



**AIR FORCE OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT #  
NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003**

**FY26 DEFENSE ESTABLISHED PROGRAM TO STIMULATE  
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH (DEPSCoR) –  
CAPACITY BUILDING (CB)**

**OVERVIEW INFORMATION**

The Department of Defense (DoD) announces the fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR) – Capacity Building (CB) opportunity. The program is sponsored and managed by Office of the Under Secretary for War, Research and Engineering (OUSW-R&E)/Science & Technology (S&T), Foundations, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD [R&E]), awarded by the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR), and administered through the Office of Naval Research (ONR). The DoD plans to award FY26 DEPSCoR appropriations through this announcement.

IAW 10 U.S.C. 4010, DEPSCoR's objectives are to: (1) increase the number of university researchers in eligible States/Territories capable of performing science and engineering (S&E) research responsive to the needs of the DoD; (2) enhance the capabilities of institutions of higher education (IHEs) in eligible States/Territories (listed below) to develop, plan, and execute S&E research that is relevant to the mission of the DoD, and competitive under the peer-review systems used for awarding Federal research assistance; and (3) increase the probability of long-term growth in the competitively awarded financial assistance that IHEs in eligible States/Territories receive from the Federal Government for S&E research.

Consistent with these long-term objectives of building research infrastructure, the DoD intends to competitively make, and fund from fiscal year 2026 appropriations, multiyear awards for capacity building strengthens basic research infrastructure and science and

engineering capabilities at universities in underutilized states and territories to support Department of Defense national security priorities in IHEs.

This funding opportunity aims to support the strategic objectives of IHEs (either individually or in partnership with others) in DEPSCoR States/Territories to achieve basic research excellence in areas of high relevance to the DoD.

IHEs in the following States/Territories are eligible to apply for this DEPSCoR opportunity under this announcement: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, U.S. Virgin Islands, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming see eligibility table in III A.

**Hyperlinks have been embedded within this document and appear as underlined and [blue-colored](#) words in the midst of paragraphs. The reader may “jump” to the linked section within this document by “clicking” (CTRL + CLICK or CLICK).**

## SUMMARY OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY INFORMATION

### 1. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY NAME

Air Force Office of Scientific Research  
875 North Randolph Street, STE 325, Room 3112  
Arlington, VA 22203

### 2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE

Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR) –  
Capacity Building (CB)

### 3. ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE

Initial Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

### 4. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER

NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003

### 5. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER(S)

12.431 – Basic Scientific Research

### 6. KEY DATES

| Schedule of Events                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                           |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Event                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Date                      | Eastern Time   |
| RunGrants website open for White Paper submission<br>( <a href="https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor">https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor</a> )                                         | Monday, 10 August 2026    | 9:00 AM        |
| DEPSCoR Webinar<br>For details and registration, please visit<br>( <a href="https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor">https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor</a> )                             | Tuesday, 25 August 2026   | 2:00 - 4:00 PM |
| RunGrants Registration (strongly suggested by)<br>&<br>Cut-off date for Q&As with Program Officers                                                                                                                                         | Wednesday, 7 October 2026 | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| White Paper and Supporting Documentation submission on RunGrants website<br>( <a href="https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor">https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor</a> )<br>(required by) | Monday, 12 October 2026   | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| Notification of White Paper Selection                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Friday, 08 January 2027   | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| Full Proposal Submission (by invitation only) electronically on<br><a href="https://grants.gov">Grants.gov</a> website<br>(submitted by)                                                                                                   | Monday, 05 April 2027     | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| Notification of Selection for Award                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Friday, 23 July 2027      | NLT 11:59 PM   |

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## I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### A. OBJECTIVES

The aim of DEPSCoR – Capacity Building is to improve the research capabilities at institutions of higher education (IHEs) in eligible States/Territories to perform competitive basic research in science and engineering that is relevant to the DoD mission and reflect national security priorities. As defined in the DoD Financial Management Regulation:

Basic research is systematic study directed toward greater knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications towards processes or products in mind. It includes all scientific study and experimentation directed toward increasing fundamental knowledge and understanding in those fields of the physical, engineering, environmental, and life sciences related to long-term national security needs. It is farsighted high payoff research that provides the basis for technological progress ([DoD 7000.14-R, vol. 2B, chap. 5, para. 1.5.1](#))

The DoD's basic research program invests broadly in many scientific fields to ensure that it has early cognizance of new scientific knowledge.

To address the program's aim, DEPSCoR – Capacity Building (CB) objectives are to:

- Jumpstart capability development in the State/Territory through increased human, technical, and management resources.
- Achieve excellence in a DoD-relevant basic research area through funding to support equipment, education, research, and other relevant activities.

Authority for a grant or cooperative agreement award under this announcement is established in [10 U.S.C. 4001](#) for basic research. Authority for DEPSCoR specifically was established in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995 and has subsequently been codified at 10 U.S.C. 4010. Grants awarded under this program are intended to support the strategic objectives of IHEs (either individually or in partnership with others) in DEPSCoR States/Territories to achieve basic research excellence in areas of high relevance to the DoD. **The intent of this DEPSCoR-Capacity Building effort is to foster new, strategic, multi-thrust efforts to increase basic research capacity in DoD-relevant**

**research areas at the applicant IHE.** DEPSCoR-Capacity Building is an opportunity for Executive Offices of IHEs in DEPSCoR states and territories to develop strategic plans to grow and expand basic research capacity at the IHE, **and to use that capacity to outreach to the surrounding DEPSCoR region,** with a long-term goal to compete and contribute more effectively to the DoD basic research enterprise. Innovative approaches to improving basic research capacity beyond the initial seed capacity of the IHE are highly encouraged. **DEPSCoR-Capacity Building is less interested in plans that do not seek to significantly improve and expand the existing seed capacity and thrusts already ongoing at the applicant IHE.** Applied research proposals are not responsive to this call.

Structuring of proposals will vary depending on technical field, basic research gaps and capabilities addressed, and geographic region.

**Definitions:**

Seed Capacity – existing expertise and capability to perform basic research in the selected research areas. Examples of seed capacity include initial pilot research, expertise, personnel, research facilities, and educational efforts.

Basic Research Capacity Gap – A deficiency or missing element of your existing capacity that the IHE wishes to enhance to achieve basic research excellence and competitiveness in a DoD-relevant technical field.

Capacity Building – the improvement of basic research capacity at the IHE through the acquisition of equipment, new faculty hires, educational initiatives, basic research plans, and other activities that synergistically improve the basic research capabilities in a DoD-relevant area for the IHE. **Capacity building is not the incremental improvement, centralization, or the reorganization of existing recognized basic research capability capacity at an IHE.**

Sustainment of Basic Research Capacity - activities to support the new basic research capacity beyond DEPSCoR funding. A sustainment plan may include tactical activities, such as maintaining newly acquired core equipment through user fees, but also must include more strategic elements, such as seeking alternative funding sources or leveraging additional DoD, academic, or commercial interests to further the increased basic research capacity for the IHE and the surrounding region.

**Applicants must be aware of the following expectations of the DEPSCoR-Capacity Building program:**

1. Applications must identify current seed capacity and the basic research capacity gaps which are inhibiting basic research excellence and competitiveness.
2. Applications must articulate thrusts to fill the basic research capacity gaps identified at the IHE and the required capabilities that need to be developed at the applicant IHE to achieve full and competitive basic research capability in DoD-relevant research areas.
3. Applications must present a strategic plan to sustain the enhanced basic research capacity after the DEPSCoR award period of performance and must discuss regional outreach and partnerships.
4. Applications must present a management plan for coordinating multiple thrusts working on a common basic research theme that will fill the capacity gaps and develop new basic research capabilities. These thrusts could include but are not limited to purchasing new equipment, supporting new hires, and support for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Adequate provision for substantive commitment by the IHE's executive offices and appropriate administrative support is an important factor contributing to the success of this Capacity Building effort.
5. Applications (at the Full Proposal Stage) must include Letters of Recommendation for Commitment / Endorsement as noted below and in [SECTION IV.D.3.p](#):
  - a) Letters of recommendation from any regional partners that may benefit from or contribute to the success of your proposed activity (industry, non-profit, other IHEs, etc.). (Required)
  - b) Any current or planned support from the state or region, financial or otherwise. (Not Required)

## **B. TEAM COMPOSITION**

The DEPSCoR-Capacity Building proposal must be led by a member of the Institution of Higher Education's (IHE) executive staff such as the Vice President for Research who will serve as the Team Lead (referred to as the Applicant). While the overall team structure may vary depending on the specific application, all key participants and proposed subawardees must be clearly identified at the time of submission, and all key personnel must hold appointments at an IHE within a DEPSCoR-eligible state (see Table III A for eligible states).

