



**AIR FORCE OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT #
NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260004**

**FY26 DEFENSE ESTABLISHED PROGRAM TO STIMULATE
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH (DEPSCoR) –
RESEARCH COLLABORATION (RC)**

OVERVIEW INFORMATION

The Department of Defense (DoD) announces the fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR) – Research Collaboration (RC) 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; and (2) enhance the capabilities of institutions of higher education (IHE) 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; (3) increase the probability of long-term growth in the competitively awarded financial assistance that IHE in eligible States 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 S&E research in areas relevant to the DoD's mission and important to national security.

This funding opportunity aims to create basic research collaborations between a **pair** of researchers, namely 1) Applicant/Principal Investigator (PI), henceforth referred to as Applicant, a full-time faculty member who has never served as a PI on a prior DoD directly funded research Prime award; and 2) Collaborator/co-Principal Investigator (co-PI), henceforth referred to as Collaborator, an investigator who will provide mentorship to the Applicant **and** has served as a PI on a DoD directly funded research Prime award actively between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026. This structure is aimed at introducing potential applicants to the DoD’s unique research challenges and its supportive research ecosystem.

IAW 32 CFR Part 21, the prime award as defined in the context of this announcement, must be awarded directly to an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) by a DoD component (e.g., Air Force Office of Scientific Research, Army Research Office, Office of Naval Research). It establishes a direct legal assistance relationship between the federal awarding agency and the recipient institution. It cannot be a sub-award, sub-grant, subcontract, or flow-down funding received indirectly from a non-DoD pass-through entity (such as another university or prime contractor).

Tenured or tenure-track faculty members with appointments at IHE, in the following States/Territories are eligible to apply for DEPSCoR opportunities 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) –
Research Collaboration (RC)

3. ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

4. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER

NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260004

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 (https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor)	Monday, 10 August 2026	9:00 AM
DEPSCoR Webinar For details and registration, please visit (https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor)	Tuesday, 25 August 2026	2:00 - 4:00 PM
RunGrants Registration (strongly suggested by) & 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 (https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depescor) (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 Grants.gov website (submitted by)	Monday, 05 April 2027	NLT 11:59 PM
Notification of Selection for Award	Friday, 23 July 2027	NLT 11:59 PM

Table of Contents

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
A. OBJECTIVES	Error! Bookmark not defined.
B. COLLABORATION COMPOSITION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
C. TOPICS.....	11
Topic 1: Space Bioscience	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
Topic 2: Dynamic Data and Information Processing	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
Topic 3: Condensed Matter Physics	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Topic 4: Aerodynamics Sciences	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Topic 5: Earth Materials and Processes	Error! Bookmark not defined. 6
Topic 6: Dynamical Influences on Performance.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 7
Topic 7: Wireless Communications Networks.....	18
Topic 8: Electrochemistry	19
Topic 9: Nonlinear Transforms for Dynamical Systems.....	20
Topic 10: Local and Regional Assessment for Public Affairs.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 1
Topic 11: Fundamental Mechanisms and Materials for Shock Mitigation for Warfighter Protection.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
Topic 12: Fundamental Research on Efficient Packaging and Deployment of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION	Error! Bookmark not defined. 4
A. ADDITIONAL DEPSCoR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	Error! Bookmark not defined. 4
III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	Error! Bookmark not defined. 5
A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 5
B. INELIGIBLE ENTITIES	Error! Bookmark not defined. 6
C. COST SHARING OR MATCHING	27
D. OTHER	27
E. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY	Error! Bookmark not defined. 0
IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION PROCESS.....	30
A. ONLINE REGISTRATION VIA RunGrants.....	30
B. WHITE PAPER AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTION SUBMISSION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 1
C. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF THE WHITE PAPER	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
D. FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PACKAGE	37
E. INFORMATION YOU MUST SUBMIT IF SELECTED FOR POSSIBLE AWARD.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
F. SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM) REGISTRATION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
GRANTS CERTIFICATIONS, UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER, AND CAGE CODE.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
G. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES	Error! Bookmark not defined. 4
H. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW	56
I. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS.....	56
V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION	57
A. CRITERIA	57
B. REVIEW PROCESS	60
C. DISCLOSURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING BY CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
D. NO GUARANTEED AWARD.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
A. WHITE PAPER SELECTION AND NONSELECTION NOTICES.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
B. AWARD NOTICES.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
C. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 3
D. REPORTING	Error! Bookmark not defined. 5
VII. AGENCY CONTACTS	Error! Bookmark not defined. 6
A. TECHNICAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined. 6
B. GENERAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined. 7
C. PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined. 7
VIII. OTHER INFORMATION	67
A. GRANTS OFFICERS AUTHORITY	67

B. ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES.....68

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. OBJECTIVES

The aim of DEPSCoR is to improve the research capabilities at institutions of higher education (IHE) 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 will focus on research collaboration through human and technical resources by soliciting applications in a DEPSCoR – Research Collaboration (RC) competition. DEPSCoR – RC seeks proposals that advance knowledge in basic science involving bold and ambitious research that may lead to extraordinary outcomes such as disrupting accepted theories and perspectives.

Authority for a grant 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 amended and reauthorized over the years since. (See specifically 10 U.S.C. 4010).

B. COLLABORATION COMPOSITION

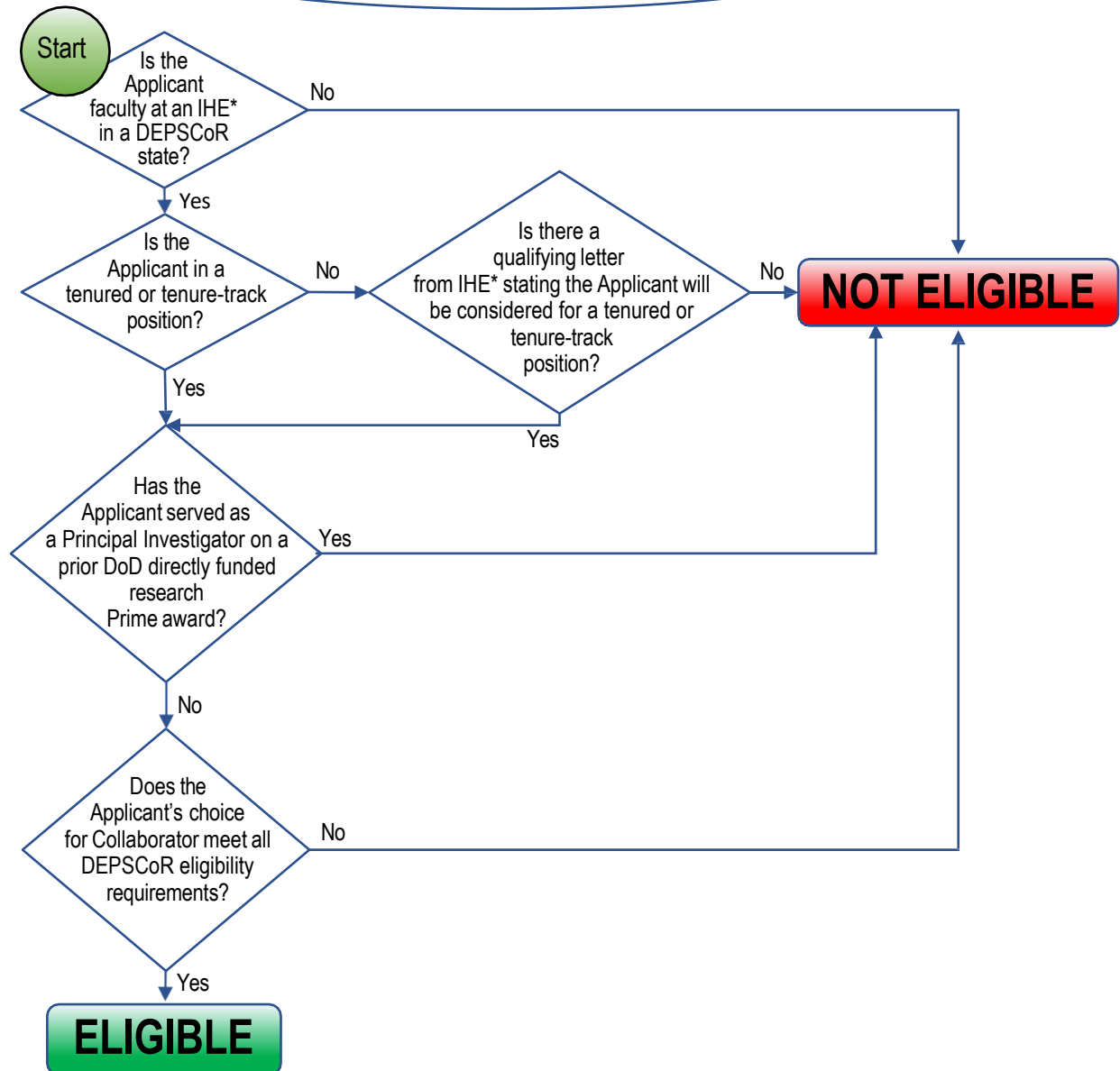
This funding opportunity aims to create basic research collaborations between a **pair** of researchers, namely 1) Applicant/Principal Investigator (PI), henceforth referred to as Applicant, a full-time faculty member who

