

Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Office  
In preparation for  
**FY 2025 NASA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

**Call for White Papers**

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

**Original Release Date:**

**AR Letter of Intent:**

NASA NOFO Release:

**AR White Paper Due:**

**Arkansas Review:**

NASA Close:

**August 30, 2024**

**September 30 2024**

October 14, 2024

**December 2, 2024**

**Dec. 9 – Jan. 6, 2025**

January 27, 2025

\*\*\*\*\*

**This call for whitepapers will result in a competitive ranking of projects by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Program and Review Team.**

**The highest-ranking whitepaper will be invited to submit the technical proposal for the jurisdiction in the expected National NASA EPSCoR competition.**

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Dr. Constance Meadors, Director  
Dr. Keith Hudson, Director Emeritus  
Ms. Misty Stukenborg, Program Manager

## Summary and Key Information

Program: NASA EPSCoR Research 2025

Funds: \$645,000 over three (3) years (\$215,000 per year or to budget as needed.)

(Note: Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Office has removed \$35,000 per year, \$105,000 total for the program period for administration expenses - the Administration office will supply 2:1 match on this portion.) Total funds: \$750,000

Cost-sharing is required at a level of at least 50% or 2:1 match, two federal for every one state match.

Indirect Cost: Indirects are allowed, but are limited to **21.2%** on salary, wages and fringes only. IDC may be collected at the institution where work is performed only, no IDC on sub-contracts. Uncollected or waived IDC should be used towards match. To calculate the waived IDC use the formula below:

1. Calculate based on your IDC rate and clearly show rate and calculation
2. Calculate based on **21.2%** of salary, wages and fringes and clearly show calculation
3. Step 1 minus Step 2 equals waived or applied to match indirect cost. It is strongly suggested this be applied to matching.

Collaboration: Collaboration is required, consisting of a research institution (PhD granting) and at least one other institution in the state.

Eligibility:

- PI's from previously funded EPSCoR Research awards may serve as a Senior Advisor with no salary expense on this white paper or other future NEP Research awards.
- Faculty and students at all Arkansas institutes of higher education are eligible (U. S. citizenship does not apply to NASA EPSCoR Research awards).

\*\*\*NASA EPSCoR funding cannot be used to purchase general purpose equipment, e.g. desktop workstations, office furnishings, reproduction and printing equipment, etc. as a direct charge. Special purpose equipment purchases (i.e. equipment that is 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 as per *NASA Grants and Cooperative Agreement Handbook*, Section A 1260.27. A detailed justification must be included in the Budget Narrative. \*\*\*

Proposal submission: Full Word and Excel documents should be submitted to the program office electronically by the white paper due date to [asgc@ualr.edu](mailto:asgc@ualr.edu).

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## **I. Description of Opportunity**

### **A. Technical Description:**

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Office of Education, in cooperation with NASA's Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD), Human Exploration & Operations Mission Directorate (HEOMD), Science Mission Directorates (SMD), and Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD), the Office of the Chief Technologist (OCT), and NASA's ten Centers, solicits proposals for the NASA Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). Each funded NASA EPSCoR proposal is expected to establish research activities that will make significant contributions to NASA's strategic research and technology development priorities and contribute to the overall research infrastructure, science and technology capabilities, higher education, and economic development of the jurisdiction.

The program parameters are:

- Proposal must be submitted by the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Program office
- The science funding request per proposal is \$645,000. This amount is to be expended over a three-year period.
- All NASA EPSCoR monies must be cost-shared at a level of at least 50% or 2:1 match, two federal for every one state match, with non-federal monies. In-kind cost-sharing is allowable.

## **II. Project Overview**

### **A. Period of Performance**

NASA EPSCoR awards will support a three-year cooperative agreement. It is anticipated that this period of performance will enable the researchers to achieve the performance task objectives stated in the original proposal and/or any amendments submitted with annual progress reports and accepted by the NASA EPSCoR project office.

