

## EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition Q4 Newsletter

December 19, 2023

### CONGRESS

#### *Chairman Frank Lucas talks 2024 Tech Priorities*

The House Science Committee has had a busy year on the tech front, most notably with crafting the [reauthorization bill for the National Quantum Initiative](#), the driving force behind the country's quantum tech. The bill advanced out of committee in November and is now waiting to be brought to the floor. Once the quantum reauthorization bill is out the door, House Science Chair Frank Lucas (R-Okla.) has a handful of other priorities he's preparing to undertake in 2024. Here's a look ahead at the committee's work for the coming year.

**Chairman Lucas' response to the Science Committee's main priorities under tech policy:** "The committee is working on several pieces, in the broad sense you can say quantum, AI and the implementations of the CHIPS and Science Act. There's a whole bunch of pieces moving, but one that is really to the stage now, where it is "when do we go to the floor, what kind of interaction are we going to have with the Senate, how will the White House react," is our quantum bill. And I'm proud of that because the National Quantum Initiative Act is one of those things where [we go from a focus on R&D](#) to how do we encourage the actual application and use of the technology so that it really makes a difference in people's lives?"

The committee has done our basic work, but we still have some more things to do. And in the legislative environment right now, it's difficult to do the simplest things and it's incredibly hard to do the challenging things. But part of where we're at on quantum is beginning the process of having positive discussions with leadership on both sides of the room, both parties, so we can get to the floor. And of course our Senate counterparts, for when we move the language over to them."

### APPROPRIATIONS

The government is operating under a temporary spending bill that funds part of the federal government through Jan. 19 and the rest through Feb. 2. Differences between the GOP House and Democratic Senate threatened shutdowns after those dates as Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) has vowed not to pass any more temporary spending extensions. The Freedom Caucus had been pushing for \$120 billion in cuts below the \$1.59 trillion budget cap level agreed to in a June debt ceiling deal between President Joe Biden and Congress. The caucus opposed that agreement. Their softened stance now gives Johnson room to negotiate a bipartisan spending deal and resolve a litany of other differences, including a Senate attempt to spend more than the debt ceiling limit allows.

**Draft Coalition Goals and Funding Chart:**



Agency	FY21 Enacted	FY22 Enacted	FY23 Enacted	FY24 Budget Request	FY24 Coalition Goals	FY24 House Appropriations Committee	FY24 Senate Appropriations Committee	FY25 Coalition Goals
NSF	\$200.0	\$215.0	\$245.0	\$280.68	\$281.0	\$250	\$275	\$280
NIH	\$396.6	\$410.0	\$425.95	\$426.0	1% of Allocation	\$436	\$426	\$450
DOE	\$25.0	\$25.0	\$35.0	\$25.0	\$50.0 + \$25 for equipment account	\$35.0	\$35.0	\$40
USDA	\$65.0*	\$66.75*	\$68.25*	n/a	15% Language (*)	15%	15%	20%
NASA	\$26.0	\$26.0	\$26.0	\$26.0	\$33.0	\$29	\$26	\$30
DOD	\$17.0	\$19.0	\$20.0	n/a	\$50.0	0	\$20	\$25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$729.6</b>	<b>\$761.75</b>	<b>\$820.2</b>	<b>\$757.68</b>	<b>\$+ USDA</b>	<b>\$750+USDA</b>	<b>\$782+USDA</b>	<b>\$825+USDA</b>

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

***Phase 1 Tech Hubs Designees are announced***

Context: The Tech Hubs Program was enacted as part of the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 (as the Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs program). The statute authorized \$10 billion for the program over five years. As part of the FY 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Congress appropriated \$500 million to launch the program. In FY24, both House and Senate CJS Appropriations Subcommittees fully funded the program at its authorized level in the CHIPS and Science Act at \$41 million.

On October 23, 2023, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) **designated 31 Tech Hubs**, as well as announced the recipients of **29 Tech Hubs Strategy Development Grants**. (There were ~400 applicants across 49 states)

- In Phase 2, EDA will award implementation grants to 5-10 Designated Tech Hubs, with each of those Hubs receiving approximately \$40-\$70 million across approximately 3-8 projects.
- Eleven of the 31 Designated Tech Hubs received SDGs, and 18 other consortia received SDGs.