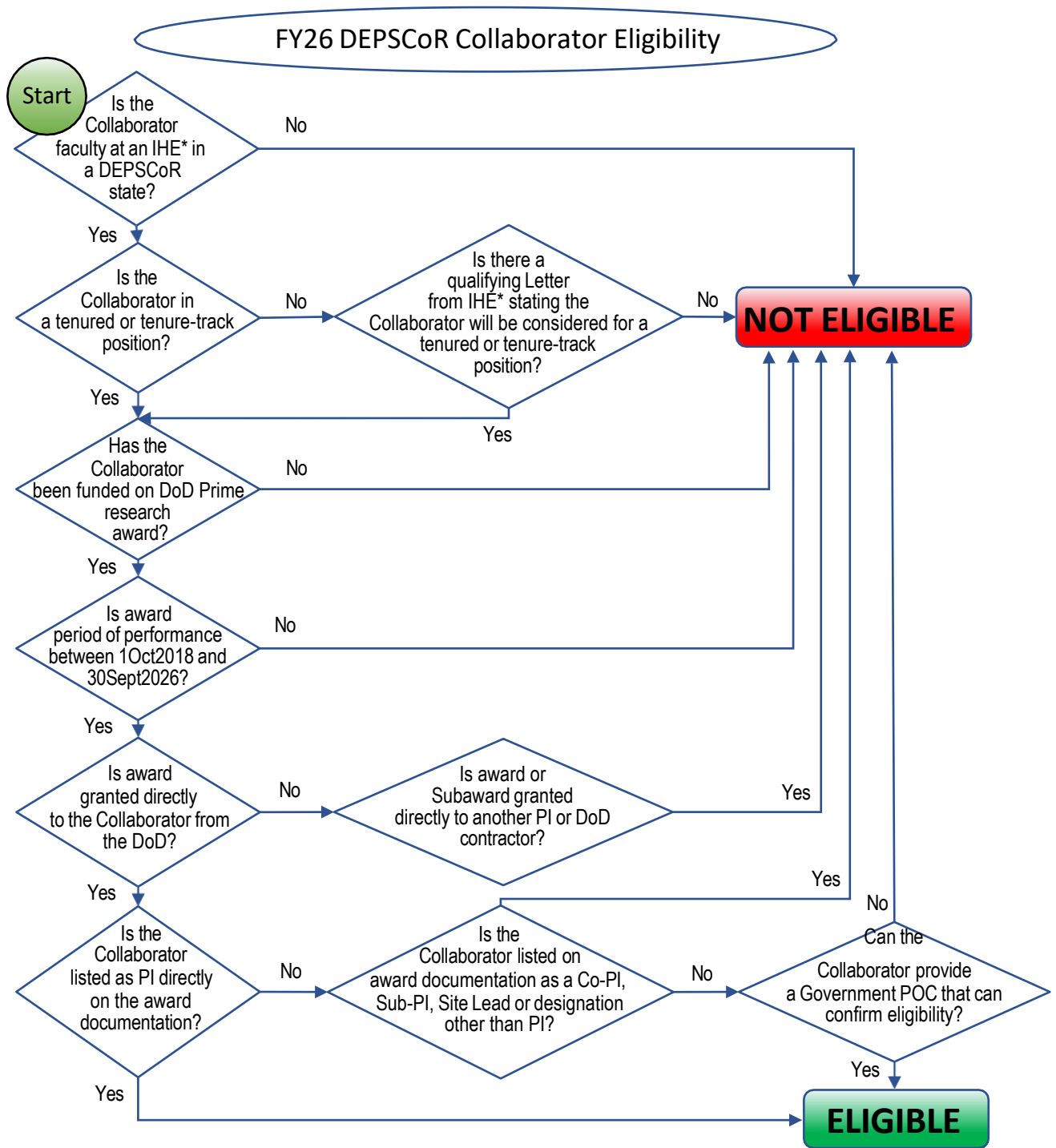
has never served as a PI on a prior DoD directly funded research Prime award; and 2) Collaborator/co-Principal Investigator (co-PI), henceforth referred to as Collaborator, an investigator who will provide mentorship to the Applicant **and** has served as a PI on a DoD directly funded research Prime award actively between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026. This structure is aimed at introducing potential applicants to the DoD's unique research challenges and its supportive research ecosystem. Only one Applicant/Principal Investigator and one Collaborator/co-PI are allowed per application.

Applicants must be aware of the following eligibility criteria:

- You are eligible to apply as the Applicant under the DEPSCoR-RC FOA as long as you were NOT listed as the Principal Investigator on a previous DoD funded research award and are a full-time faculty member in a tenured or tenure track position in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory. Being a “Co-PI” or “sub-PI” on a prior DoD funded award does not count as being a “PI” for the purposes of eligibility of the Applicant for the DEPSCoR-RC FOA.
- The DEPSCoR-RC White Paper package must include prior research award documentation which indicates that the Collaborator was a PI on a previous DoD directly funded research Prime award between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026. If the Collaborator is not identified as the PI within the award document, a letter from the awarding agency point of contact should be furnished supporting the assertion within the timeframe identified.
- The Collaborator must have served as a Principal Investigator on a directly funded DoD research Prime award between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026 and not have been subcontracted by other PIs, non-DoD entities, or companies as a Co-Principal Investigator. Subawards, indirectly funded by the DoD where the Collaborator has served as a Co-Principal Investigator does not count as eligible criteria for the Collaborator for the purposes of this funding opportunity announcement.
- The [flow charts below](#) serve as a guide for determining Applicant and Collaborator eligibility. Each diamond shape is an eligibility criterion question which elicits either a “yes” or “no” response. You are not eligible to submit a White Paper or Full Proposal if any “yes” or “no” response leads to the “Not eligible” outcome. Submissions found to be “Not eligible” will not be subject to technical review. You are not eligible to submit a White Paper or Full Proposal if you do not meet this requirement.

FY26 DEPSCoR Applicant Eligibility





*** Institution of Higher Education (IHE) must be in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory and with an advanced degree which must be directly in the Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) fields.**

For example, an eligible IHE that offers a master's in education but only offers bachelor's degrees in physics and engineering would not qualify under this rule because its advanced degree program is not in science, mathematics, or engineering granting program in science, mathematics, and/or engineering.

The Applicant is permitted to submit only one DEPSCoR-RC White Paper per this DEPSCoR-RC NOFO FOA. Each White Paper is permitted a single Applicant and a single Collaborator.

Collaborators are allowed to work with more than one Applicant and thus aren't restricted from participating in more than one White Paper. However, please note it is expected that Collaborators serve as a vital component of the proposed team and commit to providing time for research collaboration and mentorship throughout the entire process.

The website <https://discover.dtic.mil/products-services/> is a non-comprehensive repository of government-funded scientific, technical, and engineering information for the DoD. Researchers and Applicants new to DoD are encouraged to visit the site as a starting point for identifying past and present DoD-funded researchers.

OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations has also established a “Connect and Collaborate” site which prospective Applicants and Collaborators, seeking collaboration in this DEPSCoR opportunity can post their interest. Please see (<https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depacor>) for more information. Posting your interest is NOT a requirement.

While each member of the collaboration should be in a tenure-track appointment or tenured at an IHE in DEPSCoR-eligible States/Territories, you do not need to be in the same State/Territory. Likewise, the Applicant and Collaborator can have appointments at the same IHE.

Proposals should name the Applicant as the PI and their IHE as the primary institution. Awards will be issued to the IHE where the Applicant maintains a position as faculty. It is anticipated but not a requirement that the Collaborator will be funded through a sub-award. The Applicant IHE must receive greater than 50% of the funding. The relationship among participating institutions and their respective roles, as well as the apportionment of funds including sub-awards, if any, shall be described in both the proposal text and the budget. All key personnel proposed must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible state. This specifically refers to the two-person team required to apply for and execute the research.

The relationship is structured as a mentor-mentee pairing, and both individuals must satisfy strict, distinct eligibility and role requirements. Apart providing

technical expertise to the project, the Collaborator is strongly encouraged to provide guidance and mentorship to the Applicant in the DoD application process.

In this announcement, the term “you/your” refers to the Applicant.

C. TOPICS

The FY26 DEPSCoR – Research Collaboration competition seeks proposals addressing the topics listed below. You are strongly encouraged to contact the Topic Area Program Officer prior to submitting a White Paper, preferably by email to discuss the current state of the art in his/her area of interest and how your research would advance it. This information will be requested in the [IV.C.4 White Paper Package](#).

SECTION	Topic Number	SERVICE	TOPIC AREA	PROGRAM OFFICER
I.C.1	1	Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR)	Space Biosciences	Dr. Jennifer Talley
I.C.2	2	AFOSR	Dynamic Data and Information Processing	Dr. Erik Blasch
I.C.3	3	AFOSR	Condensed Matter Physics	Dr. Jiwei Lu
I.C.4	4	AFOSR	Aerodynamic Sciences	Dr. Amanda Chou
I.C.5	5	Army Research Office (ARO)	Earth Materials and Processes	Dr. Josh Boschelli
I.C.6	6	ARO	Dynamical Influences on Performance	Dr. Greg Ruark
I.C.7	7	ARO	Wireless Communications Networks	Dr. Robert Ulman
I.C.8	8	ARO	Electrochemistry	Dr. Matthew Glasscott
I.C.9	9	Office of Naval Research (ONR)	Nonlinear Transforms for Dynamical Systems	Dr. Meredith Hutchinson
I.C.10	10	ONR	Local and Regional Assessment for Public Affairs	Dr. Rebecca L. Goolsby
I.C.11	11	ONR	Fundamental Mechanisms and Materials for Shock Mitigation for Warfighter Protection	Dr. Timothy Bentley
I.C.12	12	ONR	Fundamental research on efficient packaging and deployment of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)	Dr. Pranav Shah

Topic 1: Space Bioscience

Program Description: As activities in space, particularly outer space, increase, the Department of the Air Force (DAF) must look for new innovations that go beyond today's technology. The vision of this program is to harness the power of biology through discovery research in life sciences that will lead to innovative and disruptive solutions and prevent technical surprises for DAF interests in the space domain. Life science, the study of living things and life processes to include micro- to macro-organisms, will provide a greater understanding of the space environment as well as lead to advancing technology in both space and terrestrial environments.