### **B. Funding and Cost-Sharing/Matching**

The amount that shall be requested is \$645,000 per research proposal to be expended over three years, in accordance with the budget and budget narrative in the approved research proposal. Cost-sharing is required at a level of at least 50% or 2:1.

\*\*\*Although the method of cost-sharing is flexible, NASA encourages the EPSCoR jurisdiction to consider methods that would add value to the jurisdiction's existing research capabilities. All contributions, including cash or in-kind, shall meet the criteria contained in the *NASA Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook*, Section 1260.54. \*\*\*

### C. Restrictions

In addition to the funding guidelines and requirements in the *NASA Guidebook for Proposers* and the *Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook*, the following restrictions govern the use of the federally-provided and cost-share NASA EPSCoR funds and are applicable to this CAN:

- 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. However, subject to export control restrictions, a foreign national may receive remuneration through a NASA award for the conduct of research while employed either full or part time by a U.S. institution. For additional guidance on foreign participation, see Appendix A of the *NASA Guidebook for Proposers* and NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) Part 1835.016-70 and this document's Appendix Section E.6.1 Assurance of Compliance – China Funding Restriction.
- Travel is allowed for the meaningful completion of the proposed investigation, as well as for reporting results at appropriate professional meetings. **Foreign travel to meetings and conferences in support of the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR research project will not be accepted.** EPSCoR support should be acknowledged by the EPSCoR research project number in written reports and publications. Travel should be appropriate and reasonable to conduct the proposed research. At least one trip to visit with the team's NASA Contact must be budgeted within the first two years of the program.
- The **construction of facilities is not an allowable cost** in any of the programs solicited in this Call/NOFO. For further information on allowable costs, refer to the cost principles cited in the *Grant and Cooperative Agreement Handbook*, 14 CFR §1260.127.
- NASA EPSCoR funding cannot be used to purchase general purpose equipment, e.g. desktop workstations, office furnishings, reproduction and printing equipment, etc. as a direct charge. Special purpose equipment purchases (i.e., equipment that is 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 as per *NASA Grants and Cooperative Agreement Handbook*, 14 CFR § 1260.27.
- NASA EPSCoR funding may not be used to support NASA civil service participation (FTE) in a research project unless that funding is provided through a funding vehicle between the jurisdiction and NASA center, such as a Space Act Agreement or other reimbursable agreement. NASA EPSCoR cannot hold back funding from an award to send to a center for FTE support.

### D. Research Student Support

The use of NASA EPSCoR funds for support of research students is allowable, and must be detailed in the Budget Justification and described in the narrative and evaluation sections of the proposal.

### E. Partnerships and Interactions

All institutions of higher education within the jurisdiction should be given the



opportunity and must be made aware of the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR 2025 Call. All proposals must be submitted through the jurisdiction's NASA EPSCoR office. Dr. Constance Meadors as ASGC/NEP Director will be the overall Primary Investigator. Jurisdictions are strongly encouraged to submit proposals that demonstrate partnerships or cooperative agreements among academia, government agencies, business and industry, private research foundations, jurisdiction agencies, and local agencies. It is required to have a cooperative agreement with at least two campuses of higher education in the state.

Partnerships with minority-serving institutions are strongly encouraged. Inclusion of faculty and students from underrepresented/underserved groups is strongly encouraged.

NASA-funded in-kind services provided by NASA Centers and/or Mission Directorates should be identified as NASA responsibilities in the proposals. Scientific NASA contacts must be made prior to submission of the white paper. The Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Program Office can help facilitate this connection.

Statements of commitment and letters of support are important components of the proposal. **NASA does not, however, solicit or evaluate letters of endorsement.** Review the *NASA Guidebook for Proposers* for distinctions among statements of commitment, letters of support, and letters of endorsement.