**Applicant institutions are limited to no more than one application under this FOA.**

## C. DoD RELEVANT AREAS

Applications must address one or more of the technical basic research areas outlined in the Services (Army Research Office [ARO], Office of Naval Research [ONR], and Air Force Office of Scientific Research [AFOSR]) broad agency announcements (BAA). (See Table below with topic areas & program officer). Please refer to the websites cited below for detailed technical information and goals for the Services.

| SERVICES                                                                                                                                     | HOW TO FIND THE SERVICES' RESEARCH INTEREST                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Army Research Office (ARO)<br/> <a href="https://arl.devcom.army.mil/who-we-are/aro/">https://arl.devcom.army.mil/who-we-are/aro/</a></p> | <p>Select “Collaborate with Us”; find “Funded Research”; select “Learn More”; and then “Broad Agency Announcements (BAA)” to see the most recent BAA: <a href="https://arl.devcom.army.mil/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/07/DEVCOM-ARL-BAA_W911NF23S0001-Amendment-3.pdf">https://arl.devcom.army.mil/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/07/DEVCOM-ARL-BAA_W911NF23S0001-Amendment-3.pdf</a></p> <p>Army Research Lab (ARL) BAA topics website:<br/> <a href="https://cftste.experience.crmforce.mil/arlex/s/baa-download">https://cftste.experience.crmforce.mil/arlex/s/baa-download</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>Office of Naval Research (ONR)<br/> <a href="https://www.nre.navy.mil/">https://www.nre.navy.mil/</a></p>                                 | <p>Select “Work With Us”; select “Funding Opportunities”; select “announcements section”; select “FY25 Long Range Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) for Navy and Marine Corps Science and Technology N0001425SB001” or go to <a href="https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/funding-opportunities/fy25-long-range-broad-agency-announcement-baa-navy-and-marine">https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/funding-opportunities/fy25-long-range-broad-agency-announcement-baa-navy-and-marine</a> and select the most recent amendment.</p> <p>Navigate to <a href="https://www.nre.navy.mil/our-research/onr-technology-and-research">https://www.nre.navy.mil/our-research/onr-technology-and-research</a> for a list of ONR-sponsored research. Select a technology area which will provide program officer and specific program details.</p> |
| <p>Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR)<br/> <a href="https://www.afrl.af.mil/AFOSR/">https://www.afrl.af.mil/AFOSR/</a></p>      | <p>Select “Funding Opportunities” then select “see the latest BAAs. On grants.gov <a href="#">search</a> using keyword(s) “Research Interests of the Air Force Office of Scientific Research” to see the latest core announcement. The current funding opportunity number for general research interests is <a href="#">FA9550-23-S-0001</a>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations anticipates up to \$6 million in total funding will be made available for this program to fully fund and award between one to four grants up to \$1.5 million (total cost) each. Each grant award will be funded up to \$750,000 (total cost) per year for two (2) years.

The award is subject to funding availability. OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations reserves the right to select and fund for award all, some, part, or none of the proposals received. There is no guarantee of an award.

Cost sharing or matching is not required or considered as an evaluation criterion, but you may propose voluntary committed cost sharing or matching; for example, additional support for students. Any voluntary committed cost-sharing amount will be included in the total award value.

The DEPSCoR Capacity Building award is to an IHE. However, should there be any changes to the Team Lead for the capacity building effort, these changes must be proposed, reviewed, and approved by the DEPSCoR Program Manager and OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations at least 30 days in advance.

The award start date is determined at the time of award but is most likely projected for an October 2027 start date.

Authority for award under this competition is established in [10 U.S.C. 4001](#) for basic research. Authority for DEPSCoR specifically was established in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995 and has subsequently been amended and reauthorized over the years since. (see specifically 10 U.S.C. 4010). Regulations, terms, and conditions that will apply to the award can be found in [Section VI. Federal Award Administration Information](#).

#### **A. ADDITIONAL DEPSCoR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

In addition to this DEPSCoR - Capacity Building FOA, OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations anticipates funding up to 24 awards under the DEPSCoR – Research Collaboration FOA # NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003 to support collaborative research activities in DoD-relevant fields. This additional competitive research funding is separate from this announcement and is also set aside for researchers at IHEs in DEPSCoR eligible States/Territories.

You are strongly encouraged to examine and apply directly to this opportunity as well. The full FOA can be found on [Grants.gov](#)

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

1. You are eligible to submit an application if you are a qualified and responsible IHE and in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory as listed in the table below. Applicant institutions are limited to no more than one application under this FOA.
2. All activities supported by a DEPSCoR award must be performed in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory. Funding support for the Applicant and any potential subawardees is limited to those with addresses within one or more DEPSCoR eligible States/Territories.
3. The Team Lead must be a member of the IHE's executive staff such as the Vice-President of Research and be employed in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory.

IHE in 37 States/Territories are eligible to receive awards under this announcement.

IHEs do not need to submit proposals through an EPSCoR State Committee in

response to this announcement. Awards made as a result of this announcement will be limited to IHE in States/Territories that are eligible under the DEPSCoR program authority.

**STATES/TERRITORIES DoD HAS DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR  
FY26 DEPSCoR AWARDS<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> *The average annual amount of all DoD obligations for S&E research and development that were in effect with IHEs in the state/territory for the three fiscal years preceding the fiscal year for which the designation is effective or for the last three fiscal years for which statistics are available is less than the amount determined by multiplying 60 percent times the amount equal to 1/50 of the total average annual amount of all DoD obligations for S&E research and development that were in effect with IHEs in the U.S. for such three preceding or last fiscal years, as the case may be.*

|             |                      |             |               |              |                     |           |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------|
| Alabama     | District of Columbia | Kansas      | Missouri      | New Mexico   | South Carolina      | Wisconsin |
| Alaska      | Guam                 | Kentucky    | Montana       | North Dakota | South Dakota        | Wyoming   |
| Arizona     | Hawaii               | Louisiana   | Nebraska      | Oklahoma     | Tennessee           |           |
| Arkansas    | Idaho                | Maine       | Nevada        | Oregon       | U.S. Virgin Islands |           |
| Connecticut | Indiana              | Minnesota   | New Hampshire | Puerto Rico  | Vermont             |           |
| Delaware    | Iowa                 | Mississippi | New Jersey    | Rhode Island | West Virginia       |           |

OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations and AFOSR will review your application, proposal, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) designated repositories of government-wide public and non-public data, including comments you have made, as required by [31 U.S.C. 3321](#) and [41 U.S.C. 2313](#) and described in [2 CFR200.206](#) and [32 CFR 22.410](#) to assess risk posed by

applicants, and to confirm applicants are qualified, responsible, and eligible to receive an award.

**B. INELIGIBLE ENTITIES**

Neither Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) nor Federal agencies (including military schools) can receive funding under this announcement, whether as the lead organization or as a sub-grantee.

**C. COST SHARING OR MATCHING**

We do not require cost sharing or matching for proposals under this announcement. Cost sharing is not an evaluation or selection criterion.

**D. OTHER**

Acknowledgment of Support and Disclaimer Requirements

- You must include the [VI.C.3. Acknowledgment of Research Support](#) on all materials created or produced under our awards.
- The [VI.C.4. Disclaimer Language for Research Materials and Publications](#) must be included in materials as required.
- Our award document may provide additional instructions about specific distribution statements to use when you provide research materials to us. You are not eligible to submit a White Paper or Full Proposal if you cannot accept these terms.

### Expectation of Public Dissemination of Research Results

We expect research funded by this announcement will be basic research. We expect public dissemination of research results if you receive an award. This is a basic requirement for unclassified research results.

We intend, to the fullest extent possible, to make available to the public all unclassified, unlimited peer-reviewed scholarly publications and digitally formatted scientific data arising from research and programs funded wholly or in part by the DoD as described in the OUSD Memorandum, [“Public Access to Department of Defense-Funded Research”](#) dated 9 JULY 2014.

We follow [DoDI 5230.24](#) and [DoDI 5230.27](#) policies and procedures to ensure broad dissemination of unclassified research results to the public and within the Government. The [DoDI 5230.27](#) policy and procedures allowing publication and public presentation of unclassified fundamental research results, and [DoDD 5230.25](#) policy and procedures regarding withholding of unclassified technical data from public disclosure, will apply to all research proposed under this competition unless OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations gives you an explicit, written exclusion to these policies with the Grants Officer’s advice and consent. All exclusions must be authorized or required by law and must cite a valid legal authority.

You must provide a copy of all peer-reviewed publications developed or produced from research conducted with DoD funds to OUSW-R&E/S&T Foundations.

You are not eligible to submit a White Paper or Full Proposal if you cannot accept these terms.

### Conflict of Interest (COI) / Conflict of Commitment (COC)

#### **Definitions**

- **Conflict of interest (financial conflict of interest):** is a situation in which an individual, or the individual’s spouse or dependent children,

has a financial interest or financial relationship that could directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, reporting, or funding of research. (Pursuant to NSPM-33).

➤ **Conflict of commitment (non-financial conflict of interest):** is a situation in which an individual accepts or incurs conflicting obligations between or among multiple employers or other entities. Many institutional policies define conflicts of commitment as conflicting commitments of time and effort, including obligations to dedicate time in excess of institutional obligations, including obligations to improperly share information with, or withhold information from, an employer or funding agency, can also threaten research security and integrity, and are an element of a broader concept of conflicts of commitment.<sup>2</sup>

#### General Requirement for Disclosure

You and your IHE must disclose any potential or actual scientific or nonscientific COI/COC to us. You must also disclose any potential or actual COI/COC for any sub-recipient you include in your proposal. You must provide enough information for us to evaluate your disclosure. We may have to ask you more questions if we need more information.

Any decision to accept a proposal for funding under this announcement will include full reliance on your disclosures. Failure to report fully and completely all sources of project support and outside positions and affiliations may be considered a materials statement within the meaning of the federal False Claims Act and constitute a violation of law.

The funding agency may conduct a pre-award COI/COC review of any proposal selected for funding, as defined in NSPM-33. Any significant COI/COC identified may be a basis for the rejection of an otherwise awardable proposal.

At our discretion, we may ask you for a COI/COC mitigation plan after you submit your proposal. Your plan is subject to our approval.

#### Scientific COI/COC

Scientific collaborations on research and development projects are generally the result of close collaboration prior to the submission of applications for support. Accordingly, these collaborations should be given consideration for potential conflicts of interest and commitment, and any undue influence on the integrity of research, national security, and economic security. A potential conflict is mitigated by the appropriate disclosure of these collaborations, foreign affiliations, associations, and activities, and the list of current and pending support you provide for senior and key researchers for both prime and sub-recipients.

#### **Examples that increase risk and can harm the DoD research**

**enterprise.**

**Failures to disclose:**

- Financial conflicts of interest (both domestic and foreign)
- Conflicts of commitment

<sup>2</sup> National Security Policy Memorandum 33 (NSPM-33), *Presidential Memorandum on United States Government-Supported Research and Development National Security Policy*, January 14, 2021, President Donald J. Trump

- External employment arrangements
- Financial support that overlaps with U.S. funding
- Shadow laboratories or other parallel research activities
- Diversion of intellectual property
- Peer review violations

**Examples of Behaviors that May Violate Laws:**

- Theft or diversion of materials and intellectual capital
- Grant fraud

#### **IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION PROCESS**

The application and submission process is completed **in three stages**:

1. Completed online registration via **<https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/>**. **(Required)**
2. White Paper submission via RunGrants. **(Required)**
3. Full Proposal Submission Package. **(via grants.gov – Required)**

(This is by invitation only. Must include invitation email as an attachment in block 20 of the SF424.)