Basic Research Objectives: The study of living organisms and associated processes and materials is complex particularly in the vast space environment which changes drastically with geodetic height. The influence of the earth's magnetic fields, cosmic rays, the sun's radiation, microgravity, extreme temperature fluctuations, low pressure, and space weather is not well understood in its effects on living systems or biomaterials including bacteria, viruses, plants, and animal systems. Understanding how these living systems are affected in transitioning from a terrestrial environment to a space environment can provide great insight for more resilient and robust future space technology. Can living systems that are able to survive and adapt in this harsh environment lead to space technology being unimaginable today?

This portfolio seeks knowledge and understanding of these life processes in a space environment. Understanding these processes may lead to new technologies of importance to DAF. For example, these investigations may lead to a new approach to space craft design that is better suited to the harsh space environment. Such systems may be modular, miniature, sustainable, produced quickly on-demand, scalable, autonomous, and/or optimized systems well suited for the space environment. These discoveries may also provide new advances in space manufacturing in space service and repair. These innovations could lead to materials that have improved space survivability that offer reduced cost, space hardening, increased flexibility of operations, support rapid and precise repositioning, improve their resilience, provide new capabilities, sustainably destroy or recycle their materials, reduce required materials, stabilize those materials for the space domain, produce materials on demand in the environment, and/or shield these materials from the space environment. They must contend with the harsh environment of space and therefore must also be tested, evaluated, and modeled in the space environment. Discoveries may lead to adaptive intelligent systems designed to protect spacecraft from damage to debris or other harmful scenarios.

Life Science technologies may provide solutions to many current space challenges including maneuvering without regret, efficient harvesting of energy in situ, producing materials from space resources, and thermal management. Understanding how newly developed technology derived from biological designs and biotechnology can augment and be teamed with existing engineered machines and designs is also of interest. These research interests outlined here, as well as other life science studies that lead to greater knowledge of living organisms in the space environment, are of interest.

Researchers are highly encouraged to contact the Program Officer prior to developing a full proposal to briefly discuss the current state-of-the-art and what is truly new or innovative about the proposed new work.

TOPIC 1 POC: DR. JENNIFER TALLEY, AFOSR/RTB2 - RESC

Email: afri.afosr.spacebiology@us.af.mil

Topic 2: Dynamic Data and Information Processing

Program Description: The portfolio seeks mathematical concepts that dynamically incorporate additional information, such as measured data or enhanced models, into an executing domain to coordinate dynamic measurement collections, model refinements, and system awareness. Examples include dynamic data driven applications systems (DDAS), physics-enhanced machine learning (PEML), and physics-based and human-derived information fusion (PHIF). Key developments should harness the use of first-principle models towards real, simulated, or augmented signals, data, and information processing to obtain substantial comparative improvements over existing methods. The portfolio encourages multidisciplinary research, especially synergistic and systematic collaborations between domain researchers in engineering, mathematics, and computer sciences for multiresolution systems modeling, diagnostics, and analytics.

Basic Research Objectives: Foster individual and multidisciplinary research, technology development, and system analysis over emerging science and technology frontiers.

Domain Modeling: Advance large-scale simulations for real-time control, in concert with heterogeneous data collection, model updates, and system processing. Research advances should describe different levels of detail and modalities, invoke appropriate models, and interface with other data systems. For example, ideas to engender an integration of large-scale simulations, models, and data to advance traditional data processing paradigms and digital twin technology.

Mathematical and Statistical Algorithms: Design methods for stable and robust convergence properties under perturbations induced by time-dependent (periodic and non-periodic, scheduled and event-driven) data inputs, multiple scales and model variations. Address enhanced asynchronous algorithms with stable communication between networked resources, multimodal modeling, and uncertainty quantification. For example, concepts to dynamically invoke models requiring elegant methods of uncertainty quantification, management, and propagation.

Measurement Systems and Methods: Innovate instrumentation platforms for collecting data, registering measurements, controlling sampling rates, and multiplexing multi-source information. For example, designs to determine heterogeneous and embedded distributed sensor networks architectures, information fusion paradigms, and operationally robust performance.

Areas of interest to the Air Force and Space Force include:

Autonomy (e.g., leveraging large-scale modeling of mission planning, collaborative/cooperative control, and data learning for data analytics);
Agility (e.g., designing computational methods of sensor-based processing, ad-hoc network configurations, and multi-scale multi-physics simulations for decision support);

Authority (e.g., coupling high-performance aircraft health monitoring, space situational awareness, and ground operations for command and control);

Activeness (e.g., understanding materials stresses and degradation; embedded diagnostics, complex adaptive systems verification and validation, and cognitive performance augmentation for situational understanding).

New approaches are encouraged for combining computational, empirical, cognitive, theoretical, and analytical methods for interactive testing of multiple scientific and engineering hypotheses. Programmatic activities launched under this initiative will support research in individual areas of interest to the Air Force Research Laboratory, but mostly in the context of multidisciplinary research across the Basic Area Objectives mentioned above.

TOPIC 2 POC: DR. ERIK BLASCH, AFOSR/RTA2-RESA

Email: D2IP@us.af.mil

Topic 3: Condensed Matter Physics

Program Description: The Condensed Matter Physics program seeks to investigate modern directions in the fundamental physics of condensed matter. The ultimate goal is to lead discoveries of new states of matter and understanding of fundamental phenomena towards exploitation and engineering of electronic, magnetic and photonic properties for future disruptive capabilities that are of critical interest to the U.S. Air and Space Forces.

Basic Research Objectives: This program pursues balanced experimental and theoretical studies, aimed at discovery and understanding of new matter states and phase transitions in both equilibrium and non-equilibrium conditions, as well as understanding of their properties. The topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

Topological phases and states: The topological states in electronic materials provide protection to physical properties, for example, conductivity and spin. The interest of this topic includes prediction and discovery of interacting topological materials, new approaches for identifying topological states and effects, and characterization and understanding of defects, e.g. dislocation, in topological phases. The prediction and realization of high temperature topological states is of particular interest.

Strongly correlated systems: Strongly correlated systems exhibit complex types of ordering and multifunctional properties arising from the subtle interplay between competing degrees of freedom in a near degenerate energy landscape. The interest of this topic includes prediction and realization of correlated electronic topological phases, control and modulation of electronic correlation in heterostructures, new theoretical

approaches for strongly correlated systems, and unique methods of probing emergent phenomena associated with strong correlation.

Quantum phase transitions: Understanding quantum critical points is a steppingstone to understanding important phenomena in many condensed matter systems, such as high-temperature superconductivity, heavy fermions, and quantum magnetism. This thrust seeks experimental efforts in identifying quantum critical points, exploring phase diagrams, and probing the dynamics of physical properties near quantum critical points in model systems. Studies of physical properties (spin, charge, thermal transport), and effects of chemical doping and strain on quantum criticality are of particular interest.

This program does not focus on the synthesis or applications of high TC superconductors, metamaterials, or device physics.

TOPIC 3 POC: DR. JIWEI LU, AFOSR/RTB1-RESB

E-mail: CMPhysics@us.af.mil

TOPIC 4: Aerodynamic Sciences

Program Description: The Aerodynamic Sciences portfolio supports basic research of fundamental flowfield physics across a range of conditions. Greater understanding of the fundamentals of flowfield physics is crucial for exploitation into air vehicle performance gains relevant to the USAF. The portfolio is interested in aerodynamic flowfields arising in both internal and external configurations and extending over a wide range of Reynolds numbers. The portfolio seeks to emphasize the characterization, modeling, prediction, and control of flow instabilities, turbulent flows, and aerodynamic fluid-structure/material interactions. A focus on the understanding of the fundamental flow physics, the dynamics and control of aerodynamic shear flows, and interactions of these flows with rigid and flexible surfaces in motion is motivated by an interest in developing physics based predictive models and innovative control concepts for these flows.

Basic Research Objectives: Research in this portfolio is focused on variety of topics including fluid-structure/material interactions, vortex dominated flows, free and wall-bounded shear layer flows, time-dependent flows, and transitional & turbulent flows. Greater understanding of these and related topics will lead to improved air vehicle performance relevant to USAF air vehicle configurations. The portfolio maintains an interest in the dynamic interaction between steady & unsteady fluid motion, linear & nonlinear structural deformations, and aerodynamic control effectors for a wide range of flight regimes.

The portfolio seeks to advance fundamental understanding of complex aerodynamic flow field phenomena through integration of theoretical, numerical, and experimental approaches. Research incorporating these elements that improve understanding of these complex flows are strongly encouraged. Flow field studies are expected to involve an approach based on fundamental insight into the dynamics of such flows. In cases where that insight may not exist, studies examining fundamental flow physics with a path to enabling control of the flow may be of interest. Flow control efforts integrating modeling,

control theory, and advanced sensor and/or actuator technology for application to a flow of interest are also encouraged.

Note that basic research of the variety typically funded by the portfolio may not yet have a clear transition path to an application but nevertheless should be relevant to U.S. Air Force interests. Proposers are highly encouraged to contact the Program Officer via email prior to developing a full proposal to discuss the current state of the art in their area of interest, how the proposed research would advance it, the approximate cost for a three (3) year effort, and if there are any specific submission target dates.

