

Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR) Program webinar



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S&T Foundations

Under Secretary for Research and Engineering

Assistant Secretary for Science and Technology

Deputy Assistant Secretary for S&T, Foundations

STEM/SMART
Programs

SBIR/STTR

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Programs

Grant/Research
Policy

FFRDCs/UARCs

Human Research
Protection

R&D
Infrastructure

Animal Use
Protection

S&T Workforce

Medical S&T

Basic Research Programs

- **Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR)**
- Vannevar Bush Faculty Fellowship (VBFF)
- Laboratory University Collaboration Initiative (LUCI)
- International Partnerships
- Future Directions Workshops
- Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI)
- Defense University Research Instrumentation Program (DURIP)



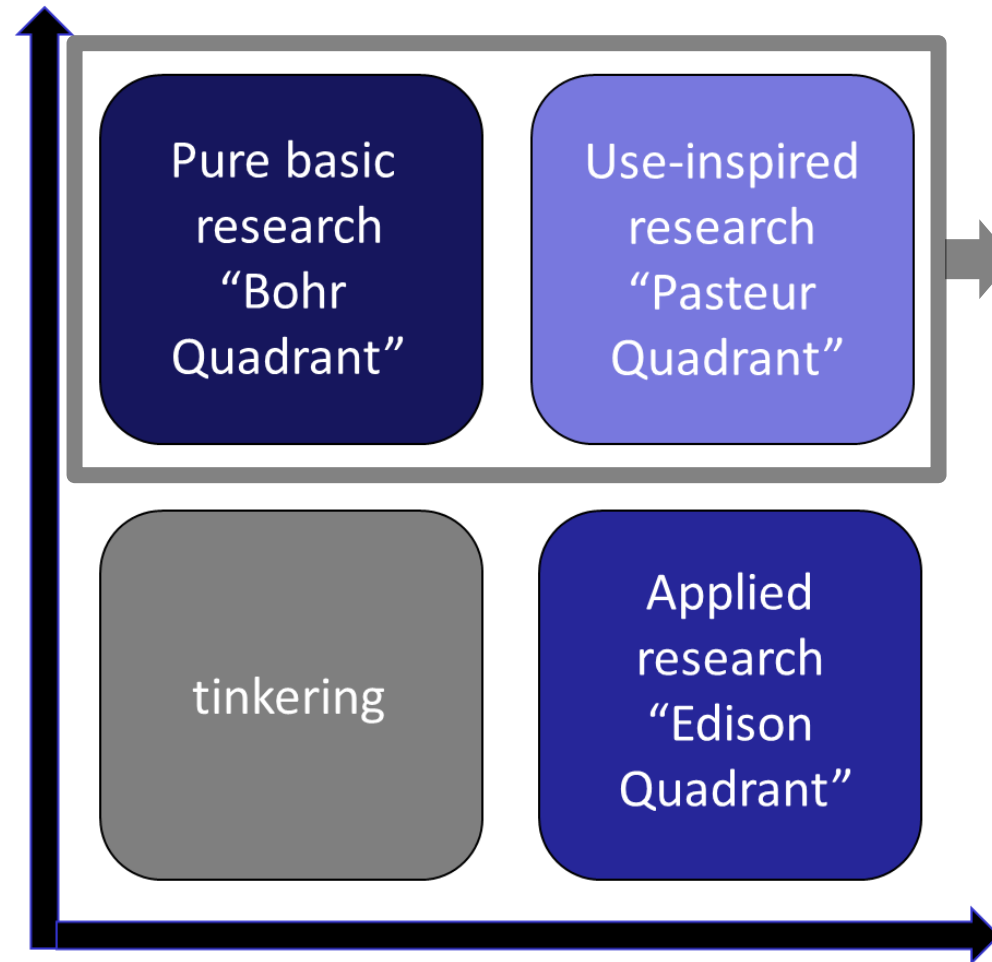
How does DoW define Basic Research?