In accordance with AFRLI 61-113, S&T Protection, Applicants/Recipients are required to submit the following documentation with their proposal:

- (1) Standard Form 424, “Research and Related Senior and Key Person Profile (Expanded) (Included in Application Package for all Covered Individuals);
- (2) Common Disclosure Forms: Biosketch, Current and Pending (Other) Support, and Collaborators and Other Affiliations (to be submitted with SF-424);
- (3) Security Program Questionnaire (*See* Appendix 1);
- (4) “Privacy Act Statement” consent form for each Covered Individual that is also signed by the Applicants/Recipients as the Individual’s Sponsors (*See* “Covered Individual” section below and Appendix 2);
- (5) Certification(s) of Covered Individual’s Research Security Training. AFOSR accepts and recommends the Research Security Training module

on National Science Foundation (NSF) SECURE website; however, Universities may submit certifications from substantially similar training(s). AFOSR requires all Covered Individuals listed on the application for a research and development award to take the training in the 12 months prior to proposal submission. Upon acceptance of proposal, Covered Individuals must submit and maintain annual certifications showing this course was taken yearly.

(6) Compliance Attestation. You must certify your institution's compliance with OUSW's Research Protection policies as articulated in the most up to date OUSW DoD Component Decision Matrix to Inform Research Proposal Mitigation Decisions on official university letterhead, and attest for the duration of the grant that the recipient confirms that the Covered Individuals participating in the grant are:

- (1) not actively participating in a malign foreign talent recruitment program (MFTRP); and,
- (2) not involved in active collaboration on fundamental research with a Section 1286 Prohibited Entity or employee of a Prohibited Entity.

For example: *[The University] certifies that the information provided is current, accurate, and complete. This includes, but is not limited to, information related to current, pending, and other support (both foreign and domestic) as defined in 42 U.S.C. §6605.*

*[The University] also certifies that, at the time of submission, no Covered Individual listed is a party in a [malign foreign talent recruitment program](#).*

*[The University] understands that misrepresentations and/or omissions may be subject to prosecution and liability pursuant to, but not limited to, 18 U.S.C. §§287, 1001, 1031 and 31 U.S.C. §§3729-3733 and 3802.*

*Signature<sup>3</sup>: [Business Office, Provost, Dean, or someone with the authority to legally obligate the University]*

*Date:*

In the event a security risk is identified, and the Government has determined the security risk exceeds the acceptable threshold and cannot be mitigated, the Applicant/Recipient will be notified and informed of the decline of award. The Government will provide an unclassified rationale for any rejection of a proposal due to security risks.

By submission of the required forms, the Applicant/Recipient agrees to comply with the following: To certify that each covered individual who is listed on the application has been made aware: 1) of all relevant disclosure requirements, including the requirements of 42 U.S.C. § 6605; and 2) that

false representations may be subject to prosecution and liability pursuant to, but not limited to, 18 U.S.C. §§287, 1001, 1031 and 31 U.S.C. §§ 3729-3733 and 3802. *See* National Science and Technology Council Guidance for Implementing National Security Presidential Memorandum 33 (NSPM-33) on National Security Strategy for United States Government-Supported Research and Development (January 2022).

## **FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH SECURITY REVIEW (FRSR) INFORMATION**

**(1) Security Risk Review.** Each proposal submission will be subject to a risk-based Security Review, (FRSR), prior to selection for award. The FRSR is applied to federally funded research designed to help protect Department of War (R&E) by identifying possible vectors of undue foreign influence. The FRSR will be conducted in accordance with OUSD(R&E)’s “Policy for Risk Based Security Reviews of Fundamental Research.”

**(2) Covered Individual.** An individual who contributes to a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of a research and development project proposed to be carried out with a research and development award from a federal research agency; and is designated as a covered individual by the federal research agency concerned. OUSW further defines that all positions identified in the proposal are Covered Individuals and thereby subject to disclosure requirements and should have a corresponding Standard Disclosure Forms for Biosketch, Current and Pending (Other) Support, and Collaborators and Other Affiliations. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 6605, Definitions. (Note: For purposes of a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) solicitation, “covered individuals” are all Senior/Key Personnel.)

**(3) Security risk review for these subject proposals will be developed for all proposed Senior/Key personnel and “Covered Individuals”.** These risk reviews will be based on information disclosed in a Research and Related Senior and Key Person Profile and Security Questionnaire. In addition, any accompanying or referenced documents, and publicly available information, will be utilized in risk reviews. Nationality or citizenship is not a factor in the security risk reviews.

**(4) External Engagements.** When considering all external engagements, OUSW incorporates a holistic decision-making process that encompasses technical and security factors. The security review method implemented by OUSW measures risk factors to identify the appropriate Risk Acceptance Level (RAL) within the organization. The objective analysis of the security risk factors is conducted to empower OUSW leaders to make risk-informed decisions. The review process looks at the risk factors indicated in the most up to date DoD Decision Matrix.

### **A. ONLINE REGISTRATION VIA RunGrants**

The RunGrants Online submission portal opens on **Monday, 10 August 2026**. It is strongly encouraged that you register on the RunGrants website no later than **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday, 5 October 2026** (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)).

Note: If you previously registered at the nVision portal, you will need to update your user account using the same user email in the RunGrants portal. You will be asked to update your user account with two-factor authentication. Please see the RunGrants website for more details on this process (<https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor>).

**While registration in RunGrants and submission of your White Paper can be done at the same time, we HIGHLY recommend that you register with RunGrants and submit your White Paper and supporting documentation well before the deadline in case you encounter any questions or problems.**

**There are two DEPSCoR competitions running concurrently. Make sure you are applying for this DEPSCoR – Capacity Building FOA # NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003**

## **B. WHITE PAPER AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION**

White Papers are a **MANDATORY** component for this three-stage application and submission process to minimize the labor and cost associated with the production of detailed proposals that have very little chance of being selected for funding.

If you do not register and submit a White Paper before the due dates and times, you will not be eligible to participate in the remaining Full Proposal submission process and are not eligible for funding.

To submit White Papers and Supporting Documentation, **you are strongly encouraged to register** on RunGrants (<https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor>) by **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Wednesday, 7 October 2026** (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)).

White Papers and Supporting Documentation **must be submitted** to RunGrants (<https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor>) by **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday, 12 October 2026** (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)).

The submission process could take several minutes depending on the network connection and the size of the file being submitted. You are responsible for allowing enough time to complete the online form, uploading the documents, and pressing the submit button before the deadline. An e-mail confirmation will be sent to the Applicant upon receipt of the submission.

Documents submitted after the deadline or found to be non-compliant will not be reviewed.

Evaluation of the White Paper will be issued via email notification. You are ineligible to submit a Full Proposal package under this FOA unless invited to do so after the White Paper evaluation process.

Only electronic submissions will be accepted and reviewed.

## **C. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF THE WHITE PAPER**

### **Pre-White Paper Inquiries and Questions**

For help with technical and programmatic matters, please **submit your questions in writing by email** to the Director, Research Programs OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations identified in section [VII.A TECHNICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS](#). All technical and programmatic discussions must take place prior to White Paper submission. After the White Paper deadline, applicants may no longer contact the DEPSCoR Program Manager.

If you have general questions about this announcement or administrative matters, please **submit your questions in writing by email** to the **Grants Officer** (see section [VII.B GENERAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS](#)).

*OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations does not have the authority to make commitments. Grants Officers acting within their warranted capacity are the only people authorized to make commitments for the Government.*

### **White Paper (as a whole)**

White Papers submitted under this FOA are expected to be unclassified; classified proposals are not permitted.

All White Paper submissions will be protected from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with applicable law and DoD regulations. You are expected to appropriately mark each page of the submission that contains proprietary information.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Titles given to White Papers should be descriptive of the basic research capacity building activities they cover and not be merely a copy of a topic title from one of the technical research areas outlined in the Services' BAAs.

### **Applicants must submit a single White Paper with the following five (5) components:**

- (1) Cover Page
- (2) Abstract

- (3) Capacity Building Narrative
- (4) CVs (2-page limit each) for the Team Lead and any subawardees
- (5) Human Subject or Vertebrate Animal Subject

### Marking Requirements for Confidential Proprietary Information

You must mark the White Paper sections that contain proprietary or confidential information. However, under Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements, some or all proposal information may be subject to release.

Your entire White Paper, or any portions thereof, without protective markings or otherwise identified as requiring protection will be considered voluntarily furnished to us without restriction and will be treated as such for all purposes. White Papers may be disclosed to reviewers for training purposes in future competitions.

### White Paper Package

The due date for receipt of White Papers is **by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday, 12 October 2026** (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)). White Papers received after the published deadline will not be considered under any circumstance. Early submission of White Papers is welcomed and encouraged.

All documents in the White Paper package must be submitted in PDF format in compliance with the guidelines and file naming convention below. When submitting the White Paper, you must upload the following as one (1) PDF file:

#### (1) **White Paper (required):**

- a. **Cover page** (one (1) page limit, single-sided): Include all key personnel names and IHE affiliations. Per Section I.C, applications must address, at a minimum, one of the basic technical research areas outlined in the Services' broad agency announcements (BAAs). Multiple BAA numbers and research areas are acceptable. The relevant BAA number(s) and research area(s) addressed by your application should be listed on the cover page. For example:
  - a. ONR N0001425B001, Amendment 0002, Basic Physiological Sciences
  - b. ARL W911NF-23-S-0001, Atomic and Molecular Physics (AMP)
  - c. AFOSR FA9550-23-S-0001, Energy, Combustion, and Non-Equilibrium Thermodynamics

Do not cite the FY26 DEPSCoR Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) as a BAA number. Your application will be considered ineligible if at least one Service BAA number and research area are not included. Include a protective legend for proprietary information, if applicable.