TOPIC 4 POC: DR. AMANDA CHOU, AFOSR/RTA1-RESA

E-mail: aerodynamics@us.af.mil

Topic 5: Earth Materials and Processes

Program Description: The Earth Materials and Processes program seeks to enable maneuver, communication and situational awareness in all terrain through understanding and prediction of the physical and mechanical properties and behaviors of rocks, soil, and man-made earth surfaces and their interactions with their surrounding environment. The Program is especially interested in interdisciplinary efforts that could be eligible for cross-discipline support. Topics for consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

Investigations on the transmission of information (e.g., seismic, acoustic, electromagnetic, or radio frequency) in challenging environments: Of special interest are urban, high-latitude, high-altitude, and forested environments. Access to new field areas and high-resolution data collection and modeling provide opportunities to differentiate sources and characterize terrain.

Research on fundamental processes within the built environment: How natural and artificial surfaces (e.g., soil, sand, or concrete) store and conduct energy depending on their spatial relationships, inherent material properties, and imparted features such as moisture storage and evapotranspiration. Detailed characterization of these environments will enable prediction of geophysical and environmental processes in diverse urban settings. Investigations that support the development, integrity, and resilience of cyber-physical systems as related to environmental sensing are of special interest.

Science to advance environmental security: These efforts must focus on the fundamental knowledge that will inform new approaches and tools to predict and mitigate risks posed by challenging environments and extreme weather events and to ensure access to natural resources, including strategic minerals. Note that (1) the Program focus is on the science required to enable development of tools and products, not the development of the tools and products themselves, and (2) proposals must target specific Army-relevant challenges rather than general topics (e.g., extreme weather, natural hazards, as broadly defined). A discussion with the program manager is encouraged to determine if a topic sufficiently addresses an Army challenge.

TOPIC 5 POC: DR. JOSH BOSCHELLI, ARO

Email: joshua.d.boschelli.civ@army.mil

Topic 6: Dynamical Influences on Performance

Program Description: The overall goal of this program is to enhance fundamental understanding of interdependent, reciprocal, and complex relationships within and across complex systems, accounting for key contextual factors to understand, enhance, and as necessary modify performance across operational environments. Performance denotes activities undertaken by actors to complete a task required to achieve a desired outcome. Actors, however, do not perform within bubbles but within and across operational environments uniquely defined by constantly changing conditions, goals, timelines, etc., sometimes parallel to the actors, sometimes in competition with, and/or in opposition to them. These dynamic influences introduce variability to performance within and across tasks from minimum to that of normative to (mal)adaptive. Therefore, performance represents the intersection between the bottom-up actor's capabilities and top-down contextual factors - temporal, physical, organizational, national, international – where success in the near-, mid-, and/or long-term depends on the dynamic interplay of these factors within and across the various systems. Furthermore, the influence of contextual factors transcends the task that may impact the evaluation of performance in the near-, mid-and/or long-term and within and across systems. Altogether, it is important to take a holistic approach that accounts for the interaction between actors and contextual elements (system, temporal, environmental, etc.) that in the moment and over time shape performance to understand, enhance, and modify to meet mission requirements. For the purpose of this topic, actors denote may denote humans and/or machines (e.g., intelligent systems) as individuals, teams, and/or teams of teams (multi-team systems) as well as larger collectives such as a unit (e.g., brigade) and organization (e.g., the U.S. Army).

The Dynamical Influences on Performance program supports fundamental research to identify and understand key contextual factors that lead to the construction, maintenance, and as necessary reconstruction of systems actors operate within to promote conditions necessary for effective performance. Successful projects will develop innovative theoretical, methodological, and modeling approaches to understand scalable behaviors within complex systems and across environments accounting for the bottom-up and top-down factors that guide, and under certain conditions, directs performance. This program has three focal areas of interest. First, create the scientific capability to identify and assess the influence of meaningful contextual factors (physical, organizational, national, international, etc.) that consciously and unconsciously impact ongoing affective, cognitive, and behavioral processes within and across individuals and collectives. Second, to enable the integration of the science of time (i.e., the experience and perception of time) to understand cascading effects beyond first and second order effects on social systems accounting for the differences within and across actors and systems. Third, to understand how advanced technologies with increasing human characteristics may influence its performance (subjective and objective) to include interaction with key contextual factors in dynamic environments and may redefine performance within complex systems.

TOPIC 6 POC: DR. GREG RUARK, ARO

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Topic 7: Wireless Communications Networks

Program Description: This program is concerned with the investigation and advancement of network science as it applies to communication networks in wireless and tactical environments, focusing on DoD and Army unique problems. Of primary interest is research applicable to infrastructure-less multi-hop wireless networks operating in congested and contested spectrum. Also of interest is the analysis of mutual interaction among communications, social, and information networks.

Wireless Network Theory: Research is required in the broad area of wireless network science including fundamental limits, performance characterization, novel architectures, and high-fidelity simulation of multi-hop wireless networks with mobility, node loss, natural and man-made impairments and unpredictable, bursty traffic. Novel analytical tools and simulation techniques may be necessary to allow for the modeling of very large networking scenarios without losing the fidelity at the physical layer, which is critical in millimeter wave networks. Emerging communications network paradigms of Software Defined Networking (SDN) and Network Function Virtualization (NFV) are also of interest as applied to wireless and hybrid networks. Concepts from SDN/NFV could be adapted for wireless ad hoc networks, centralization is not desirable, but policy control and hierarchical control of semi-autonomous systems could adapt to disconnected and limited connectivity networks. NFV, facilitated by SDN, should adapt resources according to the needs and objectives of the users that are desired. Extending concepts of NFV and adapting the network to the mission can be extended to distributed data caching and processing.

Ad Hoc and Sensor Networks: Networks serving Army need to operate in highly dynamic environments with limited or no infrastructure support. Available spectrum may be highly congested and contested, and mobile nodes may only have access to noisy local information with limited awareness of remote nodes in the network. Novel networking approaches may be needed to account for the lack of full network state information and reduce the penalty incurred due to coordination while sustaining acceptable performance. Networking algorithms may need to choose between various radio interfaces, such as traditional military bands, mm wave, and commercial (e.g., cellular) based on throughput, reliability, and security trade-offs.

Adaptive and specialized machine learning techniques are needed for dynamic allocation of network resources based on operation needs, traffic characteristics, mobility, natural and man-made spectrum interference conditions, and security considerations. Networking and sensing architectures for cognitive mobile ad hoc networks need to be developed with qualitative and quantitative performance measures, and the impacts of mobility, fading, and multi-user interference need to be investigated. Networking in combat operations may need to cope with the presence of adversarial actions of various types, including strategically inserted spectral impediments. New signal processing, information theory, game theory and network science methodologies are needed to provide reliable and efficient communications in the presence of various adversarial actions. The analysis and characterization of fundamental tradeoffs among conflicting objectives such as Low Probability of Detection (LPD) vs. rate of communications vs. operating in a

limited frequency spectrum are needed, along with novel techniques to achieve optimally located areas in the trade-off boundaries.

Novel and Revolutionary Methods in Communications and Networking: The synergy among social networking and communication networking, particularly in a tactical mobile ad-hoc scenario, is a research area that could advance the design of new communication approaches. There are many social networking aspects that are common to mobile ad-hoc networking needs such as distributed decision making, robustness, cooperation, self-organization, and cluster formation. Novel physical and MAC layer techniques are required to improve LPI / LPD / AJ capabilities as well as throughput. Examples include mm wave and (sub) THz. bands, which have unique characteristics to overcome or exploit, such as directivity, large bandwidth, and limited range. With limited bandwidth, the co-existence and dual use of communication and sensing signals should be explored. In addition, exploration of quantum information processing, teleportation and networked quantum information theory is of interest.

Extremely Large-Scale Antenna Arrays (ELSAA): There is emerging interest in precise manipulation of phase, frequency, and polarization across large apertures. In the Fresnel near field, ELSAA-enabled waveforms can curve around obstacles (e.g., Airy beams), self-heal around small objects (e.g., Bessel beams), and focus energy into confined regions with high precision. These properties allow ELSAA to deliver electromagnetic energy onto UAVs and other agile or low-signature targets for sensing, tracking, classification, and countermeasures, achieving effects not possible with conventional beams. Proposals should combine analysis, modeling, simulation, and experimentation with emphasis on hardware-driven waveform control. Key research thrusts include: aperture architectures (e.g., novel extremely large-scale array antennas, synchronized distributed arrays, reconfigurable-intelligent-surface (RIS) with spatial electromagnetic control); waveform generation (e.g., single-signal and multi-signal (MIMO) approaches, novel structured waveforms and adaptations of existing beams, waveforms optimized for sensing, directed energy, communications, and counter-UAV operations); system integration and control (e.g., higher-layer waveform selection and adaptive control, coordination of multi-element apertures for near-field and far-field operation, realization of waveforms in hardware considering SWaP, calibration, and synchronization). The goal is synergistic hardware–waveform research to ensure that engineered waveforms are not only theoretically possible, but also practically

TOPIC 7 POC: DR. ROBERT ULMAN, ARO

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Topic 8: Electrochemistry

Program Description: This Program supports fundamental electrochemical studies to understand and control the physics and chemistry that governs electrochemical redox reactions and transport of species, and how these are coupled with electrode, catalysis, electrolyte, and interface. Research includes ionic conduction in electrolytes, electrocatalysis, interfacial electron transfer, transport through coatings, surface films and polymer electrolytes, activation of carbon-hydrogen and carbon-carbon bonds, and

spectroscopic techniques that selectively probe electrode surfaces and electrode-electrolyte interfaces. Novel electrochemical synthesis, investigations into the effect of microenvironment on chemical reactivity, quantitative models of electrochemical systems, and electrochemistry using excited electrons are also of interest. This Program is divided into two research thrusts, although other areas of electrochemical research may be considered:

Reduction-oxidation (Redox) Chemistry and Electrocatalysis: The Redox Chemistry and Electrocatalysis thrust supports research to understand how material and morphology affect electron transfer and electrocatalysis, to tailor electrodes and electrocatalysts at a molecular level, and to discover new spectroscopic and electrochemical techniques for probing surfaces and selected species on those surfaces.