DoW policy states that basic research is the
*“systematic study directed toward greater knowledge
or understanding of the fundamental aspects of
phenomena and of observable facts...”*



Why DoW Funds Basic Research

Quest for
fundamental
understanding



**DoW
6.1
Basic
Research**

Donald Stokes: 'Pasteur's Quadrant'

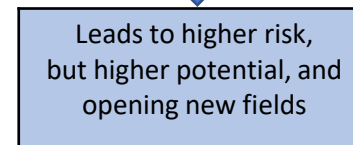
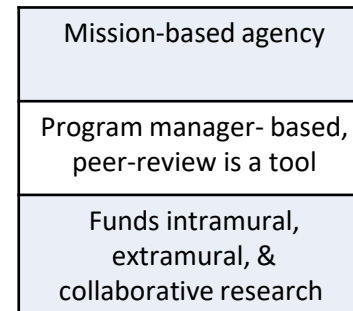


What makes applying to DoW special: DoW's Program Manager Centered Model

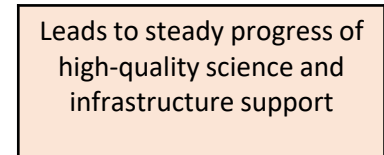
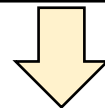
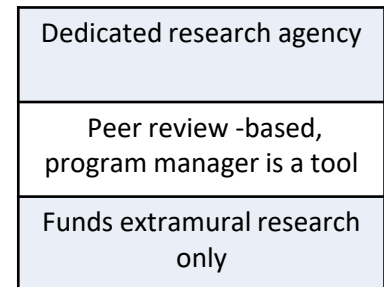
- The DoW model of funding basic research relies on program managers who have insight into DoW future needs and a vision of the scientific community.
- This model results in some incredibly important investments
 - Program manager see beyond academic trends to grow new fields, sustain fields of interest, and make early investments in leading researchers, and
 - Program managers can have incredible long-lasting impact

Different research funding models

DoW



Peer review model





DEPSCoR Program Overview

- Defense *Experimental* Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR) was created by Congress in FY91 DoD appropriation, and legislatively authorized in 1994
- Defense *Established* Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR) was reauthorized in 2017
- Appropriations (\$20M): FY26 Defense Appropriations Congressional supplement to the Basic Research Initiatives program line dedicated to DEPSCoR
- DEPSCoR will be part of the Departmental core budget starting in FY27



Program Goals

DEPSCoR Objectives as mandated by Congress:

1. **Enhance the capabilities** of institutions of higher education (IHE) in eligible State/Territories to develop, plan, and execute science and engineering (S&E) research that is relevant to the mission of the DoW and competitive under the peer-review systems used for awarding Federal research assistance
2. **Increase the number of university researchers** in eligible States/Territories capable of performing S&E research responsive to the needs of the DoW
3. **Increase the probability of long-term growth** in the **competitively awarded** financial assistance that IHE in eligible States/Territories receive from the Federal Government for S&E research

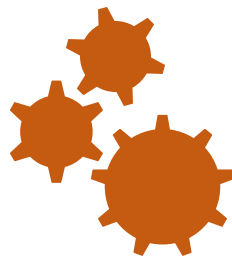


DEPSCoR: Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

Program Goal

To increase the number of university researchers and improve the capabilities of institutions of higher education in eligible jurisdictions to perform competitive basic research in science & engineering relevant to the DoW mission & national security priorities.