**b.        *Abstract*** (not to exceed 500 words): Describe the overall approach to achieving the strategic objectives of your IHE to achieve basic research excellence in areas of high relevance to the DoD. The abstract must be submitted without proprietary restrictions. Therefore, this non-proprietary abstract must be a version that is released under the Freedom of Information Act without changes.

**c.        *Capacity Building Narrative*** (six (6) page limit, single-sided): Your White Paper must clearly describe your IHE's strategic objectives to achieve basic research excellence in an area of high relevance to the DoD. **Please review the PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (I.A-C), including the OBJECTIVES and DEFINITIONS, of this FOA carefully when composing the Narrative.** The Capacity Building Narrative should include:

- a.        Existing seed research capability.
- b.        Strategic vision for building basic research capacity at the IHE including programmatic, academic, educational, and technical gaps and the specific thrusts that will be pursued to fill those gaps to build the competitive research capacity.
- c.        Your complete team composition and potential partners.
- d.        Management plan for implementing the multi-thrust effort at the applicant IHE.
- e.        The potential for long-term sustainment of the desired research capability.
- f.        Estimated budget, showing anticipated allocation of funds among different categories of expenditures for the proposed capacity building project. These categories could include, but are not limited to, potential IHE faculty hires, research projects, IHE Departmental or programmatic educational or academic initiatives, equipment, IHE outreach to regional partners, or activities to sustain the proposed increased research capacity at the IHE.

**d.        *Identify anticipated human subject or vertebrate animal subject research*** (one (1) page limit, single-sided) (where applicable).

**e.        *Curricula Vitae*** (CV) (two (2) page limit, single-sided each): Provide a CV for the Team Lead and any subawardees. All key personnel must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible state/territory. The CV should include educational degrees, organizational affiliations, academic, professional or institutional appointments, whether or not remuneration is received, and whether full-time, part-time, or voluntary, paid consulting that falls outside of an individual's appointment, separate from the institution's agreement, relevant experience, collaborations, publications, foreign affiliations, associations, and activities, and a list of

current and pending funding support received in the area of interest, and any previous involvement and experiences with the DoD.

White Paper components must be submitted in the following format as a **single** PDF file with the following naming convention:

- IHE NAME\_DEPSCoR\_FY26CB

Documents must be submitted in the following format as one (1) PDF file:

- Paper Size – 8.5 x 11-inch paper
- Margins – 1 inch
- Spacing – single-spaced
- Font – Times New Roman, 12 point
- Use the file naming convention specified above.

Concurrent submission of a proposal to other organizations will not prejudice review. Send any changes as they become known.

#### **D. FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PACKAGE**

##### **1. Full Proposal Packages will only be accepted from applicants invited to submit proposals.**

All the application forms you need are available electronically on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). From the “View Grant Opportunity” page, you can click on the “Package” tab to download the application package. These same application forms will also be available in the “Related Documents” tab to download individually.

We will not issue paper copies of this announcement.

Full Proposal packages must be submitted electronically on Grants.gov **no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, 5 April 2027** in response to this solicitation (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)).

*Please [contact us](#) to request a reasonable accommodation for any accessibility requirements you may have.*

##### **2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

###### **a. The application as a whole**

You must submit your full proposal electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). We will not accept or evaluate any proposal submitted by any means other

than through Grants.gov. We must receive your proposal no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, 5 April 2027 in response to this solicitation (see [IV.F.G.1. Proposal Submission Deadline](#)).  
DO NOT password protect any attachments.

You must use the electronic [Standard Form \(SF\) 424](#) Research and Related (R&R) Form Family, OMB Number 4040-0001. The SF 424 (R&R) Application for Federal Assistance form must be your cover page. No pages may precede the SF 424 (R&R). You must mark your application with the FOA number.

**b. Summary of what is required for a complete proposal is summarized below:**

- **We require the forms and attachments in bold text with all applications**
- *Some applications require the attachments in italic*
- We provide more instructions in [IV.D.3. Component Pieces of the Application](#)

| R&R FORM,<br>OMB No. 4040-0001                                                                |  | FIELD | ATTACHMENT                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SF 424 (R&R) Application for Federal Assistance, including an authorized signature (Required) |  | 18    | <i>Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (If Applicable)</i>                                                                                                |
|                                                                                               |  | 20    | <b>Invitation email to submit a Full Proposal (Required)</b>                                                                                                     |
|                                                                                               |  | 21    | Cover Letter Attachment (Not Required)                                                                                                                           |
| R&R Other Project Information Form (Required)                                                 |  | 7     | <a href="#">Project Summary / Abstract (Required)</a>                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                               |  | 8     | <a href="#">Attach the Project Narrative - Capacity Building and Team Composition and Management Plans (Required)</a>                                            |
|                                                                                               |  | 9     | <i>Bibliography &amp; References Cited (If Applicable)</i>                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                               |  | 10    | <i>Facilities and Other Resources (If Applicable)</i>                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                               |  | 11    | <i>Equipment Justification (If Applicable)</i>                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                               |  | 12    | <b>Other Attachments</b><br><a href="#">Data Management Plan (Optional)</a><br><a href="#">Letters of Recommendation for Commitment / Endorsement (Required)</a> |
| <a href="#">R&amp;R Senior/Key Person Profile Form Expanded (Required)</a>                    |  |       | <b>Biographical Sketch (Required)</b>                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                               |  |       | <b>Current &amp; Pending Support (Required)</b>                                                                                                                  |
| <a href="#">R&amp;R Budget Form (Required)</a>                                                |  |       | <a href="#">Budget Justification (Required)</a>                                                                                                                  |
| <a href="#">R&amp;R Subaward Budget (If Applicable)</a>                                       |  |       | <a href="#">Subaward Budget Justification</a>                                                                                                                    |

|                                                                            |  |                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Attachments Form</a>                                           |  | <a href="#">(If Applicable)</a> |
| <a href="#">R&amp;R Project/Performance Site Locations Form (Required)</a> |  | None                            |
| <a href="#">R&amp;R Personal Data Form (Required)</a>                      |  | None                            |
| <a href="#">Security Program Questionnaire</a>                             |  | (See Appendix 1)                |
| <a href="#">Privacy Act Statement</a>                                      |  | (See Appendix 2)                |

The SF 424 (R&R) must include the signature of an authorized representative from your IHE. The signature is affixed electronically by Grants.gov upon submission. This signature is considered the signature for the application as a whole.

#### c. Proposal Format

- Paper Size – 8.5 x 11-inch paper
- Margins – 1 inch
- Spacing – 1.5-line spacing
- Font – Times New Roman, 12 point
- Page Limitation – Please see proposal length below
- Content – As described below

#### d. Proposal Length

Your required [Publicly Releasable Project Summary/Abstract](#) must not exceed 500 words. Your [Capacity Building Plan \(Required\)](#) section must not exceed ten (10) single-sided pages. Your [Team Composition and Management Plan \(Required\)](#) section must not exceed five (5) single-sided pages. The optional [Data Management Plan](#) must not exceed two (2) single-sided pages. We will not consider more than the maximum number of pages in our evaluation. You must not include elaborate brochures, reprints, or presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal.

We created this table to help you understand how to calculate your page count.

| INCLUDED<br>IN PAGE COUNT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | NOT INCLUDED<br>IN PAGE COUNT |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Publicly Releasable Project Summary/Abstract</a> (Required)<br>must not exceed 500 words<br><br><a href="#">Capacity Building Plan</a> (Required)<br>must not exceed ten (10) single-sided pages<br><br><a href="#">Team Composition and Management Plan</a> (Required) | Everything else               |

|                                                                                               |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| must not exceed five (5) single-sided pages                                                   |  |
| <a href="#">Data Management Plan</a> (Optional)<br>must not exceed two (2) single-sided pages |  |

You must include enough budget related information in your Full Proposal to support your costs as necessary, reasonable, allocable, realistic, and in compliance with [2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles](#)

Not having enough information in your Full Proposal to understand if your costs are necessary, allowable, reasonable, allocable, and realistic is the most common reason awards are delayed.

**e. Marking Requirements for Confidential or Proprietary Information**

You must mark the proposal sections that contain proprietary or confidential information. However, under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements, some or all proposal information may be subject to release.

Your entire proposal, or any portions thereof, without protective markings or otherwise identified as requiring protection will be considered voluntarily furnished to us without restriction and will be treated as such for all purposes.

**f. Advance Preparation for Electronic Submission through Grants.gov**

Your Full Proposal must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](#). You should verify that the person authorized to submit proposals for your organization has completed Grants.gov registration well in advance of the submission deadline. Grants.gov electronic proposal submissions cannot be accomplished before your organization is fully registered. Registration with Grants.gov may take up to twenty-one (21) days. From January 21, 2023, the registration and authentication process for the EBiz POC (Electronic Business Point of Contact) has changed. Details on account management can be found here:

<https://grantsgovprod.wordpress.com/2022/12/14/improvements-to-ebiz-account-management/>.

- A Grants.gov getting started checklist is available at: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/grant-applications/how-to-apply-for-grants>

- Guidance for registering with Grants.gov as an organization may be found at:  
<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>
- Questions relating to the Grants.gov registration process, system requirements, how an application works, or the proposal submittal process can be answered by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), telephone at 1-800-518-4726, or at <https://www.grants.gov/support>
- An active System for Award Management (SAM) registration and SAM issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) [are required to register through Grants.gov](#) Section [IV.F.1 SAM Registration Required](#) provides more information.

### 3. Component Pieces of the Application

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Titles given to proposals should be descriptive of the basic research capacity building activities they cover and not be merely a copy of the topic title from one of the technical research areas outlined in the Services’ BAAs.

#### a. SF-424 Form (R&R) Application for Federal Assistance (Required)

The SF 424 (R&R) Application for Federal Assistance form must be your cover page. No pages may precede the SF 424 (R&R).

