 2015 [news release](#), NSF announced 17 new PIRE awards totaling \$69 million, including three to institutions in EPSCoR states: University of Nevada Las Vegas, Boise State University and the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. The release specifically noted that the EPSCoR program had supported the PIRE effort. We believe that some, but not all, of the proposals from EPSCoR states were co-funded.

Meeting with Mr. Norm Augustine – *Former President, Lockheed Martin*

Dr. Bill Gern, chair of the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition, arranged a meeting in August to discuss research and the EPSCoR states with Norm Augustine. Augustine is a widely respected engineer and STEM education proponent. A former president of Lockheed-Martin, he was the co-author of "The Gathering Storm" which led to enactment of the original America COMPETES Act. Jessica Molesworth and Carolyn Fuller accompanied Dr. Gern, and his colleague Dr. Don Roth, to the meeting.



to

Mr. Norm Augustine

For additional information about the NSF EPSCoR program, please contact [Ms. Carolyn Fuller](#).



National Institutes of Health

As previously noted, the entire federal government is operating on a Continuing Resolution, which will remain in effect until December 11, 2015. Thus, NIH, like other agencies, will be funded during that period at its current level. For the IDeA program, that is \$273.325 million.



Dr. Jon Lorsch, Director of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, testifies before the Senate Committee on Appropriations Labor Health and Human Services subcommittee on Wednesday, October 7, 2015.

Congressional Activity

On October 7, 2015, the Senate Committee on Appropriations Labor, Health & Human Services Subcommittee recently held a hearing entitled [“National Institutes of Health: Investing in a Healthier Future.”](#) During the hearing, Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) thanked witness Dr. Jon Lorsch, Director of the National Institute of General Medicine Sciences for visiting West Virginia. The Senator then went on to refer to IDeA as a “smart, successful program.” She asked Dr. Lorsch if he had any takeaways from the meeting that he would like to share, to which he replied by referencing best practices of the IDeA program and their utility as national models. . In his remarks, he again highlighted resource sharing and training young investigators as top priorities of the program. Dr. Lorsch also referenced a recent [study](#) out of Nevada where the results showed investigators trained under the COBRE program are three

times more likely to succeed than those who do not participate in the program. .

For additional information about the NIH IDeA program, please contact [Mr. Mike Adcock](#).

**The 6th Annual Northeast Regional IDeA Conference
September 24-26, 2015
Bar Harbor, Maine**



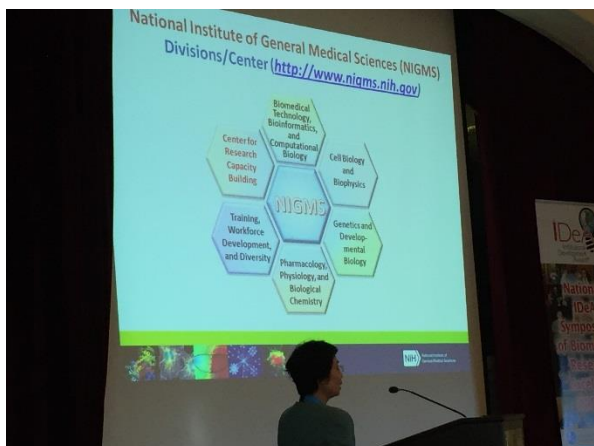
Attendees at the IDeA Conference in September 2015

Mr. Stu Van Scoyoc, Mr. Mike Adcock and Mrs. Jessica Molesworth recently represented both the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and the EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation at the Northeast Regional IDeA Conference in Bar Harbor, Maine, September 24th through the 26th.

NIH and NIGMS officials, including NIGMS Director Dr. Jon Lorsch, spoke at the conference. In his remarks, Dr. Lorsch highlighted the efficiencies and best practices of the IDeA program, such as training young investigators and sharing resources – in particular technology resources – to create economies of scale. Dr. Lorsch again emphasized that these best practices should serve as national standards. Dr. Lorsch also outlined some of the challenges that the IDeA program faces, such as tracking outcomes and continuing to cultivate the sustainability of the COBRE centers.



NIGMS Director, Dr. Jon Lorsch, gives a presentation on the IDeA program at the 2015 conference.



PD Dr. Yangpink Liu from NIGMS presents slides on the impact of IDeA.

Dr. Yangping Liu, Program Director for the Center for Research Capacity at the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, presented an overview of programs within NIGMS' Center for Research Capacity Building with a particular focus on the IDeA program and IDeA program accomplishments.



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

As noted elsewhere, the entire federal government is operating on a Continuing Resolution which will be in effect until December 11, 2015. Thus, NASA, like other agencies, will be funded during that period at the current level. For the EPSCoR program, that is \$18 million.



NASA Reauthorization

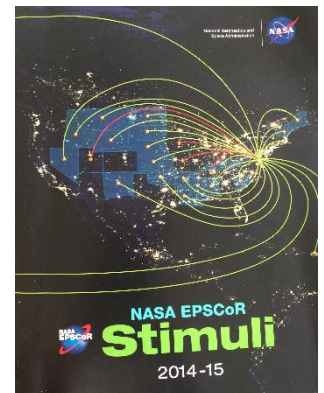
As previously mentioned in earlier newsletters, the House has passed a NASA Reauthorization bill that contains language supporting all programs in the Education Directorate at the agency. The Senate Commerce Committee has not drafted a bill. The Senate did pass legislation extending the International Space Station and the FAA moratorium on regulating the commercial space industry—a moratorium was set to expire at the end of the current fiscal year. Discussions

with key staff indicate that Congress is highly unlikely to pass a reauthorization bill this year.