Key Components

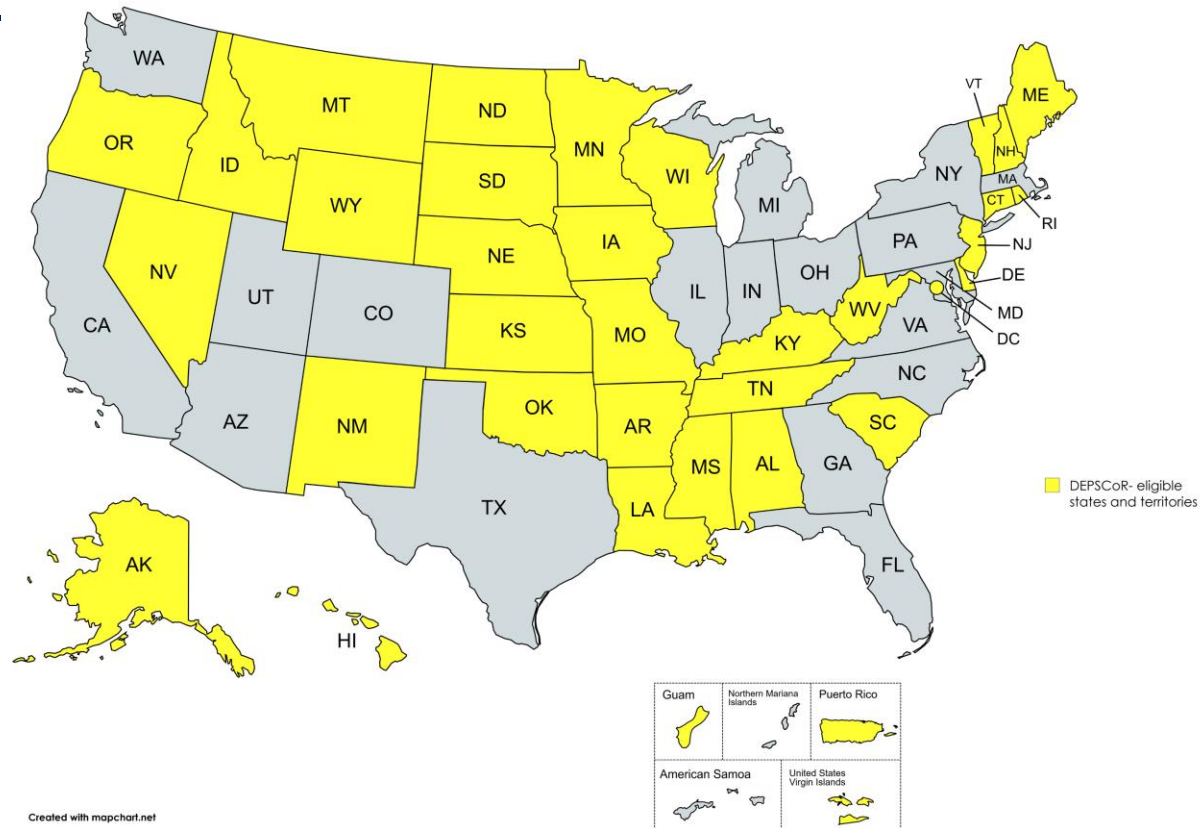


**Capacity Building
DEPSCoR
Competition**



**Research Collaboration
DEPSCoR
Competition**

Congressionally-directed eligibility criteria: “States or territories that received less than 60% of 1/50th of the total DoW S&E research obligations to U.S. IHE are eligible if a commitment to developing S&E research is demonstrated.”