Complete all required fields in accordance with the “pop-up” instructions on the SF 424 (R&R) form. You can turn on [Grants.gov](#) “Help Mode” to provide additional instructions for forms. “Help Mode” is turned on by the icon with the pointer and question mark at the top of the form.

We have special instructions for completion of several SF 424 (R&R) form fields in your application.

Our instructions are:

| FIELD | INSTRUCTION                                                                                                          |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.    | You may leave “Applicant Identifier” blank                                                                           |
| 3.    | You may leave “Date Received by State” and “State Application Identifier” blank                                      |
| 4.    | For block 4.a. Federal Identifier - Enter “FA9550”<br>For block 4.b. Agency Routing Identifier – you may leave blank |

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | For block 4.c. Previous Grants.gov Tracking ID – If this submission is for a changed/corrected application, enter the Grants.gov tracking number of the previous proposal submission; otherwise, leave blank.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 5.  | Applicant Information: DoD agencies recommend that organizations provide a global business address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 7.  | Complete as indicated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 9.  | You must list Air Force Office of Scientific Research as the reviewing agency if Grants.gov has not pre-populated this answer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 10. | You must list the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number as “12.431” and the title as “Basic Scientific Research” if Grants.gov has not pre-populated this answer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 12. | The award start date is determined at the time of the award but is most likely projected for October 2027. The award ending date will be 2 years after.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 16. | You should check “No.” and “Program is Not Covered by Executive Order 12372”.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 17. | All awards require some form of certifications of compliance with national policy requirements. By checking "I Agree" on the SF 424 (R&R) block 17 you agree to abide by the following statement: "By signing this application, I certify the proposing entity is in compliance with Section 223(a) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 which requires that: (a) the PI and other key personnel certify that the current and pending support provided on the proposal is current, accurate and complete; (b) agree to update such disclosure at the request of the agency prior to the award of support and at any subsequent time the agency determines appropriate during the term of the award; and (c) the PI and other key personnel have been made aware of the requirements under Section 223(a)(1) of this Act. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. code, Title 18, Section 1001)." |
| 18. | <p><b>Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (If Applicable)</b></p> <p>If you have lobbying activity that you must disclose under <a href="#">31 U.S.C. 1352</a> as implemented by the DoD in <a href="#">32 CFR Part 28</a>, you must attach the completed <a href="#">Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</a> (SF-LLL) to field 18 of the SF 424 (R&amp;R). Instructions for completing this form are available <a href="#">here</a>. If you do not have lobbying activities to disclose, you do not need to complete the SF-LLL.</p> <p><b>Grants Certifications (Required)</b></p> <p>You must attach your completed <a href="#">Grants Certifications</a> Report from SAM.gov to field 18 of the SF 424 (R&amp;R).</p> <p>Concatenate these documents if necessary, into a single document and attach the concatenated document into Field 18.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

**b. R&R Other Project Information Form (Required)**

*Complete this form as indicated. You must include all necessary attachments. Additional guidance on each field on the form is located [here](#).*

| FIELD              | INSTRUCTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1, 1a.             | You must address all prospective human subject involvement by answering these questions. Additional documentation pursuant to National Policy, DoD and U.S. Air Force standards is required for all proposals with human use or involvement. Your inquiries about our human subject requirements should be sent by email directly to the Director, Research Programs who will coordinate an answer with the Air Force Human Research Protections Official [ <a href="mailto:AFRL.IR.HRPO@us.af.mil">AFRL.IR.HRPO@us.af.mil</a> ].                       |
| 2, 2a.             | You must address all prospective animal subject and/or recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (rDNA) involvement by answering these questions. Additional documentation pursuant to National Policy, DoD and U.S. Air Force standards is required for all proposals with animal or rDNA use or involvement. Your inquiries about our requirements should be sent by email directly to our Research Protections Officer at <a href="mailto:michael.r.bonhage.mil@health.mil">michael.r.bonhage.mil@health.mil</a> with a copy to the DEPSCoR Program Manager. |
| 3.                 | Is proprietary/privileged information included in the application? Select “Yes” or “No”.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 4a.                | For any proposal, that has an actual or potential impact on the environment, answer yes and provide the answers and attachments required for fields 4b, 4c, and 4d. Additional documentation in accordance with National Policy and U.S. Air Force standards is required for any proposal with an actual or potential impact on the environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 5.<br>5.a.         | 5. Is the research performance site designated, or eligible to be designated, as a historic place? Select “Yes” or “No”.<br>5.a. If you checked the “Yes” box indicating any performance site is designated, or eligible to be designated, as a historic place, provide the explanation in Block 5.a.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 6.<br>6.a.<br>6.b. | 6. Does this project involve activities outside of the United States or partnerships with international collaborators? Select “Yes” or “No”.<br>6.a. If you checked the “Yes” box, identify the countries with which international cooperative activities are involved.<br>6.b. Enter an explanation for involvement with outside entities (optional).                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7.                 | Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.c. Publicly Releasable Project Summary/Abstract</a> to field 7 (Required)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 8.                 | Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.d. Project Narrative - Capacity Building and Team Composition and Management Plans</a> (Required) to field 8. Concatenate these documents if necessary, into a single document and attach the concatenated document to field 8.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 9.                 | Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.e Bibliography and References Cited</a> to field 9 (If Applicable)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 10.                | Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.f. Facilities &amp; Other Resources</a> description document to field 10 (If Applicable)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 11.                | You may supplement your <a href="#">IV.D.3.i. Budget Justification</a> (Required) by attaching an <a href="#">IV.D.3.j. Equipment Justification</a> (If                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | Applicable) here in field 11. Do not duplicate information included on your budget justification. If you attach an Equipment Justification, make sure you reference the attachment in your budget justification.                                                                                                                                                                |
| 12. | Other Attachments – Privacy Act Statement<br>Security Program Questionnaire<br>Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.k. R&amp;R Sub-award Budget Attachments Form</a> to field 12 (If Applicable).<br><br>Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.o. Data Management Plan</a> to field 12 (Optional)<br>Attach your <a href="#">IV.D.3.p. Letters of Recommendation</a> to field 12 (Required). |

**c. Publicly Releasable Project Summary/Abstract (Required)**

*You must attach the Project Summary/Abstract to field 7 of the R&R Other Project Information form.*

You must provide a concise abstract no more than 500 words with your Full Proposal. Do not include proprietary or confidential information. The project summary/abstract must be marked by the applicant as “Approved for Public Release.” The abstract should use terms the public can understand to describe the capacity building research objective, technical approach, anticipated outcome, and potential impact of the specific research.

Use only characters available on a standard QWERTY keyboard. Spell out all Greek letters, other non-English letters, and symbols. Graphics are not allowed.

Abstracts of all funded research projects will be posted on the public DTIC website: <https://discover.dtic.mil/>

**d. Project Narrative – Capacity Building and Team Composition and Management Plans (Required)**

*You must attach the Project Narrative – Capacity Building and Team Composition and Management Plans to field 8 of the R&R Other Project Information Form. Concatenate these documents, if necessary, into a single document and attach the concatenated document to field 8.*

Your project narrative will be evaluated using the criteria listed in section [V.A CRITERIA](#). You should show strength in as many of the evaluation and selection areas as practicable to demonstrate maximum competitiveness.

**Your narrative should include the following elements:**

**1. Capacity Building Plan (Required) – must not exceed ten (10) single-sided pages, please number them.**

Your Capacity Building Plan must clearly describe your IHE's strategic objectives to achieve excellence in an area of high relevance to the DoD. **Please review the PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (I.A-C), including the OBJECTIVES and DEFINITIONS, of this FOA carefully when composing the Narrative.** Your Capacity Building Narrative should include:

- a. Existing seed research capability.
- b. Strategic vision for building basic research capacity including basic research gaps and the specific thrusts that will be pursued to build the competitive basic research capacity.
- c. Your complete team composition and potential partners.
- d. The potential and specific plan for long-term sustainment of the desired research capability.

**2. Team Composition and Management Plan (Required) – must not exceed five (5) single-sided pages, please number them.**

Describe the complete composition of the team and provide an overview of your Management Plan and how it will support your Capacity Building Plan. CVs of all Key Personnel should be included in the [R&R Senior/Key Person Profile Form Expanded](#). All Key Personnel must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible state/territory.

**The adequacy of this information will influence the overall evaluation in accordance with the criteria and procedures specified in section [V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION](#) below.**

**e. Bibliography and References Cited (If Applicable)**

You must attach your Bibliography and References Cited to field 9 of the R&R Other Project Information Form.

**f. Facilities & Other Resources (If Applicable)**

You must attach your Facilities & Other Resources description document to field 10 of the R&R Other Project Information Form if applicable.

1. Describe the facilities available for performing the proposed research, and any additional facilities or equipment the organization proposes to acquire at its own expense for the work.
2. Indicate any government-owned facilities that will be used. Indicate any government-owned equipment possessed presently that will be used. The facilities contract number, or in absence of a facilities contract, the specifics of the facilities or equipment, and the number of the award under which they are accountable are required.
3. Government Furnished Equipment: List any special Government-owned property or test equipment possessed or required to support the capacity building effort. When possible and practicable, give a description or title for each item, the current location, and an estimated cost as applicable. If you do not have information about individual items, group items you require by class and provide an estimate of values.

**g. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile Form Expanded (Required)**

You must list all Key Persons proposed for the research effort on the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) Form. Senior/Key Persons are generally the Team Lead and Senior Executive Staff. All Key Personnel must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible state.

Failure to submit this information may cause the proposal to be returned without further review.

This information will be used to support protection of intellectual property, controlled information, Senior/Key Personnel, and information about critical technologies relevant to national security. Additionally, this information will be used to limit undue influence, including foreign talent programs, by countries that desire to exploit United States' technology within the DoD research, science and technology, and innovation enterprise.