## **F. Program Management**

### **A. NASA EPSCoR Program and Project Levels**

The NASA EPSCoR is a component of the Aerospace Research and Career Development Program administered by the Office of Education at NASA Headquarters. NASA EPSCoR Program Management is closely coordinated with NASA Headquarters program offices (research and educational) and the Centers.

NASA EPSCoR Project Management resides at the Kennedy Space Center (KSC). Overall responsibility for oversight, evaluation, and reporting resides here. Technical and scientific questions are for the Project Manager. Each Mission Directorate and NASA Center has primary points of contact (POC) as well.

### **B. Jurisdiction Level**

The jurisdiction's NASA EPSCoR Director will serve as the managing Principal Investigator (PI) on the award, responsible for providing leadership, oversight and overall management of the project to ensure compliance with NASA EPSCoR. The submitting and awardee institution will be that of the jurisdiction's NASA EPSCoR Director. The investigator in charge of the scientific direction of the proposed work should be listed as the Science-I (Co-I/Science-I). If the Co-I/ Science/I's institution is different from the submitting institution, awards may be made to the Co-I/Science/I's institution through a subcontract.

The Government's obligation to continue any award is based on satisfactory progress as detailed in the recipient's required annual progress reports. The proposal can include a reasonable level of funding for administrative function of the jurisdiction's NASA EPSCoR program office, to be included in the \$645,000 cap. The AR NASA EPSCoR Office will budget \$105,000, to be included in the final state proposal (\$750,000 total).

Annual in person or video conference meetings (ex. Teamviewer) will take place between the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR program office staff and all Co-I/Science-I's. This will provide a means of communication allowing guidance and updates from both an Agency and NASA EPSCoR programmatic standpoint; discussion of the project to include research progress and problems, budget discussions and more. **NOTE:** The selected Sci-I and team are expected to attend the annual Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Conference. This is usually held in conjunction with the ASGC Symposium held on the **third Friday of April each** year, most recently on the Thursday prior, making for a day and ½ or two-day event. This presentation is **MANDATORY** and is a part of your team progress review. Exact information for this event will be provided in a timely fashion each year, but the chosen Arkansas research team Sci-I must arrange for presentation and attendance!



### III. White Paper Preparation

#### A. Notice of Intent

A notice of intent must be sent by COB on the LOI due date indicated previously (see title page) to the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Program Office. This must include a cover page with all known participating researchers along with their corresponding campuses and a project summary limited to 4000 characters including spaces. Only word documents will be accepted. *Please save file as NOI\_Pi's Last Name.doc.*

#### B. White Paper Content

All white papers should be typed in 12 point font with 1" margins

- Cover Page (1 page) – Title, Submitting Institution, Team members with corresponding campuses and contact information.
- Table of Contents (1 page)
- Body (maximum 8 pages) *Please save file as Proposal\_Pi's Last Name.doc*
  - **Project Description:** A detailed description of the proposed research plan. Page limit includes all illustrations, tables, and figures, where each “n-page” fold-out counts as n-pages and each side of a sheet containing text or an illustration counts as a page.
  - **Project Purpose:** Describe how the proposed research activities will make significant contributions to the strategic research and technology development priorities of one or more of the Mission Directorates or the OCT and contribute to the overall research infrastructure, science and technology capabilities, higher education, and economic development of the jurisdiction.
  - **Goals and Objectives:** Clearly state goals and objectives for the proposed effort and provide a rationale for the approach that will be used to achieve them.
  - **Project Content:** Clearly describe the proposed effort and how the goals and objectives will be achieved. Please note, when preparing a proposal that involves the use of human subjects, animals, hazardous materials, select agents, and/or recombinant DNA, the proposers will need to address applicable compliance issues.
  - **Anticipated Results:** Describe the anticipated results of the proposed effort.
  - **Partnerships and Interactions:** Describe any partnerships or cooperative arrangements among academia, government agencies, business and industry, private research foundations, jurisdiction agencies, and local agencies as well as partnerships with minority-serving institutions and the inclusion of faculty and students from underrepresented/underserved groups.
  - **Timeline:** Include a timeline for achieving the stated goals and objectives, including significant milestones.
  - **Sustainability:** Describe how the research capability will be sustained beyond the funding period. There should be a clear plan for sustaining the research beyond NASA EPSCoR funding and for seeking non-EPSCoR funding. Identify potential CAN's, NRA's, RFP's, etc., specifically as examples.
  - **Dissemination:** Outline the plan for disseminating the results to NASA and the broader community.
- References and Citations (as needed)