Transport of Electroactive Species: The Transport of Electroactive Species thrust supports research to uncover the mechanisms of transport through heterogeneous, charged environments such as polymers and electrolytes, to design tailorable electrolytes based on new polymers and ionic liquids, and to explore new methodologies and computational approaches to study the selective transport of species in charged environments.

TOPIC 8 POC: DR. MATTHEW GLASSCOTT, ARO

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Topic 9: Nonlinear Transforms for Dynamical Systems

Program Description: The applied physical mathematics program focuses on foundational theory and experimental approaches concerning wave, energy, heat, and momentum dynamics. New mathematics and methods that provide representation of the physical problem, with assumptions that respect physical dynamics, are sought. Emphasis is placed on spatio-temporal problems utilizing methods that maintain geometric order and seek to develop a minimum description of the spatio-temporal relatedness.

Objectives: Research objectives include, but are not limited to:

- Nonlinear transforms that are invertible and maintain geometric order
- Transform and mathematical theory that simplifies or linearizes a problem without loss of information
- Transforms and mathematics focused on geometric curvature as related to dynamical system representation
- Models and methods that make use of Lagrangian frameworks to preserve and simplify geometrical order in transport problems
- Methods, theory, and experiments that provide the ability to understand how a material, fluid, particle(s), or system acts on or with its environment through nonlinear transport of mass, heat, energy, and momentum

TOPIC 9 POC: DR. MEREDITH HUTCHINSON, ONR/CODE 33

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Topic 10: Local and Regional Assessment for Public Affairs

Program Description: This topic supports basic research to support human-centered operations in the information environment, focusing on the problem of narrative conflict in local and regional populations. The US Navy and Marine Corps operate in many situations in which face-to-face communications and local media play more important roles than other forms of media. Understanding local community effects on mission messaging is a new, high priority topic. See the Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 8: Information, (<https://marine.mil/News/Publications/MCPEL/Electronic-Library-Display/Article/3077947>) and Marine Corps Working Paper 8-10 : Information in Marine Corps Operations, (<https://marines.mil/News/Publications/MCPEL/Electronic-Library-Display/Article/3712860/mcwp-8-10/>) for further information on these new doctrinal considerations.

Local radio, newspapers, engagements, and events are key to “getting the message out,” framing the mission message, and dealing with misinformation, disinformation, and malign information that are critical to public affairs communications, particularly in conflict situations in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and other less studied regions. Research is needed to assist in understanding the obstacles and challenges of communicating in local communities where narrative conflicts are likely to present challenges to public affairs communications. Leveraging new scientific research in cognition, suasion, and local factors can assist public affairs in improving communications.

Objectives: The goal of this effort is to develop new theory and new insights into the role of local communications in the development of attitudes, biases, and perceptions. This research will guide the development of new US Navy/Marine Corps doctrine in information and communications. Similar doctrinal development efforts are beginning at US Army, US Air Force, and at the Joint Force level. Research in this area should seek to provide better understanding of local processes of social cognition, including the role of local media, real-world events, language and community processes, to identify problems and issues, improve planning and engagement, and assist in countering malign information.

A notional list of potential sub-topics that might be good matches for this topic include:

- New methods and studies in how community relationships affect attitudes, biases, and receptivity to new information
- Cognitive dissonance in local communities and its impact on narratives in conflict
- Rumor propagation in local community contexts (and how rumor is controlled by local community processes)
- The role of local radio and local media in information dissemination
- The role of real-world events in information dissemination
- Community-based methods in countering disinformation and malign information

Successful research projects will provide practical insights into key problems and issues in communications. Research that can provide insight and guidance into the development of future doctrine for public affairs is especially desired.

TOPIC 10 POC: DR. REBECCA L. GOOLSBY, OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH, ONR/CODE 34

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Topic 11: Fundamental Mechanisms and Materials for Shock Mitigation for Warfighter Protection

Program Description: This topic solicits research focused on understanding fundamental mechanisms of reducing kinetic energy inputs to biological systems, especially the human body, through novel material and system solutions.

Shock waves from kinetic energy including accelerative, blunt, blast, and ballistic events are one of the leading causes of human injury, such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), among warfighters. This shock mitigation program supports investigation of advanced composite materials/systems that can effectively prevent shock damage to the human. Proposed composite materials/systems can be metal/soft matter/ceramic-based composites that absorb shock energy by both their elastic/plastic deformation at different length scales and their unique constituent-matrix interplay, e.g., interfacial shockwave attenuation/reflection and micro-fragmentation.

Revealing fundamental mechanisms of shock mitigation composites, e.g., through multi-physics and multi-scale approaches, is essential to definitive description of their physical properties. Comprehensive experimental, theoretical, and computational characterizations of advanced composite materials/systems will include constituent materials, phase interpenetrating, structural characteristics, elastic/plastic properties, high strain rate deformation, and shockwave propagation and attenuation.

This program also emphasizes innovative manufacturing techniques and processes of such protective composite materials/systems toward rapid technology transfer. Recent technological advances in 0D, 1D and 2D nanomaterials offer strong and tough fillers for development of high-performance composite materials/systems. However, the cost-effective and high-throughput manufacturing of these nanocomposites still lacks useful real-world manufacturing approaches. Proposed material solutions must have a foreseeable route to manufacturability now or in the near future, rather than purely conceptual approaches that could not be achieved without extreme advances in material sciences.

In brief, the shock mitigation program aims to rapidly advance fundamental understanding and technical know-hows of innovative composite materials/systems for effective shock mitigation with an emphasis on prevention of shock-induced TBI. The materials physics, analytical/computational models, and manufacturing process mechanisms will be beneficial for creation of new military equipment and devices that

require protection against shock waves from conventional explosives or emerging directed energy weapons.

Objectives: Research concentration areas include, but are not limited to:

- Exploration of advanced composite materials/systems with high shockwave mitigation capabilities.
- Development of methods to investigate the shockwave propagation and attenuation mechanisms in materials/systems through integrated experimental and computations efforts.
- Mechanical, thermal, and electrical characterization of protective composite materials/systems including influences of phase distribution, phase interpenetrating and anisotropies.
- Deformation, damage, and fracture mechanics of composite materials/systems.
- Scalable manufacturing of strong and tough nanocomposite materials/systems with high degree quality control.
- Novel measurement methodologies for determining shock intensity, propagation, and reflection in materials/systems.
- Advance the ability of computational models to accurately predict behaviors of composite materials/systems under loading and high strain rate conditions relevant to military environments.

TOPIC 11 POC: DR. TIMOTHY BENTLEY, NAVAL FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION, ONR/Code 34

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Topic 12: Fundamental Research on Efficient Packaging and Deployment of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Program Description: The ASCEND (Aero Science and Technology of Cost-Efficiency and Capabilities in Naval Domain) portfolio at the Office of Naval Research is focused on developing and delivering effective, cost-efficient, and advanced Naval aviation capabilities. To accomplish this, the portfolio supports basic and applied research topics traversing multiple disciplines and thrust areas. One of the critical thrust areas under this portfolio is to study and understand the fundamentals of efficient and rapid packaging and deployment of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) from minimal space. A thorough understanding of these fundamentals will ultimately help develop capabilities to deliver combat mass in multitude and high sortie rates for our warfighters.

Basic Research Objectives: Unique naval challenges, such as extreme environments, high sea states, and limited storage, handling, launch, and recovery space for UAS necessitate a thorough understanding of the fundamentals and innovative solutions for the capabilities enabling efficient packaging and deployment of these assets in an automated fashion. Hence, basic research on the topics listed below is sought. The fundamental research on these topics will help understand challenges and develop novel solutions to

maximize the number of UAS (small or large in size) stored in and rapidly deployed from space-constrained Naval ships and expeditionary land-based platforms.

1. Optimal packaging and deployment of UAS structures
2. Fundamentals of morphing structures
3. Post morphing instability
4. Dynamics of origami structures
5. Multistable state structures
6. Biomimicry

TOPIC 12 POC: DR. PRANAV SHAH, ONR/CODE 35

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II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations anticipate up to \$14.4 million in total funding will be made available for this program to fully fund and award up to twenty-four (24) grants up to \$600,000 (total cost) each. Each grant award will be funded up to \$200,000 (total cost) per year for three (3) years. Awards are subject to funding availability. 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-RC award is to an IHE. However, should the PI transfer IHE, the agency may attempt to accommodate these changes if funds are available and approved by OUSW-R&E/S&T Foundations. Potential options may include: (1) grant remains at awarded DEPSCoR IHE with a new PI, identified by the DEPSCoR awardee, (2) sub-award to the new IHE of the DEPSCoR awardee (new IHE must be in a DEPSCoR-eligible state/territory), or (3) termination of DEPSCoR grant or any combination of the above. The new PI must meet the stated DEPSCoR-eligibility requirements.