1. You must attach a short biographical sketch and list of significant publications (vitae) for each Senior/Key Person, whether or not the individuals' efforts under the projects are to be funded by the DoD.
2. If Senior/Key Personnel have current pending, or expected research supported by other sources (e.g., Federal, State, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other commercial organizations) during the period you seek our support the following information must be provided for each project:

List of Current and Pending Support:

- Title of Proposal and Summary;
- Source and amount of funding (provide contract and/or grant numbers for current contracts/grants, annual direct & indirect costs, the total award amount for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs), and the number of person-months or labor hours per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of source of support;
- Percentage of effort devoted to each project;
- Identity of prime applicant and complete list of subawards, if applicable;
- Technical contact (name, address, phone, email address);
- Period of performance (differentiate basic effort);
- The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the Applicant (Principal Investigator) and other Senior Personnel. This must be included, even if they receive no salary support from the project(s); and
- State how project(s) is/are related to the proposed effort and indicate degree of overlap.

Concurrent submission of a proposal to other organizations will not prejudice review. Send any changes as they become known.

**h. R&R Budget Form (Required)**

You must provide all information requested. You must estimate the total project cost. You must categorize funds by year and provide separate annual budgets for projects lasting more than one year. A [budget justification](#) must be attached.

You must include enough budget related information in your proposal to support your costs as necessary, allowable, reasonable, allocable, realistic, and in compliance with [2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles](#).

*Not having enough information in your proposal to understand if your costs are necessary, reasonable, allocable, and realistic is the most common reason awards are delayed.*

#### **i. Budget Justification (Required)**

You must provide a detailed budget justification for each year that clearly explains the need for each item. The entire budget justification and supporting documentation must be combined into a single file and attached to field L of the R&R Budget Form. The budget narrative submitted with the application must match the dollar amounts on all required forms. Please explain each calculation and provide a narrative that supports each budget category. This detailed budget justification must match the proposed budget categories. Each year of the budget justification narrative must stand alone; lump sum budget justifications are not allowed. If options are proposed, option detailed budget justifications must stand alone as well, no lump sum justifications allowed.

You **must** itemize travel. State the purpose of each trip proposed, the number of trips, the number of travelers, the destination, the duration, and the basis for calculating costs such as airlines and hotels. Proposed per diem should not exceed GSA or State Department standards for the location.

You **must** itemize materials, supplies, and equipment. List all material/equipment by type and kind with associated costs. Indicate what your costs are based on, such as vendor quotes, historical data and/or engineering estimates. **You should include vendor quotes and/or catalog pricing data.**

Proposals including requests to purchase equipment **must** include equipment quotes or vendor agreements. "Equipment" is nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more having a useful life of more than 1 year. Items that do not meet the "equipment" definition can be included under supplies. List each piece of equipment to be purchased and provide a description of how it will be used in the project. The budget narrative should explain why the equipment is necessary for successful completion of the project. Provide

quotes in the English language (US Dollars) if available or indicate the basis of the equipment cost. If you have any sub-award(s), you should describe how you determined sub-award costs were determined fair and reasonable. Your business office usually makes this determination.

**DHHS/ONR Rate Agreement:** If you use a Government rate agreement to propose indirect cost rates and/or fringe benefit rates, attach a copy of the agreement you used. Helpful Cost Principle Reference Information includes:

- (i) [2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles](#)
- (ii) General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost in [2 CFR 200.420 through 2 CFR 200.476](#)

**j. Equipment Justification (If Applicable)**

*If applicable, attach your Equipment Justification to field 11 of the R&R Other Project Information Form.*

*You may list any special Government-owned property or test equipment required to complete the research. When possible and practicable, give a description or title for each item, the current location, and an estimated cost as applicable with a supporting vendor quote. If you do not have information about individual items, group items you require by class and provide an estimate of values.*

**k. R&R Sub-award Budget Attachments Form (If Applicable)**

You must attach all sub-award budgets to the R&R Subaward Budget Attachments Form.

You must provide a budget at the same level of detail as your [IV.D.3.h. Prime budget](#) for each proposed sub-award.

You must attach the R&R Sub-award Budget Attachments Form to field 12 of the R&R Other Project Information Form.

**l. Sub-award Budget Justification (If Applicable)**

The entire sub-award budget justification and supporting documentation must be combined into a single file and attached to field L of the R&R Sub-award Budget Attachments Form.

You must provide a sub-award budget justification at the same level of detail as your [IV.D.3.i. Prime budget justification](#) for each proposed sub-award in a DEPSCoR eligible state/territory.

**m. R&R Project/Performance Site Locations Form (Required)**

You must complete all information as requested. You must include the ZIP+4 for each performance location you list.

**n. R&R Personal Data Form (Required)**

This form will be used by DoD as the source of demographic information for the Principal Investigator and all other persons identified as Co-Principal Investigator(s). Each application must include this form with the name fields of Senior/Key Persons, generally the Team Lead and Senior Executive Staff completed; however, provisions of the demographic information in the form is voluntary. If completing the form for multiple individuals, each Senior Executive can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button. The demographic information may be accessible to the reviewer, but will not be considered in the evaluation. Applicants who do not wish to provide some or all information should check or select the “Do not wish to provide” option.

**o. Data Management Plan (Optional) – must not exceed two (2) single-sided pages**

*Attach your Data Management Plan to field 12 of the R&R Other Project Information Form.*

You can decide if you want to include a Data Management Plan with your application. If you do, attach your Data Management Plan to field 12 of the R&R Other Project Information Form.

Your “Data Management Plan” must not exceed two (2) single-sided pages in length and should discuss:

The types of data, software, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project, and include a notation marking items that are publicly releasable;

1. How the data will be acquired;

2. Time and location of data acquisition if they are scientifically pertinent;
3. How the data will be processed;
4. The file formats and the naming conventions that will be used;
5. A description of the quality assurance and quality control measures during collection, analysis, and processing;
6. If existing data are to be used, a description of their origins;
7. A description of the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content;
8. Plans and justifications for archiving the data;
9. The timeframe for preservation; and;
10. If for legitimate reasons the data cannot be preserved, the plan must include a justification citing such reasons.

**p. Letters of Recommendation for Commitment / Endorsement (Required)**

*Attach your Letters of Recommendation for Commitment / Endorsement to field 12 of the R&R Other Project Information Form.*

1. Letters of recommendation from any regional partners that may benefit from or contribute to the success of your proposed activity (industry, non-profit, other IHEs, etc.) **(Required)**
2. Any current or planned support from the state or region, financial or otherwise. **(Not Required)**

**q. Privacy Act Statement**

**Authority:** Authorized under federal statutes (e.g., 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(3)) and agency-specific laws.

**Purpose:** Informs applicants how personal identifiers (names, contact data, credentials) will be used to evaluate proposals, run background checks, or manage awards.

**Routine Uses:** Details who can view the data, including peer reviewers, federal staff, and congressional oversight committees.

**Voluntary vs Mandatory:** States whether providing the requested personal information is optional or required to complete the funding application.

#### **r. Security Program Questionnaire**

**Physical Security:** Facility access plans and secure storage for project materials.

**Information Security:** Where project data and files are stored (local drives, secure cloud platforms).

**Cybersecurity:** Network protection and safe transmission procedures.

**Operations Security (OPSEC):** Measures to prevent unauthorized or foreign adversary access to research results.

**Handling Requirements:** Destruction/disposal protocols and rules for Government Furnished Equipment or Information (GFE/GFI).

### **E. INFORMATION YOU MUST SUBMIT IF SELECTED FOR POSSIBLE AWARD**

Our Grants Officer may request additional necessary information from you during negotiations, or as required for award considerations. You must respond promptly.

If you do not fully comply with our information requests by the time we are ready to make an award, we may determine that you are not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

### **F. SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM) REGISTRATION, GRANTS CERTIFICATIONS, UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER, AND CAGE CODE**

SAM Registration Required

As required in [2 CFR 25](#) all applicants must:

- Be registered in [SAM.gov](#) before submitting its application;
- Complete their Grants Certifications in [SAM.gov](#) to be eligible to apply for a Federal financial assistance project or program;

- Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier as issued by SAM.gov as part of the registration process, and provide a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code as issued by the Defense Logistics Agency through the SAM.gov registration process; and
- Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times any Federal award is active, or when any application is under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

#### SAM Exemption or Exceptions Not Available Under This Announcement

We will not issue an Agency level exemption to SAM registration under [2 CFR 25.110\(d\)](#) for applicants under this announcement.

You must comply with SAM registration requirements and include an Organizational Unique Entity Identifier in field 5 of the SF 424 (R&R) application or we cannot make an award.

#### Questions about SAM Registrations and Updates

You can get questions about SAM registration and entity updates answered by live chat at [https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd\\_sp](https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp) and telephone at (866) 606-8220. Top help topics for [SAM.gov](#) are available at [https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd\\_sp?id=kb\\_category&kb\\_category=f56ee43edbfadc102c5f368f7c961906](https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=kb_category&kb_category=f56ee43edbfadc102c5f368f7c961906).

#### Consequences of Non-Compliance with SAM Registration Requirements

We cannot make an award to you unless you comply with SAM requirements. If you are non-compliant, we may determine you are not qualified to receive an award and use that determination to make an award to someone else as authorized by [2 CFR 25.205\(b\)](#). You cannot receive payments without an active SAM record and CAGE code.

## G. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

### 1. Full Proposal Submission Deadline

We must receive your validated proposal electronically through Grants.gov **no later than 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday, 5 April 2027** to be considered for selection (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)). This is the final due date. We recommend you submit your application early.

You are responsible for making sure your application is submitted, received, and validated by Grants.gov before the application deadline.

If you submit your application late, your proposal is not eligible for consideration.

### **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

*Online Submission:* All applications must be validated by Grants.gov **no later than 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday, 5 April 2027.** Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgment of receipt and a tracking number (**GRANTXXXXXXXX**) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov tracking number in an email.

A second confirmation is provided by email when your application has passed Grants.gov validation and the status is updated from received to validated. **Your application is not complete until you receive the validation confirmation.** Your submission must be validated before the submission deadline.

