

Meeting Minutes

****Event:**** Virtual Opportunity Day for the US Army STEM Education Consortium (ASEC) Cooperative Agreement

****Date:**** January 30, 2025

****Time:**** 1:00 PM (EST)

****Hosts:**** Aiden Witt (Lead Grant Specialist, Army Contracting Command) and Brian Leftridge (Cooperative Agreement Manager, DEVCOM HQ)

Agenda:

- Opening Remarks – Aiden Witt
- Army STEM and ASEC Overview – Brian Leftridge
- Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Details – Brian Leftridge
- Q&A Session

1. Opening Remarks – Aiden Witt

- Welcomed participants to the Virtual Opportunity Day for the US Army STEM Education Consortium (ASEC) Cooperative Agreement.
- Introduced himself as the Lead Grant Specialist for the effort and Brian Leftridge as the Cooperative Agreement Manager.
- Provided an overview of the agenda.
- Key dates:
 - - FOA posted on January 15, 2025.
 - - Applications due by March 14, 2025, at 5:00 PM EST.
 - - Deadline for questions: February 14, 2025.
 - - Tentative award date: July 1, 2025.
 - - Period of performance begins October 1, 2025.
- The cooperative agreement will be for up to 10 years, with a base period of 2 years and four 2-year option periods.

- Total funding: Up to \$277 million.
- Clarified that the recent executive order pausing federal grants does not affect ASEC or the current cooperative agreement.

2. Army STEM and ASEC Overview – Brian Leftridge

- **Army STEM Mission:** To attract, develop, and mentor the next generation of STEM talent for the Army, DoD, and the nation.
- **Current Consortium Model:** The Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) has been in place for 15 years, leveraging partnerships with academia, industry, and DoD laboratories.
- **Key Programs:** GEMS (Gains in Education of Math and Science), eCYBERMISSION, Internship and Fellowship Programs, and Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS).
- **Rebranding:** The new consortium will rebrand from AEOP to align with Army STEM and DoD STEM initiatives.
- **Strategic Goals:** Broaden the future talent pool, engage priority populations, and leverage partnerships to enhance STEM education and outreach.

3. Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Details – Brian Leftridge

- **Fundamental Elements of the FOA:**
 - 1. Consortium Management
 - 2. Data Management, Analysis, and Reporting
 - 3. Strategic Communications and Marketing
 - 4. Ambassador Management
 - 5. Strategic Outreach Initiatives
 - 6. GEMS Program
 - 7. eCYBERMISSION Program
 - 8. Internship and Fellowship Programs
 - 9. JSHS Program
- **Funding:** Up to \$277 million over 10 years, with optional renewal periods subject to budget availability.
- **Evaluation Process:** Applications will be evaluated based on technical plan, management, past performance, credentials, and cost.

4. Q&A Session

- **Q:** Are current consortium partners eligible to apply? **A:** Yes, current partners, including Battelle Memorial Institute, are eligible to apply.
- **Q:** Can organizations apply to only one area of the consortium? **A:** No, organizations must apply as part of a consortium covering all nine fundamental elements.
- **Q:** Are there restrictions on the type of lead institution? **A:** Any non-federal entity can apply, including for-profit companies, but no profit or fee is allowed.
- **Q:** Will the slides and recording be posted? **A:** The slides will be posted by February 21, 2025. The session was not recorded.
- **Q:** Is the STEM Learning Hub available for preview? **A:** Currently, the STEM Learning Hub is not publicly available, but access may be provided upon request.
- **Q:** Are organizations required to be located in the US? **A:** Yes, organizations must be located in the US, including territories like Puerto Rico.
- **Q:** Will forums be provided for partnerships? **A:** No, organizations are responsible for forming partnerships independently.

Closing Remarks

- **Brian Leftridge:** Thanked participants for attending and expressed pride in the work of the current consortium.
- **Aiden Witt:** Reiterated that all questions and answers will be posted as an amendment to the FOA.
- Provided contact information for follow-up questions.

Next Steps

- Slides and Q&A document will be posted to the FOA by February 21, 2025.
- Attendees are encouraged to submit additional questions to Aiden Witt or Sarah Eggerling.