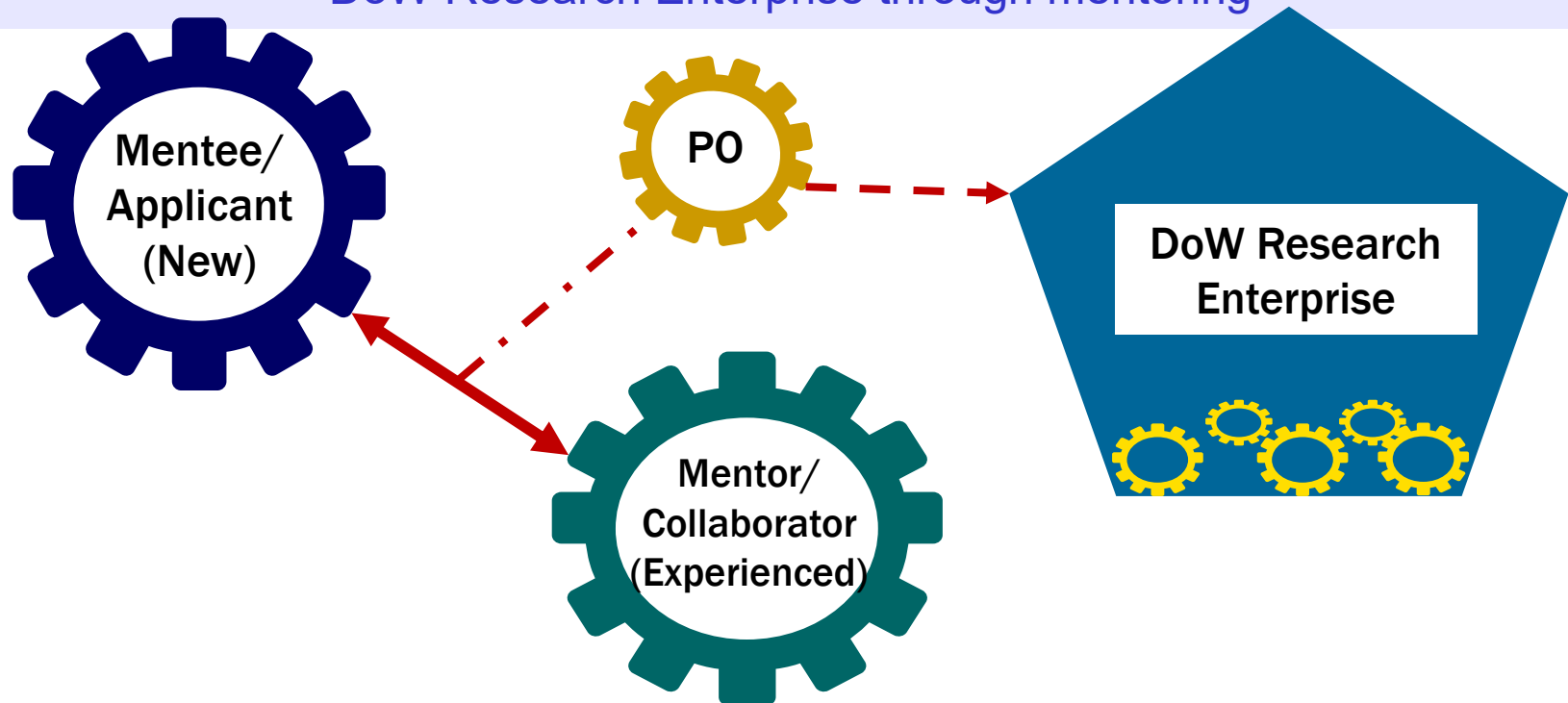


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Research Collaboration (RC) DEPSCoR Competition

Integrate new researchers from DEPSCoR-eligible states/territories into the DoW Research Enterprise through mentoring



2-person team from DEPSCoR-eligible States/Territories can apply
\$200K/year (total cost) for three years (\$600,000 total)
12-14 Topics per year.
Approximately 120 White Papers received per year.
33% asked to submit Full Proposals
20% of full proposals selected for funding



DEPSCoR – RC Competition

- Collaborative research grants
- **Strongly encouraged to discuss proposal idea with a tri-Service Program Officer listed in the FOA**
- One white paper submission per Applicant
- Collaborator may partner with more than one Applicant
- Security clearance is not required to receive award
- U.S. citizenship is not required



DEPSCoR – RC Competition

- Both Applicant and Collaborator must be **tenured or tenure-track faculty members** with appointments **at an IHE*** in a **DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory**
- Applicant must be a full-time faculty member who has **never** served as a PI on a prior DoW-funded award
- Collaborator will collaborate on research AND provide *mentorship* to the Applicant. **Collaborator must have served as a PI on a DoW-funded research award between 01 Oct 2018 and 30 Sept 2026**

*Institution of Higher Education (IHE) must be in a DEPSCoR eligible State/Territory and with an advanced degree granting program in science, mathematics, and/or engineering.