Congressman Steven Palazzo (R-MS) speaks on the House floor about the NASA reauthorization in February 2015.

Compilation of NASA EPSCoR Accomplishments

On October 3, 2015, NASA's Office of Education issued Stimuli, a summary collection of research and development projects carried out by NASA state EPSCoR programs that are relevant to NASA's mission. Such a compilation provides audiences with a good overview of the exciting research being done in EPSCoR jurisdictions. Further, the publication can serve as the basis for a summary of the necessity of the NASA EPSCoR program for fostering cutting-edge research and educating future scientists for work in fields like aerospace, earth science, robotics, and human sciences.



For additional information about the NASA EPSCoR program, please contact [Dr. Leslee Gilbert](#).



Department of Energy

The House of Representatives and United States Senate wrapped up their consideration of the FY2016 Energy & Water Appropriations bill early in the appropriations process this year. The House approved their version on May 1, 2015 while the Senate Appropriations Committee approved theirs on May 21, 2015. The full Senate did not consider Energy & Water as a standalone bill and final funding decisions related to DOE EPSCoR will be made as part of what could be a larger spending deal later this fall/winter.

Congress is recommending near level funding for the Office of Science in FY2016. While the Senate provided \$5.2 billion for Science, \$73 million more than FY2015 levels, both Chambers proposed less funding than the \$5.3 billion requested by the Obama Administration.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, so far this year, the Coalition has successfully worked with the House of Representatives, and specifically Chairman Mike Simpson (R-ID) of the Energy & Water Subcommittee, to include \$14.3 million for the DOE EPSCoR program. This is the highest funding level ever approved by the House of Representatives. The Senate Appropriations Committee recommended \$20 million for DOE EPSCoR, the full amount requested by the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition. This funding increase is the result of strong support from the Senators who represent EPSCoR states coupled with your excellent advocacy. We are now focusing our attention on conference negotiations.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has proposed increases for the Office of Science in its pending Energy Policy Modernization Act. Specifically, the Senate Committee has proposed increasing funding from \$5.2 billion in FY2016 to \$6.2 billion in FY20. The legislation did not specify any program within the Office of Science and debate on the Senate floor has not yet been scheduled. This will likely be a priority in the next session of Congress.

For additional information about the DOE EPSCoR program, please contact [Mr. Tom Quinn](#).



Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA) hold a hearing of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.



Department of Agriculture

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 NIH IDeA program and the NSF EPSCoR program.

The USDA EPSCoR program office is also 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 the EPSCoR states. A date for the next webinar has not been selected but will likely take place in the spring of 2016.

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

Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 31, 2015 – Portsmouth, NH

There will be an informal dinner for the Joint Board and Voting Members at [Row 34](#) in Portsmouth, New Hampshire at 7:00pm EST. *Thank you very much to those of you who RSVP'd for this event.*

Row 34
5 Portwalk Place
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 319-5011



Sunday, November 1, 2015 – Portsmouth, NH

The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and Foundation Board members, along with the state Voting Members, will meet at the [Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside Hotel](#) at 10:00am EST in the Prescott Room. This meeting will be just prior to the registration period for the [24th NSF EPSCoR National Conference](#) at the same location. An agenda and any additional background material will be sent via email prior to the meeting.

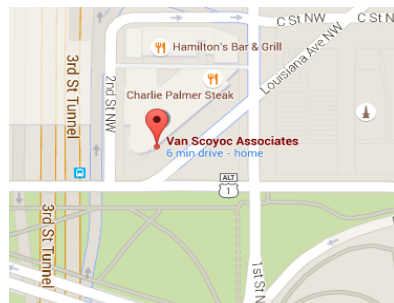
Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside Hotel
Prescott Room (lower level)
250 Market Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 431-2300



Tuesday, December 8, 2015 – Washington, D.C.

The Annual December Joint Board Members meeting will take place at the VSA offices here in Washington, D.C. from 8:30am–3:30pm EST. An agenda and any additional background material will be e-mailed prior to the meeting.

Van Scoyoc Associates Offices
101 Constitution Avenue NW
Suite 600 West
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 638-1950



Announcements

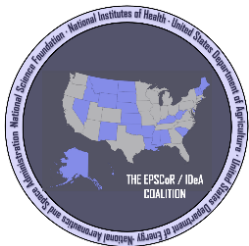


National Science Board Nominations Are Open for the Class of 2016-2022

Nominations to serve on the NSB are open through October 30, 2015. The Coalition and Foundation Board Chairmen would like to hear your suggestions for strong candidates from the EPSCoR/IDeA states. If you have nominated, or plan to nominate a candidate, please let us know. To learn more about the process, please view the [full press release](#) from NSF.

Alan T. Waterman Award – Call for Nominations

NSF is still accepting nominations for the Alan T Waterman award which is the highest honor that NSF awards and individual. It is bestowed on outstanding young researchers who have “demonstrated exceptional individual achievement in scientific or engineering research of sufficient quality to place them at the forefront of their peers.” To nominate a candidate, please [click here](#). [Information](#) on the award and past recipients is also available.



New Twitter account

The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition recently established its first social media account. You can follow the Coalition on Twitter using the address [@EPSCoR_IDeA](#).