The award start date is determined at the time of the 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 - Research Collaboration FOA, OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations anticipates funding up to 4 awards under the DEPSCoR – Capacity Building FOA # NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260003 to support university capacity building activities in DoD-relevant fields. This additional competitive research funding is separate from this announcement and is also set aside for 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](https://www.grants.gov)

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Though this is a collaboration between the Applicant and Collaborator, the Applicant's IHE will submit the proposal. Both the Applicant's and Collaborator's IHE must be located in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory as listed in the table below. Applicant institutions are not limited in the number of applications that can be submitted under this FOA. Applicants (PIs) are permitted to submit only one DEPSCoR-RC White Paper per this DEPSCoR-RC FOA. Each White Paper is permitted a single Applicant and a single Collaborator. Collaborators are allowed to work with more than one Applicant and thus aren't restricted from participating in more than one White Paper. However, please note it is expected that Collaborators serve as a vital component of the proposed team and commit to providing time for research collaboration and mentorship throughout the entire process. All key personnel proposed must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory. Funds may be used to support students and post docs in DEPSCoR eligible States/Territories that support the research effort for both the Applicant and Collaborator. A small portion of the budget may be allocated through a subaward to non-university partners (such as industry or a National DOE lab) in DEPSCoR-eligible States/Territories, but these proposed costs should be justified in the White Paper.

IHEs located in States/Territories deemed eligible to submit proposals for DEPSCoR research grants are based on meeting the following criteria:

- Falls into a specific range of DoD R&D S&E funding to IHE in that State/Territory as defined in legislation.

NB: All activities supported by a DEPSCoR award must be performed in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory.

NB: Funding support for the Applicant and any potential sub awardees is limited to those in the context of federal research administration; the intent is strictly the institutional/organizational address of the Institution of Higher Education (IHE) where the personnel are employed or where the sub-awardee organization is physically located. It does not refer to the

home or residential address of the individual researcher within one or more DEPSCoR eligible States/Territories.

AND

- Contains an advanced degree granting program in science, mathematics, and/or engineering.

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

IHEs do not need to submit proposals through an DEPSCoR 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 AWARDS¹**

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, Full 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 CFR 200.206](#) 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

¹ *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.*

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

1. Employment Requirement

Both the Applicant and Collaborator must hold a tenured or tenure-track position with their IHE, otherwise the White Paper submission must include a letter from the IHE stating that the Applicant or Collaborator (as applicable) will be considered for a tenured or tenure-track position if a short-term appointment is currently held. The team is not eligible to submit a White Paper or Full Proposal if either the Applicant or the Collaborator does not meet this requirement, no exceptions. All key personnel proposed must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible state.

2. Prior DoD-Funding Requirement

- You are eligible to apply as the Applicant under the DEPSCoR-RC FOA as long as you were NOT listed as the Principal Investigator on a previous DoD funded research award and are a full-time faculty member in a tenured or tenure track position in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory. Being a “Co-PI” or “sub-PI” on a prior DoD funded award does not count as being a “PI” for the purposes of eligibility of the Applicant for the DEPSCoR-RC FOA.
- The DEPSCoR-RC White Paper package must include prior research award documentation which indicates that the Collaborator was a PI on a previous DoD directly funded research Prime award between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026. If the Collaborator is not identified as the PI within the award document, a letter from the awarding agency point of contact should be furnished supporting the assertion within the timeframe identified.
- The Collaborator must have served as a Principal Investigator on a directly funded DoD research Prime award during the eligibility period and not have been subcontracted by other PIs, non-DoD entities, or companies as a Co-Principal Investigator. Subawards, indirectly funded by the DoD where the Collaborator has served as a Co-Principal Investigator do not count as eligible criteria for the Collaborator for the purposes of this funding opportunity announcement.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.²

6. 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 Full 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 Full Proposal. Your plan is subject to our approval.

7. 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

² 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

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
- 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

E. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY

Please refer to the [flow charts](#) in Collaboration Composition (Section I.B) and the [Eligibility Checklist](#) questions below (Section IV.B) that serve as a guide for determining Applicant and Collaborator eligibility.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

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

1. Completed online registration via RunGrants (<https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/>). **(Required)**
2. White Paper and Supporting Documentation submission via RunGrants. **(Required)**
3. Full Proposal Submission Package. **(via grants.gov - Required)**
(This is by invitation only. Must include acceptance email as an attachment in block 20 of the SF424.)

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 Wednesday, 7 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/depacor>).

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 – Research Collaboration NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260004.

B. WHITE PAPER AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION

During the RunGrants submission process, you will be asked to verify eligibility by answering a series of questions in an “Eligibility Checklist.” If you (Applicant) or your Collaborator are determined to be ineligible, you will not be permitted to submit a White Paper. We encourage you to start the submission process early and confirm eligibility as soon as possible.

The Eligibility Checklist questions:

- Are the Applicant/Principal Investigator (PI), henceforth referred to as Applicant, and Collaborator/co-Principal Investigator (co-PI), henceforth referred to as Collaborator, faculty at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory and with an advanced degree granting program in science, mathematics, and/or engineering?
- Applicant - [Fill in Name of Institution] - [Fill in Eligible State/Territory]
- Collaborator [Fill in Name]
- Collaborator [Fill in Name of Institution] - [Fill in Eligible State/Territory]
- Is the Applicant a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member?
 - If not in a tenure-track position, is there a qualifying letter from the IHE stating the Applicant will be considered for a tenured or tenure-track position?
 - If applicable, a qualifying letter for the Applicant will need to be uploaded to RunGrants.

- To be eligible to serve as the Applicant, the individual must have never served as a PI on a prior DoD directly funded research Prime award. Is this statement applicable to the Applicant?
 - NOTE: If you served as a Principal Investigator on a research Subaward indirectly funded by the DoD, you still qualify to serve as an Applicant.”
- Is the Collaborator a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member?
 - If not in a tenured or tenure-track position, is there a qualifying letter from the IHE that you can furnish stating the Collaborator will be considered for a tenured or tenure-track position?
 - If applicable, a qualifying letter for the Collaborator will need to be uploaded to RunGrants.
- Has the Collaborator served actively as a Principal Investigator on a prior DoD directly funded research Prime award between 1 OCTOBER 2018 and 30 SEPTEMBER 2026 of which they will furnish a copy as proof?
 - NOTE: If you served ONLY as a PI or Co-PI on a research Subaward indirectly funded by the DoD, this does not satisfy the qualification requirements to serve as a DEPSCoR Collaborator.
- Is the Collaborator identified as the PI on the face of the award document? [Provide Research Project: [Fill in Title] - [Fill in Collaborator’s Research Project Prime Award Number]
 - If not, is there a qualifying letter from the awarding agency POC that states they served as Principal Investigator on the award between 1 OCTOBER 2018 and 30 SEPTEMBER 2026?
 - A copy of the complete award document supporting this claim, or a qualifying letter will need to be uploaded to RunGrants.
- Will the Collaborator provide active mentorship & guidance to the Applicant?
- Have all criteria on this list been marked Yes? Anything marked No is a disqualifier and will be determined a non-eligible factor.
- The undersigned (Applicant) states to the best of their knowledge and belief, that they have completed this eligibility checklist in accordance with the criteria in the FOA.

You will not be able to proceed with the rest of the submission process if you or your Collaborator are determined to be ineligible.

White Papers and Supporting Documentation are a **MANDATORY** component for this three-stage application and submission process to minimize the labor and

cost associated with the production of detailed Full Proposals that have very little chance of being selected for funding.

If you do not register and submit a White Paper and Supporting Documentation 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-basice-research.nvision.noblis.org/program/dep-scor>) by **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday, 5 October 2026** (see Section [IV.F.G.1. Submission Dates and Times](#)).

White Papers and Supporting Documentation **must be submitted** to RunGrants (<https://dod-basice-research.nvision.noblis.org/program/dep-scor>) 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 email 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

1. Pre-White Paper Inquiries and Questions

For help with technical matters, you should contact the Program Officer (PO) identified as the POC for your topic of interest as listed in section [I.C. TOPICS](#). All technical discussions must take place prior to White Paper submission. After the White Paper deadline, applicants may no longer contact the Program Officers listed in section I.C. TOPICS.

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

The PO 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.

2. White Paper and Supporting Documentation (as a whole)

White Papers and Supporting Documentation 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 they cover and not be merely a copy of the topic title.

Applicants must submit the following White Paper and supporting documentation components. All components are required unless specified “when applicable”:

- (1)** White Paper (required)
 - Cover Page
 - Abstract
 - Program Description Narrative
 - Collaboration Composition Statement
 - Basic Research Statement
 - Anticipated human subjects or vertebrate animals subject research, when applicable
 - [2] Curriculum Vitae (2-page limit each) for Applicant and Collaborator
 - [2] Previous DoD Funding List. List all previous DoD research relevant funding³ for both the Applicant and Collaborator. **If the Applicant has no prior DoD funding, the following statement must be included, “The Applicant has never received DoD funding.”**
- (2)** Previous Collaborator Prime Research Award Document (required)
- (3)** Qualifying Letter(s) (when applicable)

Each White Paper and Supporting Documentation component is described in detail in Section 4 “White Paper Package.” All Applicants must submit their White Paper Package using the guidelines established in Section 4.

3. Marking Requirements for Confidential Proprietary Information

³ These are examples of DoD research relevant funding sources and do not represent a comprehensive list: Air Force Office of Scientific Research, Army Research Office, Office of Naval Research, Air Force Research Laboratory, Army Research Laboratory, U.S. Naval Research Laboratory, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

You must mark any 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.