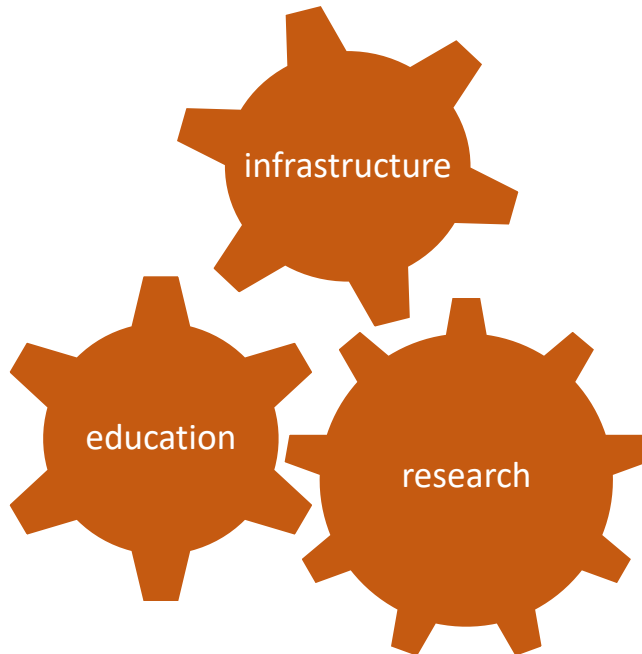
Research Collaboration Topics for FY26

PO	Service	Topic
Dr. Josh Boschelli	ARO	Earth Materials and Processes
Dr. Greg Ruark	ARO	Dynamical Influences on Performance
Dr. Robert Ulman	ARO	Wireless Communications Networks
Dr. Matthew Glasscott	ARO	Electrochemistry
Dr. Jennifer Talley	AFOSR	Space Biosciences
Dr. Erik Blasch	AFOSR	Dynamic Data and Information Processing
Dr. Jiwei Lu	AFOSR	Condensed Matter Physics
Dr. Amanda Chou	AFOSR	Aerodynamic Sciences
Dr. Meredith Hutchinson	ONR	Nonlinear Transforms for Dynamical Systems
Dr. Rebecca L. Goolsby	ONR	Local and Regional Assessment for Public Affairs
Dr. Timothy Bentley	ONR	Fundamental Mechanisms and Materials for Shock Mitigation for Warfighter Protection
Dr. Pranav Shah	ONR	Fundamental Research on Efficient Packaging and Deployment of Unmanned Aircraft Systems



Capacity Building (CB) DEPSCoR Competition

Support the strategic objectives of IHEs to achieve basic research excellence in areas of high relevance to the DoW



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

Program Structure:

- IHE's executive office, such as Vice-President of Research, in DEPSCoR-eligible States/Territories can apply
 - \$750K/year (total cost) for 2 years



DEPSCoR – CB Competition

- Applications must present the opportunities for enhanced academic research and development competitiveness and, if appropriate, industrial or economic competitiveness, for the State/Territory. **A strategic plan to sustain the investment after the DEPSCoR award period of performance must be discussed.**
- Applications must identify basic research gaps currently at the IHE and the required capabilities that need to be developed at the applicant IHE to achieve full and competitive basic research capability in a DoW-relevant research area.
- Applications must present a management plan for coordinating multiple thrusts working on a common basic research theme that will fill the research gaps and develop new basic research capabilities. These thrusts could include, but are not limited to, purchasing new equipment, supporting new hires, and support for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Adequate provision for **substantive commitment by the IHE's executive offices and appropriate administrative support is an important factor contributing to the success of this Capacity Building effort.**



How to Engage with the DoW



Typical Project Development Process

PRE-

RESEARCH MENU

- Engage with program officer.
- Submit any time via email.

Evaluation: Individual tri-Service Program Officers

WHITEPAPER

- Propose a novel approach to a scientific question.
- Describe the level of risk associated with the effort.
- Identify the resources required to pursue the research.
- Provide a short bibliography.

Evaluation Panel: Subject Matter Experts in the tri-Services

PROPOSAL

- Consult the solicitation for full details on requirements.
- Expand on the discussion in the whitepaper.
 - The description should allow expert reviewers to understand your approach without heavily consulting the literature or supplementary materials.
- Submit via grants.gov.

Evaluation Panel: Subject Matter Experts in the tri-Services



Ways To Engage with tri-Service Program Officers



Email preferred for most POs



Phone (hit or miss due to travel)

Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR)	Army Research Office (ARO)	Office of Naval Research (ONR)
https://www.afrl.af.mil/AFOSR/ On grants.gov search using keyword(s) "Research Interests of the Air Force Office of Scientific Research" to see the latest core announcement. The current funding opportunity number for general research interests is: FA9550-23-S-0001.	https://arl.devcom.army.mil/ Select "Collaborate with Us"; then "Browse Current Topics" under the "ARL Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)" The current funding opportunity number for the ARL BAA for Foundational Research is W911NF-23-S-0001-002.	https://www.onr.navy.mil/ Select "Work With Us" and then "Funding Opportunities/Announcements" and then select FY23 Long Range Broad Agency Announcement for Navy and Marine Corps Science and Technology, N00014-23-S-B001. Navigate to https://www.nre.navy.mil/our-research/onr-technology-and-research for a list of ONR-sponsored research. Select a technology area which will provide program officer and specific program details.



Questions



Thank you



<https://basicresearch.defense.gov/Programs/DEPSCoR-Defense-Established-Program-to-Stimulate-Competitive-Research/>