Request for Pre-Proposals for the NASA National EPSCoR Research Program

Introduction

The Idaho NASA EPSCoR Program requests research pre-proposals for the NASA EPSCoR Research Program. NASA EPSCoR Research Program awards are typically 3 years in duration and can be funded up to $725,000[1]. Pre-proposals will be used to determine one proposal that will be fully developed in response to the NASA National EPSCoR Request for Proposals (RFP), expected to be released in October 2024. NASA's timeline for development and submission of full proposals is typically 60 to 90 days – thus, it is critical that teams begin actively seeking resources and appropriate collaborations for development of a full proposal prior to the RFP release. The goal of this pre-proposal request and the subsequent review and selection process is to identify projects that may be successful in competing for NASA EPSCoR funds at a national level.

Collaborations between researchers at different universities and industries within Idaho are encouraged. The NASA EPSCoR review committee reserves the right to invite teams with related projects to collaborate and possibly merge projects before announcing the pre-proposals selected for development of full proposals. Idaho NASA EPSCoR especially encourages proposals from early career researchers, women, and other underrepresented groups in STEM fields.

If a proposer lacks a current connection to a NASA researcher, Idaho NASA EPSCoR may be able to assist. Proposers should contact the Idaho NASA EPSCoR office at ine@uidaho.edu by July 15, 2024 or via the Notice of Intent form to discuss possible ways to connect to NASA.

Award Eligibility

Researchers studying or conducting research at an Idaho-based accredited institution are eligible to submit pre-proposals for this call. U.S. citizenship is not a requirement.

To be eligible for submission, the research proposed must directly align and/or support the missions and activities of NASA. Any submission that does not clearly align to NASA's activities or missions will **not** be considered.

Important Dates

Release Date: May 17, 2024
Notice of Intent Due: July 15, 2024
Pre-proposal Due: August 16, 2024

Notice of Intent

Proposers are encouraged, though not required, to submit a notice of intent (NOI) via the Idaho NASA EPSCoR website at https://www.idahonasaepscor.org/submit or via this direct link no later than July 15, 2024. The NOI will allow Idaho NASA EPSCoR to augment its review committee, if necessary, to cover different areas of research.

Pre-Proposal Submission Deadline: August 16, 2024 at 11:59 P.M. PDT

---

[1] The total amount available from NASA is usually $750,000. However, INE usually reserves approximately $25,000 to cover costs associated with program administration and oversight.

Idaho NASA EPSCoR

To be eligible for consideration, pre-proposals must be submitted through an eligible institution and must satisfy the specific pre-proposal requirements outlined below. **Proposers must obtain pre-proposal approval from their institution's research/grant office prior to submission.** Each pre-proposal must include the following sections and information.

1. *Title Page (Limit: 1 page)*

The title page should include:
- Project title
- Principal investigator and co-investigator information including name, title/rank, unit/college, research role, and contact information (i.e., address, phone number, e-mail).
- Research abstract
- Primary NASA contact/researcher collaborating on the proposed research

2. *Description of Research (Limit: 7 pages)*

The description of research should contain the following information:
- **Description of the proposed research:** The research plan should include, at a minimum, 1) the anticipated research outcome, 2) a research timeline and associated milestones, and 3) metrics for measuring research success. The research plan should be presented in plain language so that individuals who are not experts in the proposed research area will be able to effectively evaluate the research plan.
- **Potential impact of research**: Should describe the benefits to NASA and the state of Idaho.
- **Relationship to NASA's missions and activities as evidenced by technology/research roadmaps, and/or other strategy documents used by NASA:** Examples include: NASA Technology Roadmaps, Human Research Roadmap, or decadal surveys for the sciences. NASA also has plans to return to the Moon. Proposers can access the current plans at https://www.nasa.gov/specials/moon2mars/ Proposers should be as specific as possible when identifying the missions/strategies/priorities/technology related to their proposed project.
- **Planned collaboration:** Include established and proposed collaborations with NASA researchers, engineers, technologists, and/or scientists at NASA Centers and/or within the NASA Mission Directorates. *(Note: Written correspondence such as a letter or email that contains substantive details of NASA's commitment, support, and/or resources to be provided is not required but is highly encouraged, and should be included as part of an appendix with the pre-proposal).*
- **Additional partnerships:** List any additional partnerships that could strengthen the proposed research efforts, especially those with private sector companies.
- **Research sustainability:** Outline the possibilities and any plans for sustaining the proposed research beyond the NASA EPSCoR 3-year grant period.

3. *Curriculum Vitae (Limit: 2 pages for principal investigator; 1 page for each co-investigator)*

Proposers should include curriculum vitae for the principal investigator and for each co-investigator.

4. *References (No page limit)*

Proposers may include references and citations to support their proposal as needed.