When the administering agency successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role.

*Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date will be counted as late and will not be considered.*

Applicants using slow internet should be aware that transmission could take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. *Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.*

### **2. How Proposal Submission Time is Determined**

We use the system-generated Grants.gov time stamp to determine when you submitted your successfully validated proposal. Grants.gov policies and procedures for application submission and processing apply.

### **3. Grants.gov Tracking Number is Application Receipt**

Grants.gov generates a confirmation page when you submit your application. A second confirmation is provided by email when your application has passed Grants.gov validations and the status is updated from received to validated. Your application is not complete until you receive the validation confirmation.

The validation confirmation page includes a system-generated Grants.gov tracking number; this serves as your receipt. You should keep a copy of all confirmations.

You can verify the submission time and application status with your tracking number through Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/grant-applications/track-my-application>

#### 4. Other Submission Requirements

If Grants.gov [rejects](#) your electronic application submission for any reason, you must correct all errors and resubmit your application before the proposal submission deadline as outlined in section [IV.G.1. Proposal Submission Deadline](#).

#### 5. Submission Dates and Times

| Schedule of Events                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                           |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Event                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Date                      | Eastern Time   |
| RunGrants website open for White Paper submission<br>( <a href="https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor">https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor</a> )                                         | Monday, 10 August 2026    | 9:00 AM        |
| DEPSCoR Webinar<br>For details and registration, please visit<br>( <a href="https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor">https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor</a> )                             | Tuesday, 25 August 2026   | 2:00 - 4:00 PM |
| RunGrants Registration (strongly suggested by)<br>&<br>Cut-off date for Q&As with Program Officers                                                                                                                                         | Wednesday, 7 October 2026 | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| White Paper and Supporting Documentation submission on RunGrants website<br>( <a href="https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor">https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor</a> )<br>(required by) | Monday, 12 October 2026   | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| Notification of White Paper Selection                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Friday, 08 January 2027   | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| Full Proposal Submission (by invitation only) electronically on<br><a href="#">Grants.gov</a> website<br>(submitted by)                                                                                                                    | Monday, 05 April 2027     | NLT 11:59 PM   |
| Notification of Selection for Award                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Friday, 23 July 2027      | NLT 11:59 PM   |

#### H. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

N/A - This program is excluded from coverage under [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#).

#### I. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

## Proposal Preparation Costs

Your proposal or application preparation costs are not considered an allowable direct charge to any award under this announcement. Your costs are, however, an allowable expense to the normal bid and proposal indirect cost as specified in [2 CFR 200.460](#) proposal costs if you receive a grant or cooperative agreement.

## Pre-award Costs

You must request our prior approval if your research requires a specific date [pre-award costs](#) become allowable, or if you need more than ninety (90) days pre-award cost authorization as described in [2 CFR 200.308\(G\)\(1\)](#) and [2 CFR 200.458](#). **Your business office must provide this request in writing.** You must document why pre-award costs are necessary and essential for the research in the request and identify a specific date for our Grants Officer to consider.

Our grants include up to ninety (90) calendar days pre-award costs in accordance with the DoD Research and Development General Terms and Conditions, (DoD T&C) [FMS Article IV.C. Pre-award costs](#) section; however, the actual date costs become allowable is not final until an award is made. We recommend you ask for a specific date as described above to prevent misunderstandings.

All costs incurred before a grant or cooperative agreement award are at the recipient's risk as described in [2 CFR 200.308\(g\)\(1\)](#). We are under no obligation to reimburse your costs if for any reason you do not receive an award, or if your award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover your pre-award costs.

## V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### A. CRITERIA

DEPSCoR seeks to increase the number of researchers at and improve the capabilities of IHEs in eligible States/Territories to perform competitive S&E research relevant to the DoD.

Proposed capacity building research should describe cutting-edge efforts on basic scientific problems. White Papers deemed to be applied research, as opposed to basic research, will not advance to the Full Proposal stage of the competition.

You should show strength in as many of the evaluation and selection areas as practicable to demonstrate maximum competitiveness.

## Evaluation Criteria

The White Paper and Full Proposal will be evaluated against the following five (5) criteria. Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4 are equally important to each other; Criteria 5 is of least importance:

**(1) Demonstration of initial seed capability and identification of your IHE's gap(s) in basic research capacity.**

Applicants should describe existing academic basic research capability at the IHE in the proposed research area including leading experts / researchers, existing projects, infrastructure, industry access, etc., as well as the gap(s) in their basic research capacity they plan to fill.

**(2) Demonstration of the potential for the effort to build academic research capacity, improve basic research capacity, and enhance educational outcomes in DoD relevant fields.**

- a) A capacity building plan that includes an innovative multi-thrust strategy addressing the key basic research capacity gaps at the IHE and surrounding region beyond the initial seed capacity, to allow the IHE to achieve its strategic objectives.
- b) The plan should indicate and justify how the proposed project would significantly improve basic research capacity at the IHE beyond the IHE's initial seed capacity.
- c) The plan should include technical, management, and programmatic details to justify the proposed thrusts and to support the feasibility of achieving each thrust of the plan.

**(3) Demonstration of regional interest to support the need for capacity building.**

Existing as well as planned interactions with regional DoD and commercial entities in the proposed research area should be described.

**(4) Demonstration of a long-term plan for sustainment of the enhanced capacity with non-DEPSCoR funding.**

Specific plans with clear and supported goals as well as clear paths to sustainment of the increased research capacity will be more favorably reviewed.

**(5) (Full Proposal Evaluation Only) Realism and [reasonableness](#) of proposed costs.**

All, some, one, or none of the applicants may be contacted after the proposal review process by phone by the Director of Research Programs, OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations to clarify certain aspects of their proposed research efforts.

No Further Evaluation Criteria or Criterion will be used for Proposal Selection

### **GOLD STANDARD SCIENCE (GSS)**

In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 14303—Restoring Gold Standard Science (May 2025) GSS is science conducted in a manner that is:

- 1) reproducible;
- 2) transparent;
- 3) communicative of error and uncertainty;
- 4) collaborative and interdisciplinary;
- 5) skeptical of its findings and assumptions;
- 6) structured for falsifiability of hypotheses;
- 7) subject to unbiased peer review;
- 8) accepting negative results as positive outcomes; and,
- 9) without conflicts of interest

With regards to GSS, applications/proposals shall:

- 1) include clear benchmarks for measuring success and progress towards relevant goals and a commitment to achieving GSS;
- 2) identify areas of demonstrating success in implementing GSS; and
- 3) include a commitment to complying with administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting GSS. By your submission, you explicitly agree to the following statements:
  - Our institution understands the definition of Gold Standard Science as outlined above.
  - Our institution and all personnel involved in the proposed project will adhere to all administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting Gold Standard Science in the execution of this project if funded.

### **NATIONAL PRIORITY**

In accordance with Executive Order 14332, all technical program descriptions contained in this NOFO reflect the basic research priorities for the Department of the Air Force and are defined to advance the administration and agency priorities (c.f., OMB memo M-25-34 “Fiscal Year 2027 Administration Research and Development Budget Priorities

and Cross-Cutting Actions”). More information about the Department of the Air Force Priorities can be found at [www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil).

### Expectation of Adherence to Gold Standard Science

AFOSR expects the highest standards of scientific rigor, integrity and adherence to appropriate tenets of GSS. For more on these standards and DoW expectations, see <https://www.cto.mil/gold-standard-science-implementation-plan/>.

To meet GSS, applications/proposals shall:

- (1) Include clear benchmarks for measuring success and progress towards relevant goals and a commitment to achieving GSS;
- (2) Identify areas of demonstrating success in implementing GSS; and
- (3) Include a commitment to complying with administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting GSS.

By responding to this NOFO, you explicitly agree with the following statements:

- (1) Our institution understands the definition of Gold Standard Science as outlined above.
- (2) Our institution and all personnel involved in the proposed project will adhere to all administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting Gold Standard Science in the execution of this project, if funded.

## **B. REVIEW PROCESS**

### Merit-based, Competitive Procedures

Proposals will be subjected to programmatic and peer reviews. The peer review will use external or internal reviewers to assess the science and engineering technical merit and relevance of the proposal to the mission of the DoD.

The programmatic review will assess the technical quality of the proposal, relevance of the proposed research to the portfolio descriptions in this FOA, relevance of the work to DoD needs, and the potential of the research balanced against available funds. Selection for award consideration will be made based on the outcome of these reviews.

We select proposals for possible funding on a competitive basis according to [10 USC 4141](#) and [10 USC 4024](#) using the merit-based competitive procedures described in [32 CFR 22.315](#), incorporated herein by reference.

### Cost Analysis

The proposed budgets are subject to a thorough cost analysis to ensure financial viability and compliance. To prevent performance risk, Cost Realism (FAR 15.404-1(d)) verifies that proposed costs are realistic for the technical scope and match the described methods, while Cost Reasonableness ensures pricing is not excessively high. Every proposed cost element must be allowable and allocable under 2 CFR 200 or FAR Part 31 cost principles. Finally, to maintain administrative control, the primary DEPSCoR-eligible Institution of Higher Education (IHE) must retain more than 50% of the total award allocation, with all subaward and collaborator budgets clearly subordinated in the budget justification.

#### Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

- a. We must review information available about you and entities included in your Full Proposal through the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification and financial integrity information. Our risk review is required by [31 U.S.C. 3321](#) and [41 U.S.C. 2313](#) and includes both public and non-public information. You must be qualified and responsible as described at [32 CFR 22.415](#) to receive a grant award.
- b. We must consider the responsibility and qualification records available in the non-public segment of the System for Award Management ([SAM.gov](#)) for all awards exceeding the current simplified acquisition threshold of \$350,000.
- c. At a minimum, the information in the system for a prior Federal award recipient must demonstrate a satisfactory record of executing programs or activities under Federal grants or cooperative agreements, and integrity and business ethics. We will consider any comments you provide, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, when making our risk judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards.
- d. We may make an award to a recipient who does not fully meet our standards as described at [2 CFR 200.206\(a\)\(2\)](#) if it is determined that the information is not relevant to the current Federal award under consideration; or there are specific conditions that can appropriately mitigate the effects of the non-Federal entity's risk in accordance with [2 CFR 200.208](#).
- e. We must comply with the guidelines on government-wide suspension and debarment described in [2 CFR 200.214](#), and must require you to comply with these provisions for all work we fund.

