
EPSCoR/IDeA Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research Institutional Development Award Program

A Federal-State Partnership to Build Research Capacity Across the Nation

EPSCoR/IDeA: A Sound Investment in our Nation's Future

The Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) and the Institutional Development Award (IDeA) program are federal-state partnerships, which are successfully increasing the scientific and technological (S&T) capability of the United States. Congress has established and expanded EPSCoR and IDeA to ensure that all states and regions participate in and benefit from federally-funded research activities. Twenty-seven states and two territories currently partner with six federal agencies in funding EPSCoR/IDeA activities.

EPSCoR and EPSCoR-like programs are located at the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Departments of Defense, Energy, and Agriculture. The National Institute of Health's Institutional Development Award (IDeA) program is the largest. The Administration's FY 2010 federal budget for EPSCoR/IDeA programs is over \$400 million. In addition, each of the participating jurisdictions is also required to contribute a significant funding investment.

The research universities and faculty in EPSCoR/IDeA states represent a significant portion of the nation's academic research portfolio. EPSCoR/IDeA states account for about one-fifth of American doctoral institutions, university scientists, and research engineers, and about the same percentage of the country's population. EPSCoR/IDeA institutions have developed S&T expertise in health, defense, energy, agriculture, cyberinfrastructure, and green technologies. This expertise is an important tool in the effort to restore America's eminence in world high-tech markets.

EPSCoR/IDeA seeks to expand and improve the research capability of participating jurisdictions. The program allows research faculty to compete more effectively for federal academic research and development money, to build their technical workforces, to foster innovation, and to contribute to their state's and the nation's economy. In each of the agencies, merit-based review strategies decide how to allot EPSCoR/IDeA funding.

Importance of EPSCoR/IDeA

The nation cannot afford to neglect any part of the country's research community. Global competition demands a highly skilled workforce, and the country's economic future depends on scientific and technological advances in all states and regions. Through EPSCoR/IDeA, participating states and territories are building a high-quality, university-based research infrastructure, a backbone to these states' scientific and technological enterprises, and a strong and stable economic base.

Just as a state's agricultural, industrial, and natural resources led technological and economic development in the 20th century, EPSCoR/IDeA universities, their faculty, and students are leading the way in the 21st century. These researchers are needed for the nation to meet its most pressing priorities in health, cyberinfrastructure, and homeland security. A broad science and technology base is especially important in an era when different regions have unique issues involving resources, health, security, and the environment.

Scientific and technological research cannot be limited to a few states if the nation is to maintain world leadership and reach its full potential. Along with stimulating competitive research and promoting excellence in education, EPSCoR/IDeA improves access to that high-quality education and cutting-edge research, expands economic opportunity, creates jobs, and improves the quality of life across the nation.

EPSCoR/IDeA Scope

EPSCoR/IDeA operates in the states of: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The set of eligible jurisdictions may vary among agencies.



In each EPSCoR/IDeA jurisdiction, a statewide committee guides the programs. Senior university officials, representatives from state legislatures and governor's offices, and representatives from the private sector usually make up these state committees.

The committees lead new policies and infrastructure development, generate high levels of collaboration, keep EPSCoR/IDeA responsive to state and regional needs, and cultivate broad-based support for science and technology within the jurisdictions.

The high caliber of these committees encourages each state to allocate the resources necessary for their EPSCoR/IDeA projects to succeed.

Building Research Excellence

By increasing the quality of academic research capabilities within the EPSCoR/IDeA jurisdictions, the federal program:

- Ensures that the S&T expertise that resides in all states and regions contributes to U.S. world leadership in science and technology.
- Enables the citizenry in all parts of the country to benefit from a strong scientific and technological enterprise,
- Builds local, state, and national support for stronger science and technology research and education,
- Expands economic opportunity and creates jobs through improved education and technology transfer, and
- Prepares a diverse and highly-competent technical workforce.

Summary of EPSCoR/IDeA Programs, by Agency

Agency	Date Enacted (FY)	FY 10 Enacted Budget (\$ in millions)	Types of Support/Award Mechanisms
NSF / EPSCoR	1979	\$147.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Research Infrastructure Improvement Awards ◆ Co-Funding
DoD / DEPSCoR	1991	\$0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Basic and Applied Research Grants ◆ Graduate Traineeships ◆ Research Instrumentation
EPA / EPA EPSCoR	1991	\$0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Co-Funding
DoE / DoE EPSCoR	1991	\$22.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Implementation Grants ◆ Laboratory-State Partnership Awards
USDA / USDA EPSCoR	1991	\$26.248	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Research Career Enhancement Awards ◆ Equipment Grants ◆ Seed Grants ◆ Strengthening Standard Research Project Awards
NASA / NASA EPSCoR	1993	\$25.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Research Implementation Awards ◆ Research Infrastructure Development Awards
NIH / NIH IDeA	1993	\$228.862	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) ◆ IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) ◆ Co-Funding

EPSCoR/IDeA: Building the National S&T Infrastructure, the Quality of Research and Technological Innovation, and Economic Opportunities

EPSCoR/IDeA projects undergo merit reviews at the state level to align projects with state and institutional needs and priorities. At the federal level, they undergo rigorous external merit review to make sure they meet national standards of quality. EPSCoR/IDeA funds only high-quality research that "adds significant value" to the existing science and technology enterprise.

EPSCoR/IDeA helps researchers and institutions improve their research capabilities and quality in order to compete more effectively for "mainstream" competitive research funds.

EPSCoR/IDeA: Making a Difference

Since the inception of EPSCoR/IDeA, the success of the programs is clear. At the National Science Foundation, for example, the percentage growth in proposals submitted and awards won by EPSCoR researchers exceeds the percentages from non-EPSCoR states. The National Institute of Health's IDeA program reports similar progress. But more work remains. The uneven distribution of federal research and development funds persists. For example, at the National Science Foundation, four states received 36 percent of these funds, while 27 EPSCoR/IDeA states and 2 territories received less than 10 percent of NSF's research funding. The national effort to restore American competitiveness in global high tech markets cannot succeed without the contribution of the S&T expertise that resides in all states.

For More Information

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or

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