4. White Paper Package

The due date for receipt of White Papers and Supporting Documentation 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 highly encouraged.

All documents in the White Paper package must be submitted in PDF format in compliance with the guidelines and file naming conventions below. When submitting the White Paper and Supporting Documents, you must upload the following as three (3) separate PDF files:

- (1)** White Paper (required)
- (2)** Previous Collaborator Prime Research Award Document (required)
- (3)** Qualifying Letter(s) (when applicable)

White Paper (required):

a. Cover page (see Proposal Length below): Include your name, IHE, proposed title, topic number addressed, and the name of the program officer contacted about the proposed work (if engaged). Include a protective legend for proprietary information, if applicable.

b. Abstract (not to exceed 500 words): Describe the research problem and objective, technical approaches, and anticipated outcomes of the research. 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. Program Description Narrative (three (3) page limit, single-sided): State the defense challenge or topic area of research. Describe the basic scientific research approach. Summarize the state of the field and describe what is innovative about the proposed approach. What results, new knowledge, or insights might this approach afford compared to alternate approaches other researchers in this field

have taken? Include approximate yearly costs for the project. Reference citations are not required but may be included within the three-page limit.

d. *Collaboration Composition Statement* (one (1) page limit, single-sided):

Describe the composition of the collaboration and how the Collaborator will provide mentorship. Describe how the collaboration fulfills the purpose of DEPSCoR.

e. *Basic Research Statement* (one (1) page limit, single-sided): Describe how the proposed research meets the DoD definition of [basic research](#). Describe the extraordinary outcomes that may be achieved as a result of the proposed project.

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

g. *Curricula Vitae* (CVs) (two (2) page limit each, single-sided): The Applicant **and** Collaborator must **each** submit a two (2) page limit CV. 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.

h. *Lists of all previous DoD research relevant funding active between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026 for both the Applicant and the Collaborator. The lists should include project title(s), award number(s), and the name of the PI on each listed award. The role of each Applicant and Collaborator must be demonstrably noted for each prior DoD funded award such as PI, co-PI, etc. This list must be furnished for both the Applicant and Collaborator. If the Applicant has no prior DoD funding, the following statement must be included, "The Applicant has never received DoD funding."*

Items a – h constitutes the White Paper and must be included in the White Paper package. The White Paper must be submitted in the following format as a single PDF file with the following naming convention:

- Applicant Last Name_First Name_DEPSCoR FY26RC

Previous Collaborator Prime Research Award Document (required)

i. *Provide a copy of at least one Collaborator DoD directly funded research Prime Award active between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2026 where the "Co-PIs", "sub-PIs", and "Site Leads" do not qualify. Having served as a PI on a research Subaward that is indirectly funded by the DoD does not count for the purposes of this funding opportunity announcement. That is, the Collaborator must be listed as the PI on the previous research award directly from the DoD or*

its agencies. Only one prior qualifying research award is required, however you may submit as many as you would like. If a copy of the DoD research award cannot be furnished, a letter from the awarding agency point of contact should be furnished supporting the assertion within the timeframe identified.

Item i constitutes the previous Collaborator prime research award document and must be included in the White Paper package. The prime research award document(s) must be submitted in the following format as a single PDF file with the following naming convention:

- Applicant Last Name_First Name DEPSCoR FY26RC_award

j. *Qualifying Letter (when applicable):* The Applicant and Collaborator must both hold a tenured or tenure-track position with their respective IHE. If otherwise, a letter from the IHE stating that the Applicant or Collaborator will be considered for a tenured or tenure-track position must be included.

Item j constitutes as the Qualifying Letter(s) and must be included in the White Paper package, when applicable. Qualifying Letter(s) must be submitted in the following format as a single PDF file with the following naming convention:

- Applicant Last Name_First Name DEPSCoR FY26RC_letter

Documents must be submitted as two or three PDF files, formatted on **8.5 x 11-inch paper** with **1-inch margins** and **single-spacing**. The text must be set in **Times New Roman font at 12 points**. Additionally, you must strictly follow the file naming conventions specified above for the **White Paper, Previous Collaborator Prime Research Award Document, and Qualifying Letter(s)**.

D. FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PACKAGE

1. Full Proposal Packages will only be accepted from collaborations invited to submit proposals.

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);

Certification(s) of Covered Individual's Research Security Training. OUSW 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). OUSW 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.

5) 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.

Signature³: [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 the 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 in 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 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.

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 to Grants.gov **no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, 5 April 2027** (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 Full Proposal before the [IV.F.G.1. Full 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. A summary of what is required for a complete proposal is the security program questionnaire (Appendix 1) and privacy act statement (Appendix 2).

- **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, OMB No. 4040-0001	FIELD	ATTACHMENT
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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	Invitation email to submit a Full Proposal (Required)
		21	Cover Letter Attachment (Not Required)
R&R Other Project Information Form (Required)		7	<u>Project Summary / Abstract (Required)</u>
		8	<u>Attach the Project Narrative (Required)</u>
		9	<u>Bibliography & References Cited (Required)</u>
		10	<u>Facilities and Other Resources (If Applicable)</u>
		11	<u>Equipment Justification (If Applicable)</u>
		12	Other Attachments: <u>Data Management Plan (Optional)</u> <u>Letter of Support (Required)</u>
<u>R&R Senior/Key Person Profile Form Expanded (Required)</u>		Biographical Sketch (Required)	
		Current & Pending Support (Required)	
<u>R&R Budget Form (Required)</u>		<u>Budget Justification (Required)</u>	
<u>R&R Subaward Budget (If Applicable) Attachments Form</u>		<u>Subaward Budget Justification (If Applicable)</u>	
<u>R&R Project/Performance Site Locations Form (Required)</u>		None	
<u>R&R Personal Data (Required)</u>		None	
<u>Security Program Questionnaire</u>		Appendix 1	
<u>Privacy Act Statement</u>		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 points
- 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 [Statement of Objectives](#) must not exceed one (1) single-sided

page. Your [Research Effort](#) section must not exceed twelve (12) 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 IN PAGE COUNT	NOT INCLUDED IN PAGE COUNT
Publicly Releasable Project Summary/Abstract (Required) must not exceed 500 words Statement of Objectives (Required) must not exceed one (1) single-sided page Research Effort (Required) must not exceed twelve (12) single-sided pages Data Management Plan (Optional) must not exceed two (2) single-sided pages	Everything else

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.

- 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, 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 they cover and not be merely a copy of the topic title.

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” For block 4.b. Agency Routing Identifier – Enter the Topic # and Program Officer’s name (last name first) in brackets (e.g., Topic # 14 [Doe, Jane]).

	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.	Application 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 3 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.	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (If Applicable)

If you have lobbying activity that you must disclose under [31 U.S.C. 1352](#) as implemented by the DoD in [32 CFR Part 28](#), you must attach the completed [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities](#) (SF-LLL) to field 18 of the SF 424 (R&R). Instructions for completing this form are available [here](#). If you do not have lobbying activities to disclose, you do not need to complete the SF-LLL.

Grants Certifications (Required)

You must attach your completed [Grants Certifications](#) Report from SAM.gov to field 18 of the SF 424 (R&R).
Concatenate these documents, if necessary, into a single document and attach the concatenated document to Field 18.

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 [AFRL.IR.HRPO@us.af.mil]
2, 2a.	You must address all prospective animal subjects 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 michael.r.bonhage.mil@health.mil 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.	Is the research performance site designated, or eligible to be designated, as a historic place? Select “Yes” or “No”.
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.	Does this project involve activities outside of the United States or partnerships with international collaborators? Select “Yes” or “No”. If you checked the “Yes” box identify the countries with which
6.a.	international cooperative activities are involved. Enter an explanation for involvement with outside entities
6.b.	(optional).
7.	Attach your IV.D.3.c. Publicly Releasable Project Summary/Abstract to field 7 (Required).
8.	Attach your IV.D.3.d. Project Narrative to field 8 (Required).
9.	Attach your IV.D.3.e Bibliography and References Cited to field 9 (Required).

10. Attach your [IV.D.3.f. Facilities & Other Resources](#) description document here if you need to supplement your [IV.D.3.d.4. Project Narrative Facilities and Resources](#) section to field 10 (If Applicable).

11. You may supplement your [IV.D.3.i. Budget Justification](#) by attaching an [IV.D.3.j. Equipment Justification](#) (If Applicable) to 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 –

Attach your [IV.D.3.k. R&R Sub-award Budget Attachments Form](#) to field 12 (If Applicable).

Attach your [IV.D.3.o. Data Management Plan](#) to field 12 (Optional).

Attach your [IV.D.3.p. Letter of Support](#) to field 12 (Required).

b. 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 should identify the Program Officer and topic area your proposed research falls under (see section [I.C. TOPICS](#)).

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 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/>

c. Project Narrative (Required)

You must attach your Project Narrative to field 8 of the R&R Other Project Information Form. The narrative must be complete and self-contained to qualify for review. Concatenate these documents, if necessary, into a single document and attach the concatenated document to field 8.

You must identify the Program Officer and topic number your proposed research falls under. You must clearly describe your research, including your research

objective and approach. 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. Statement of Objectives – must not exceed a single page

You must summarize your proposed research on a single-page titled “Statement of Objectives.” We may decide to incorporate your statement of objectives into the award as a description of the work instead of incorporating the whole technical proposal.

You should use active verbs when you prepare the statement of objectives, e.g., “conduct” research in a subject area, “investigate” a problem, “determine” to test a hypothesis.

2. Research Effort – must not exceed twelve (12) single-sided pages, please number them.

This section must not be longer than twelve (12) single-side pages. Please number them. OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations will not review proposals that exceed this page limit.