- f. These provisions restrict Federal awards and sub-awards with certain parties that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal programs or activities.
- g. All Covered Individuals proposed under this FOA for all grants and cooperative agreements are subject to the OUSW(R&E) Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security Review Process. In accordance with applicable laws and regulations and as designated by agency policy, Covered Individuals include the principal investigator (PI), co-PI(s), as well as any other individual who “contributes in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of a research and development project.” See e.g., 42 U.S.C. §6605.
- h. This risk-based security review process provides consistency in policy and procedures across all DoW Components. Risk-based-security reviews will be conducted of all Covered Individuals submitted with fundamental research proposals that are identified as “selectable and recommended for funding.” The risk-based security reviews will be conducted by reviewing the Standard Form (SF) 424, “Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded),” its accompanying or referenced documents, Common Disclosure Forms, and the Research Performance Progress Reports (when applicable), publicly and commercially available information, in concert with a risk decision matrix consistent with the DoW’s Decision Matrix to Inform Fundamental Research Proposal Mitigation Decisions.

#### **C. DISCLOSURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING BY CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL**

We use support contractor personnel to help us with administrative proposal processing. These contractor personnel are employees of commercial firms that have a contract with us. We make sure all of our support contracts include nondisclosure agreements that prohibit disclosure of any information you submit to other parties.

#### **D. NO GUARANTEED AWARD**

We do not guarantee that any award will be made under this competition.

### **VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

#### **A. WHITE PAPER SELECTION AND NONSELECTION NOTICES**

1. **Electronic Notification of White Paper Selection by Friday, 08 January 2027**

Applicants will receive an email notification regarding the status of their White Paper submission, which will inform them whether or not they have been selected to submit a Full Proposal for this year's DEPSCoR – Capacity Building funding opportunity.

Instructions for requesting feedback on your White Paper will be included in your notification email. Please check these instructions carefully.

## **2. Selection for Possible Award Does Not Authorize Work**

Our selection notice is not an authorization to start work and is not an award guarantee. We will contact your business office to get answers to any questions we have about your proposal and negotiate specific award terms.

### **B. AWARD NOTICES**

Electronic Notification of Full Proposal Selection by Friday, 23 July 2027

Applicants will receive an email notification regarding the status of their Full Proposal submission, regardless of whether it is selected or not selected for this year's DEPSCoR – Capacity Building funding award.

If you would like to request written feedback on your Full Proposal submission, instructions will be provided in the notification email.

Federal Award Document

A grant signed by a warranted Grants Officer is the only official notice that an award has been made.

Electronic Federal Award Distribution

We send award documents to the Applicant and their IHE business office by email. This is called award distribution.

### **C. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

You must report recipient integrity and performance information as required by [Appendix XII to 2 CFR Part 200](#) – Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters, incorporated herein by reference. You should read the full text of this award term now using the link above to make sure you understand our requirements. You can find this term at <http://www.ecfr.gov>.

Cross-Cutting National Policy Requirements

You must comply with all applicable national policy requirements as a condition of award. Key national policy requirements may be found in the [DoD Research and Development General Terms and Conditions](#) (DoD T&C); and [32 CFR Part 22 Subpart E](#) are incorporated herein by reference.

#### Acknowledgment of Research Support

You must acknowledge support provided by the Government in all materials based on or developed under our awards. The requirement extends to copyrighted and non-copyrighted materials published or displayed in any medium.

The following language must be used unless the award document provides different instructions:

*“This material is based upon work supported by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering under award number\_\_\_\_\_.”*

You must require any sub-recipients under your award to also include this acknowledgment.

#### Disclaimer Language for Research Materials and Publications

All materials based on or developed under our awards except scientific articles or papers published in scientific journals must use the following language unless the award document provides different instructions:

*“Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Defense.”*

You must require any sub-recipients under your award to also include this acknowledgment.

#### Grants - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

Our grants and cooperative agreements are governed by the guidance in [Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 200](#), “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards” as modified and supplemented by the Department of Defense’s (DoD) interim implementation in [2 CFR Part 1104](#) and [2 CFR Part 1125](#). Provisions of [Chapter 1, Subchapter C of Title 32, CFR](#), “DoD Grant and Agreement Regulations” other than parts 34 and 37 continue to be in effect and apply as stated.

These regulations are incorporated by reference into this announcement.  
Conditions of Award for Recipients Other Than Individuals

You must agree to comply with the requirements at [2 CFR Part 182, Subpart B “Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals”](#) as a condition of award.

#### Minimum Record Retention Requirements

You must keep records related to our awards for at least three years after completion and the final Federal Financial Report is submitted. This requirement is described further in [2 CFR 200.334](#), and incorporated herein by reference. For grant awards, the most recently dated [DoD R&D T&C’s - OAR Article II. Records retention and access](#) describes additional requirements.

Sometimes records must be retained for more than three years.

### **D. REPORTING**

#### Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance

All of our awards require at least interim and final research performance progress reports as required in [2 CFR 200.328](#), [2 CFR 200.329](#), and [2 CFR 200.330](#). The [DoD R&D T&C’s - REP Article I. Performance management, monitoring, and reporting](#) will apply to grant awards. Some of our awards require more frequent technical reports.

You must provide your reports on time. Our awards include a schedule specifying the latest date for submission of each required report.

You must use a completed SF 298 Report Documentation Page as the first page of the final report. You can download an electronic SF 298 from <https://www.gsa.gov/reference/forms/report-documentation-page>

#### Technical Performance Report Format

Interim and final Research Progress Performance Reports (RPPRs) are to be submitted in accordance with reporting requirements identified in the grant document. Typically, interim RPPRs are due annually, however the report due dates can vary. A link to the report submission site will be included in the grant award document.

#### Department of Defense (DD) Form 882 Report of Inventions and Sub-awards

##### **a. Invention Reports**

(1) You must provide a final invention report on a DD Form 882. Our award documents specify the due date.

You can get the form at:

<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/forms/dd/dd0882.pdf>

- (2) You must submit this report even if you do not have a patent to report.

**b. Sub-Award Reporting**

You must report information about sub-awards and executive compensation in accordance with the terms in [REP Article IV. of the most recently dated DoD T&C's](#).

Standard Form (SF) 425 Federal Financial Report

- a. If you request any advance payment(s) under your award, you must submit quarterly SF 425 Federal Financial reports for the life of the grant. Our awards include specific instructions.

You can get the form at:

<https://www.gsa.gov/forms-library/federal-financial-report>

- b. You do not have to submit quarterly SF 425 Federal Financial reports if you only request payments by reimbursement.

Electronic Payment Requests and Electronic Payment

You must register to use Wide Area Workflow (WAWF) for payment. Payment requests shall be made electronically using an SF270 through the WAWF application in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment (PIEE) e-Business Suite at <https://piee.eb.mil/>. The website includes registration instructions. All payments must be made using the electronic funds transfer (EFT) method.

If you have WAWF or PIEE questions or problems, you can get help by telephone at (866) 618-5988, or by electronic mail at [disa.global.servicedesk.mbx.eb-ticket-requests@mail.mil](mailto:disa.global.servicedesk.mbx.eb-ticket-requests@mail.mil), or via the Internet at: <https://piee.eb.mil/xhtml/unauth/web/homepage/vendorCustomerSupport.xhtml>

Property Reports

If we furnish any property owned by the Government under an award, you must submit periodic property status reports as described in [2 CFR 200.330](#) and further implemented for grants by the most recently dated [DoD T&C's - REP Article III. Reporting on Property](#).

Other Reports

OSW program managers may ask for quarterly reports as needed. We use these informal reports for program purposes, such as preparation for meetings and other technical purposes, and expect timely submission if requested.

#### Electronic Submission of Reports

You must plan to submit reports electronically through our online service specific portals or by email. Our award documents will provide the specific instructions.

## VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

### A. TECHNICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS

Questions of a technical and programmatic nature can be directed to the Director, Research Programs, OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations and **must be sent in writing by email. You must include NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003 in the subject line.** All technical discussions must take place prior to White Paper submission. After the White Paper deadline, applicants may no longer contact the Director, Research Programs.

**DR. DAVID MONTGOMERY**

**Program Manager**

**Email:** [david.w.montgomery61.civ@mail.mil](mailto:david.w.montgomery61.civ@mail.mil)

*If you submit a question by telephone call, fax machine, or other means you may not receive a response.*

### B. GENERAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS

General questions about this announcement **must be sent to us by email.** You must **include NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003 in the subject line.**

**MS. DENISE JOHNSON**

**Grants Officer**

**Email:** [denise.johnson.19@us.af.mil](mailto:denise.johnson.19@us.af.mil)

**MS. NICOLE THOMAS**

**Grants Officer**

**Email:** [nicole.thomas.20@us.af.mil](mailto:nicole.thomas.20@us.af.mil)

*If you submit a question by telephone call, fax machine, or other means you may not receive a response.*

## VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

## **A. GRANTS OFFICERS AUTHORITY**

Grants Officers acting within their warranted capacity are the only individuals legally authorized to make commitments or bind the Government.

No other individuals are authorized to make commitments or otherwise bind the DoD.

## **B. ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

New funding opportunities are posted throughout the year on the AFOSR, ARO, and ONR sites; we encourage you to monitor them for future opportunities and announcements.

AFOSR: <https://www.afrl.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Fact-Sheet-Display/Article/2282103/afosr-funding-opportunities>

ARO: <https://www.arl.army.mil/business/broad-agency-announcements/>

ONR: <https://www.nre.navy.mil/work-with-us/funding-opportunities>