- Biographical Sketches (as needed)
  - **PI, Co-I/Science-PI:** maximum 2 pages
  - **Co-I, Co-I/Institutional-PI :** 1 page
  - **Other Key Personnel:** 1 page
- Letters of Match (as needed) (for whitepapers, Dean level is sufficient)
- Letters of Commitment (as needed). Please place them in the order you would like them to be reviewed.
- Budget Justification
- Budget spreadsheet – Sample template can be found on our website:  
<https://arkansasspacegrant.org/index.php?page=epscor>

### **C. Budget**

The annual funding request for each research proposal should reflect a year-by-year distribution of funds that will give the project a strong start, but also sustain it at an effective level for the three-year period.

There is no cap on the funds for individual sub-task areas. However, the total federal funds requested for the proposed research must be no greater than \$645,000.

Dollar amounts proposed with no detailed explanation (e.g., Equipment: \$12,000, or Labor: \$35,000) may reduce proposal acceptability, or cause delays in funding should the proposal be selected. Each item should be explained in reasonable detail. Publication costs should be listed separately by journal name, number of pages and price per page.

Direct labor and fringe benefit costs should be separated by titles or disciplines (e.g., Principal Investigator, graduate research assistant, clerical support, etc.) with estimated hours, hourly rates, and total amounts of each. Indirect costs should be sufficiently explained such that evaluators can understand the basis of the proposed costs.

Other Costs (with each significant category detailed) should be explained in reasonable detail, and substantiated whenever possible. For example, proposed equipment purchases should specify the type of equipment, number of units, and unit cost.

Requested domestic travel should include purpose, the number of trips and expected location, duration of each trip, airfare, and per diem. There is no limit placed on domestic travel. Domestic travel should be appropriate and reasonable to conduct the proposed research. At least one trip to visit with the team's NASA Contact must be budgeted within the first two years of the program.

Foreign Travel is not allowed.

All costs to be incurred by NASA Centers on behalf of NASA EPSCoR for the use of facilities and contracted technical work should be identified in the research proposal funding request. In advance of actual NASA EPSCoR proposal submission, proposers should contact NASA installations from which services will be requested in order to ascertain the availability and anticipated costs of such services. Salaries and travel of NASA civil servants, as well as other in-house research provided by NASA Centers



provided at no cost to the project, cannot count as part of the cost share. These costs may be identified as “Federal Match” in a separate section of the budget.