You should describe the basic scientific or technical concepts that will be investigated in great detail. State the research objectives and approach, and the relationship and comparable objectives to research progress elsewhere. Describe your research team’s knowledge in the field. Discuss the nature of the expected results.

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.

3. Applicant (PI), Collaborator (co-PI), and Senior/Key Personnel Time

a. You must provide an estimate of the time the Applicant and Collaborator will devote to the research. Your estimate must include information pertaining to the proportion of time anticipated to be devoted to this research, to other research, and to other commitments of time such as sabbatical, extended leave, and teaching duties.

You should budget time for two required trips per year to DEPSCoR-related activities, which include attending a program review (Washington, DC area) and participating in a DoD-organized workshop (in a nearby metropolitan area).

- b.** All key personnel proposed must hold appointments at an IHE in a DEPSCoR eligible state.
- c.** State the number of graduate students that will engage in the project for whom each senior staff member is responsible.
- d.** If the Applicant, Collaborator, or other 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, electronic mail address);
- Period of performance (differentiate basic effort);
- The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time for 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.

4. Your Facilities

- a.** 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.
- b.** 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.
- c.** Government Furnished Equipment: List any special Government-owned property or test equipment possessed or 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. If you do not have information about individual items, group items you require by class and provide an estimate of values.

e. Bibliography and References Cited (Required)

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

f. Facilities & Other Resources (If Applicable)

Attach a Facilities and Other Resources description document to field 10 of the R&R Other Project Information Form if you need to supplement your [IV.D.3.d.4. Project Narrative Facilities and Resources section](#).

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 Applicant, Collaborator, and Senior Staff. All key personnel proposed 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.

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 project are to be funded by DoD.

You must also attach [the list of current and pending support from the Project Narrative](#).

h. R&R Budget Form (Required)

You must provide all information requested. You must estimate the total research 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 Full 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 the R&R Sub-award Budget Attachments Form which will be 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.

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 the Principal Investigator and any Co-Principal Investigator(s) completed; however, provisions of the demographic information in the form are voluntary. If completing the form for multiple individuals, each Co-Principal Investigator 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 of this 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:

1. The types of data, software, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project, and include notation marking items that are publicly releasable;
2. How the data will be acquired;
3. Time and location of data acquisition if they are scientifically pertinent;
4. How the data will be processed;
5. The file formats and the naming conventions that will be used;
6. A description of the quality assurance and quality control measures during collection, analysis, and processing;
7. If existing data are to be used, a description of their origins;
8. A description of the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content;
9. Plans and justifications for archiving the data;
10. The timeframe for preservation; and;

11. If for legitimate reasons the data cannot be preserved, the plan must include a justification citing such reasons.

p. Letter of Support (Required)

Attach a **letter of support** from the Collaborator that discusses how they will foster a *mentorship* relationship with the Applicant to field 12 – Other Attachments in the R&R Other Project Information Form.

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

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 and telephone at (866) 606-8220. Top help topics for [SAM.gov](https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=kb_category&kb_category=393083441b4f64108aa3a8eae54bcb77&kb_id=f66d8e6cdb76d4100d73f81d0f9619c6) are available at https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=kb_category&kb_category=393083441b4f64108aa3a8eae54bcb77&kb_id=f66d8e6cdb76d4100d73f81d0f9619c6

4. 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 Full 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 (see Full Proposal Submission Deadline). 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 can 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 schedule correct all errors and resubmit your application before the Full

Proposal submission deadline as outlined in section [IV.F.G.1. Full Proposal Submission Deadline](#).

5. Submission Dates and Times

Schedule of Events		
Event	Date	Eastern Time
RunGrants website open for White Paper submission (https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depacor)	Monday, 10 August 2026	9:00 AM
DEPSCoR Webinar For details and registration, please visit (https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depacor)	Tuesday, 25 August 2026	2:00 - 4:00 PM
RunGrants Registration (strongly suggested by) & 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 (https://dod-basicresearch.nvision.noblis.org/program/depacor) (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 Grants.gov website (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

1. 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.

2. 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 IHE in eligible States/Territories to perform competitive S&E research relevant to the DoD.

Proposed 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. Merit-based, competitive procedures will be used, in accordance with 32 CFR 22.315.

All proposals will be evaluated according to the weight of scientific evidence. “Weight of scientific evidence” means an approach to scientific evaluation in which each piece of relevant information is considered based on its quality and relevance, and then transparently integrated with other relevant information to inform the scientific evaluation prior to making a judgment about the scientific evaluation. Quality and relevance determinations, at a minimum, should include consideration of study design, fitness for purpose, replicability, peer review, and transparency and reliability of data (cf. Executive Order 14303, “Restoring Gold Standard Science”).

A.1 Evaluation and Selection Criteria

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

Programmatic Requirements Review Criteria (Initial Screening -- Go/No Go Criteria)

- (1) Proposal includes all documents and elements required by the BAA.
- (2) Proposal incorporates all elements required for adherence to Gold Standard Science (EO 14303) and EO 14332, including making a commitment to complying with administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting Gold Standard Science.

(3) Proposal does not promote, encourage subsidize, or facilitate: (a) racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the grant recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; (b) denial by the grant recipient of the sex binary in humans or the notion that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; (c) illegal immigration; or (d) any other initiatives that compromise public safety or promote anti-American values.

(4) Proposal is relevant to the portfolio descriptions in this BAA, relevant to Air Force, Space Force and DoW needs, and consistent with administration priorities, to include the EO 14332 requirement: Proposal demonstrably advances the President's policy priorities.

If the application/proposal meets programmatic review requirements, it will proceed to the Full Evaluation; if it does not, it will be removed from consideration. The Full Evaluation will encompass the full evaluation consistent with RFO 35.102(e) and DODGARS 22.315.

- **2nd Step: Full Evaluation/Review (Selection Criteria):**
- **Primary Evaluation Criteria:** Subject to funding availability, all proposals will be reviewed using the following two primary criteria listed below, which are of equal importance. These evaluations will entail a “weight of scientific evidence” approach (EO 14303):
 - Technical merits of the proposed basic science and/or engineering research to include the potential to significantly advance fundamental understanding in the topic areas.
 - a. **Note:** Technical merits include the following considerations, consistent with the requirements of EO 14303 and 14332:
 - i. The proposal is likely to produce immediately demonstrable results. This includes the possibility for potentially longer-term, breakthrough results, in a manner consistent with the funding opportunity announcement.
 - ii. The inclusion of clear benchmarks for measuring success and progress towards relevant research and development goals.
- **Potential DoD relevance and contribution to the DoD mission.**
- **Other Evaluation Criteria:** Less important than the primary criteria but of equal importance to each other:
 - Qualifications and availability of the Principal Investigator and other investigators
 - Adequacy of current or planned facilities and equipment to accomplish objectives.
 - Impact of interactions with other organizations engaged in related R&D.

- **Other Selection Criteria: Cost/Price:** While of less importance to the Primary and Other Evaluation criteria above, the realism of the proposed cost will be evaluated. Cost sharing is not a factor in the evaluation.
- **Risk Assessments:** Risk assessments are performed prior to award with regards to Science & Technology (S&T) Protection and assessments IAW 2 CFR 200.206.

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 War 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”).

Expectation of Adherence to Gold Standard Science

DoW 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 AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 NOFO 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 to 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. Our 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

Regardless of the outcome, all applicants will receive an official notification via email regarding the status of their White Paper. This correspondence will clearly state whether the submission has been selected to proceed to the Full Proposal and award consideration phase, or if it has not been selected for this year's DEPSCoR-RC funding cycle.

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

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

If your Full Proposal submission is selected for award, a notification will be sent to the Applicant via email and if not selected for award for this year's DEPSCoR-RC funding opportunity, a notification will be sent to the Applicant via email.

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

2. Federal Award Document

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

3. 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

1. 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>.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

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

Refer to DoD Research and Development (R&D) General Terms and Conditions (Ts&Cs), located at <https://www.onr.navy.mil/media/document/dod-research-and-development-rd-general-terms-and-conditions-march-2025>. (See website for additional AFRL Addendum and supplemental terms and conditions).

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.

6. 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.

7. 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

1. 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>

2. 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.

3. 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 DoD R&D T&C's](#).

4. 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.

5. 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 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, or via the Internet at:

<https://piee.eb.mil/xhtml/unauth/web/homepage/vendorCustomerSupport.xhtml>

6. 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.](#)

7. 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.

8. 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 specific instructions.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

A. TECHNICAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS

Questions of a technical nature on a specific topic must be directed to one of the [program officers](#) identified in Section I.C. TOPICS. You should **submit your**

questions in writing by email. You should **include NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260004 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 program officers listed in section I.C. TOPICS.

If you submit a question by other means than by writing by email, 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 NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260004 in the subject line**.

MS. DENISE JOHNSON

Grants Officer

Email: denise.johnson.19@us.af.mil

MS. NICOLE Y. THOMAS

Grants Officer

Email: nicole.thomas.20@us.af.mil

If you submit a question by other means than by writing an email, you may not receive a response.

C. PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Overall DEPSCoR questions can be directed to Director, Research Programs, OUSW-R&E/S&T, Foundations and **must be sent in writing by email**. You must **include this NOFOAFRLAFOSR20260004 in the subject line**.

DR. DAVID MONTGOMERY

Program Manager

Email: david.w.montgomery61.civ@mail.mil

If you submit a question by other means than by writing by email, 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://arl.devcom.army.mil/collaborate-with-us/>

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