5. Proposed Budget and Budget Justification (No page limit)

The proposed budget and budget justification should contain the following information:

- Detailed budget information for the proposed research including a minimum match of 50 percent using non-federal funds. Please note that the total funds requested from NASA in the research proposal cannot exceed $725,000 over a three-year period.
- When estimating the proposed research budget please keep in mind the following restrictions on the use federal NASA EPSCoR funds:
  - Award funds may not be used to fund research carried out by non-U.S. institutions. U.S. research award recipients may, however, directly purchase supplies and/or services that do not constitute research from non-U.S. sources. For additional guidance on foreign participation, see the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#).
  - Foreign travel related to Idaho's NASA EPSCoR research project is an acceptable use of NASA EPSCoR funds, with an upper limit of $3,000 per trip for up to two separate years of a proposal (i.e., the maximum amount one can request for foreign travel is $3,000 total in any one year and a limit of $6,000 total for each research proposal). Domestic travel is not limited, but should be relevant and reasonable to conduct the proposed research.
  - NASA EPSCoR funding cannot be used to purchase general-purpose equipment (e.g., desktop computers, office furnishings, printers, etc.) as a direct charge. Special purpose equipment purchases (i.e., equipment used only for research, scientific, and technical activities directly related to the proposed research activities) are allowed and can be reflected as a direct charge.
  - Indirect costs are limited to the proposer's institution's negotiated rate and negotiated base.

6. Appendices (Only required for some proposers; no page limits unless explicitly stated)

- **Documentation of proposed support/collaboration:** This appendix should include letters of support and/or collaboration obtained from NASA Centers and/or Mission Directorates.
- **Subcontracts:** Proposers planning to subcontract out part of the research, should provide more detail in this section, including a brief scope of work for the subcontractor.
- **Summary of research accomplishments:** Researchers who have received previous NASA Idaho Space Grant Consortium (ISGC) or Idaho NASA EPSCoR funding for the proposed research or closely related research are required to submit a summary of research accomplishments resulting from the funding, including proposals submitted, papers presented at professional conferences or published in refereed journals, and research contacts and potential collaborations initiated with NASA and industry. The summary should not exceed two pages.

Pre-Proposal Format and Submission

Pre-proposals must be single spaced, 12-point font, and have one-inch margins on all sides. Submissions should follow the page limit guidelines outlined above.

All pre-proposals must be submitted via the Idaho NASA EPSCoR website at https://www.idahonasaepscor.org/submit. Submission instructions are available on the online form. A full proposal submission will include 1) a research proposal (in PDF) and a budget (in MS Excel). Submissions that do not follow these guidelines and/or do not directly align to NASA's missions and activities will not be considered for development of a full proposal. Pre-proposals must be submitted by August 16, 2024 at 11:59 P.M. PDT. No late submissions will be accepted.

Pre-Proposal Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

Pre-proposals and final proposals will be evaluated by members of the Idaho NASA EPSCoR Technical Advisory Committee.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- **Merit of proposed research (35%):** Will the proposed research contribute to advancing knowledge in the specified field or advancing the state-of-the-art in a technology?
- **Alignment with NASA's missions, activities, roadmaps, priorities, etc. (15%):** Does the proposed research help NASA progress toward achieving its aims? The proposal should be able to cite specific measures or plans and how the proposed research will facilitate achieving those goals.
- **Collaboration with NASA and other institutions (20%):** Is there a **strong** tie to a NASA Mission Directorate or mission and a sufficient plan in place to ensure successful collaboration with NASA? Will other institutions in Idaho (including private industry) or from other EPSCoR states participate? Letters of support can serve as evidence for the collaboration plan.
- **Project management and evaluation (10%):** Is there a management plan for ensuring progress toward measurable milestones, and is it likely that the proposed personnel can carry out the proposed research? Is there a plan and metrics for evaluating research progress/success? Success with prior research projects can be used as evidence of successful project management.
- **Budget justification (10%):** Is the proposed budget realistic for the proposed research? Does the narrative give sufficient detail to evaluate the estimated budget?
- **Research sustainability and impact on Idaho (10%):** Is the research sustainable past the proposed 3-year timeline for this grant? What future funding possibilities are planned? Will the research impact Idaho's future competitiveness on the national research stage?

Pre-proposals submitted by the deadline will be evaluated. Proposers will be notified of their status to submit to the NASA National EPSCoR solicitation. Feedback based upon the pre-proposal review will also be provided. After the NASA National EPSCoR call is released by NASA, research teams selected to develop full proposals will be provided complete proposal instructions and timelines. Full proposals **must** be submitted through the Idaho NASA EPSCoR program to be eligible for funding consideration.

Questions?

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Idaho NASA EPSCoR
ine@uidaho.edu
208-885-4934

Pre-Proposal Submission Deadline: August 16, 2024 at 11:59 P.M. PDT