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**To be clear, there are two separate**

**announcements:** Consortia receiving a Tech Hubs designation and/or receiving a Strategy Development Grant. In quick summation, the difference between the two are:

- Consortia’s receiving the Tech Hub designation are fully fleshed out infrastructure capable to handle \$40-70 million to grow and invest in a region.
- The SDG are for consortia who need the boost to be able to apply for a tech hub designation down the road.



The Phase 2 NOFO was released at the same time designees were announced. Phase 1 recipients have until February 29th to submit for Phase 2. As of now, EDA has not offered official feedback for non-designated proposals.

***NIST Releases Draft Guidance on March-In Rights for Public Comment***

On December 7, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) [released](#) for public comment its Draft Interagency Guidance Framework for Considering the Exercise of March-In Rights, a tool to help agencies evaluate when it might be appropriate to require licensing of a patent developed with federal funding.

**DEFENSE**

***Congress passed the FY24 defense policy bill (NDAA)***

Congress has [passed](#) its \$874.2 billion defense policy bill, sending it to the White House for President Biden’s signature. Thursday’s 310-118 vote in the Republican-held House on the compromise National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2024 came after the Democratic-held Senate did the same in an 87-13 vote on Wednesday.

***DOD Aims to Empower Defense Research Ecosystem With \$161M in New Awards; Bindu Nair Quoted***

The [U.S. Department of Defense](#) has issued \$161 million in grants to nearly 300 university researchers to strengthen their research capabilities and build up the science, technology, engineering and mathematics workforce. The funds were awarded to 120 institutions spanning 39 states through the Defense University Research Instrumentation Program, an effort intended to cultivate the U.S. scientific ecosystem and drive progress in [defense-related research](#), the DOD announced on Tuesday.

These awards are just a few of the ways the DOD is ramping up its research and development activities. At the Potomac Officers Club’s [10th Annual Defense R&D Summit](#) on Jan. 31, 2023, key leaders in the defense R&D field will come together to discuss the department’s most important technology priorities and challenges. To learn more and [register to attend](#) the event, [click here](#).

## **NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

### ***NSF Grants First-Ever Awards for Accelerated Research Translation***

The U.S. National Science Foundation [announced](#) the first-ever Accelerating Research Translation (ART) investment - more than \$100 million to 18 teams at academic institutions across the nation. Each ART awardee will receive up to \$6 million over four years to identify and build upon academic research with the potential for technology transfer and societal and economic impacts, to ensure availability of staff with technology transfer expertise, and to support the education and training of entrepreneurial faculty and students. A wide range of institutions from many states, including nine projects from jurisdictions in the Established program to Stimulate Competitive Research, will benefit from the power of the network formed by this initial cohort of ART awardees.

### ***NSF launches EducateAI initiative***

Recently, the National Science Foundation [announced](#) the EducateAI initiative, with the goal of enabling educators to make high-quality, audience-appropriate artificial intelligence educational experiences available nationwide to K-12, community college, four-year college and graduate students, as well as interested adults. The program will establish the necessary infrastructure to support AI education across diverse institutions and will focus on underrepresented groups in computing. The program also encourages proposals from institutions in [Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research \(EPSCoR\) jurisdictions](#), minority-serving institutions and emerging research institutions.

### ***NSF and partners kick off the National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource Pilot Program***

On November 7th, representatives from federal agencies, academia and the private sector gathered at the U.S. National Science Foundation to kick off a collaborative process to design a pilot program for a National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource (NAIRR). NAIRR is a concept for a shared national research infrastructure that will connect U.S. researchers to responsible and trustworthy AI resources, as well as the needed computational, data, software, training, and educational resources to fuel AI research and discovery.

### ***National Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes***

Unfortunately, there is a tight turnaround for [this round](#) of funding, if you're interested. You have until January 12th to apply (preliminary proposal) and the full proposal deadline is May 17. (for material and strengthening AI funding...the astronomy award is already closed). Awardees can receive up to \$16-\$20M and NSF estimates approximately 5 awards: two in astronomy, one in discovery in materials research, and two+ in strengthening AI. Within the posted link, there is a comprehensive slide deck that NSF presented back in September which should include everything there is to know. Otherwise, they offer the following: [AllInstitutesProgram@nsf.gov](mailto:AllInstitutesProgram@nsf.gov) as a contact for questions. FYI, the preliminary proposal should be a 6-page project description covering: Vision, Research goals, Foundational AI research, Use-Inspired Research, Broader Impacts, and Key Personnel / organization.

## ENERGY

### ***Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR)***

**Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number:** [DE-FOA-0003201](#)

**Total Estimated Funding:** \$35 Million

Deadline for Pre-Applications (required):	January 17, 2024 at 5:00pm ET
Deadline for Applications:	February 28, 2024 at 11:59pm ET

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) Program hereby announces its interest in receiving applications for Building EPSCoR-State/DOE-National Laboratory Partnerships. These partnerships advance the understanding of the physical world by supporting fundamental, early-stage energy research collaborations with [DOE National Laboratories](#).

Participation by undergraduate students, graduate students, or postdoctoral fellows is required. Early career faculty from EPSCoR jurisdictions are encouraged to apply, and utilization of DOE user facilities is encouraged. Information on the DOE's Office of Science (SC) User Facilities can be found by visiting [SC's website](#) and information on the DOE Office of Nuclear Energy user facilities can be found on the [Nuclear Science User Facilities website](#). DOE EPSCoR follows the U.S. National Science Foundation's (NSF) EPSCoR Program eligibility determinations. Please see the funding opportunity for agency contacts, eligibility, and more details.

### ***Energy Department's new 'Critical Materials Collaborative' seeks to boost domestic supplies***

The competition for strategic advantage in economic and military affairs depends more and more on critical materials. Now the Energy Department has launched an initiative it calls the Critical Materials Collaborative. Among its goals, to accelerate a domestic supply chain for critical materials. Read more [here](#).

## NEWS & UPDATES

### ***Cutting federal funding for basic research will hurt the US economy***

Amidst [ongoing](#) budget brinkmanship in Washington, House and Senate panels have [proposed significant](#) cuts in federal funding for basic scientific research. That would be a grave mistake for our nation's long-term economic success.

[President Biden's](#) 2024 budget proposal [maintained](#) the current funding level for the National Institutes of Health and proposed a small boost for the National Science Foundation (NSF). Yet under recent congressional proposals, NIH funding would be [significantly reduced](#) — and NSF funding will fall to its [lowest level](#) in more than 30 years. [NIH](#) and [NSF](#) are the pillars of federal support for academic research. The [bulk](#) of their budgets each year goes to [grants](#) for [basic research](#), on which the federal government spent [\\$101 billion in 2018](#) across all agencies. In 2021, the federal government funded [40 percent](#) of basic research in the United States.



*The 2024 Annual Meeting of the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and Foundation will be held in person on February 26, 2024.*



## WHO

This meeting is open to the EPSCoR/IDeA community. We strongly encourage attendance by PDs/PIs, junior investigators, government affairs representatives and anyone in your jurisdiction who will help support advocacy efforts for the EPSCoR and IDeA programs, or who wants to be part of Coalition and Foundation initiatives.

## WHAT

The 2024 Annual Meeting of the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition and EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation, a free event, will kick off on **February 26** at 9:00 am. The presentation of the **Fred Taylor award** will take place during a luncheon program from 12:00 to 1:00 pm. The presentation of the **Joe Danek award** will take place during the cocktail reception from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. **February 27** is reserved for either in-person or virtual meetings with your congressional delegation.

## WHERE

InterContinental The Wharf, Washington, DC

## DEADLINES

Use [this link](#) or complete form below to register for meeting by **February 13**.

**Reserve hotel [online](#) by February 3** or contact Shengyl Poshka, Group Reservation Manager, InterContinental Washington DC - The Wharf, H (202) 800-0844, D (202) 878-8586, F (202) 827-0597, [email](#)