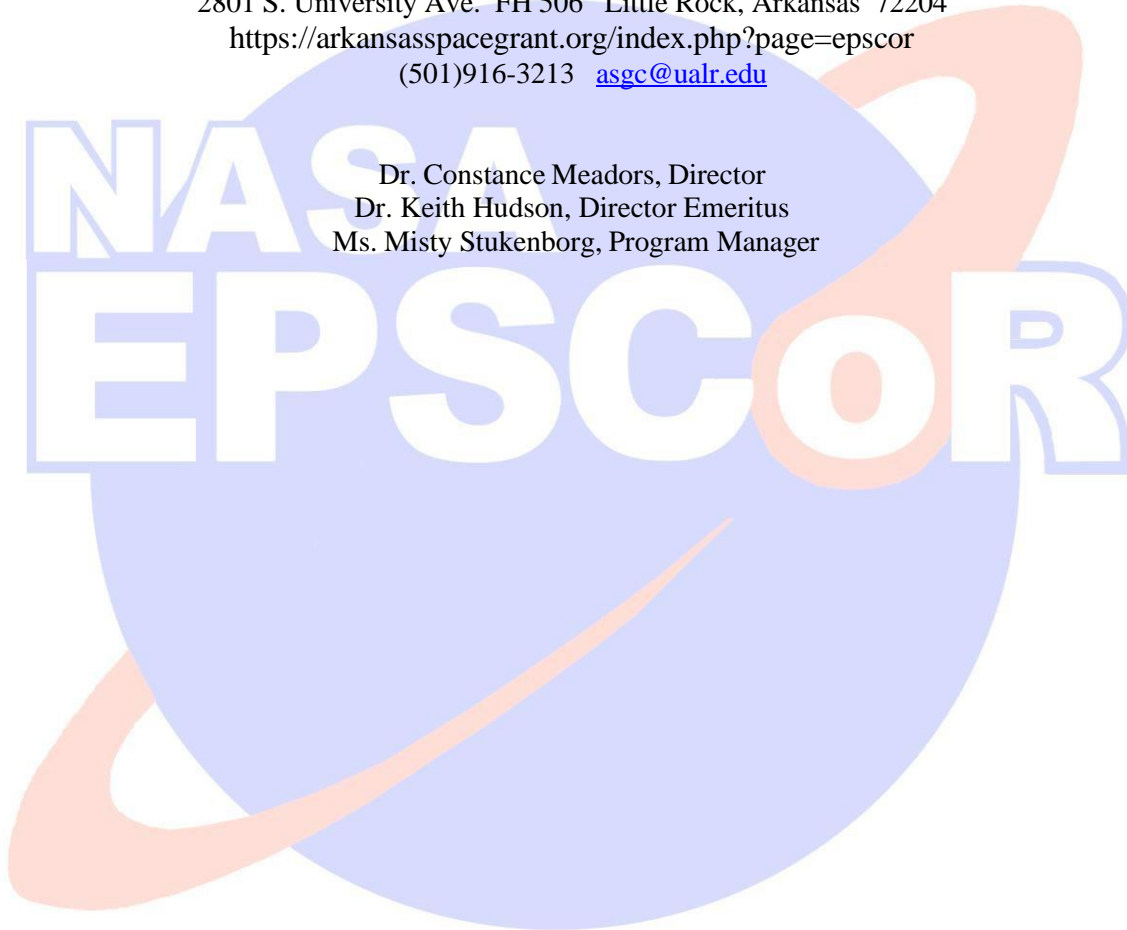
Matching - Must be a separate line item from items charged to federal funds.

#### **IV. Inquiries**

Additional information regarding Arkansas NASA EPSCoR can be obtained from the following:

Arkansas NASA EPSCoR Office  
University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
2801 S. University Ave. FH 506 Little Rock, Arkansas 72204  
<https://arkansasspacegrant.org/index.php?page=epscor>  
(501)916-3213 [asgc@ualr.edu](mailto:asgc@ualr.edu)

Dr. Constance Meadors, Director  
Dr. Keith Hudson, Director Emeritus  
Ms. Misty Stukenborg, Program Manager



## APPENDIX I

### NASA HQ Evaluation Criteria

\*\*\*NASA HQ Evaluation Criteria is from our previous years NOFO, and is included to assist in development of your whitepaper. NASA 2025 NOFO should be similar. \*\*\*

Successful research proposals are likely to be those that provide sound contributions to both immediate and long-term scientific and technical needs of NASA as explicitly expressed in current NASA documents and communications, as well as contribute to the overall research infrastructure, science and technical capabilities, higher education, and economic development of the jurisdiction.

### Overarching Philosophy: Cultivate Inclusion and Excellence

NASA's ability to promote inclusion practices is instrumental in fulfilling our mission. Being inclusive in our approach ensures that we collectively utilize the unique talents and perspectives from the diverse array of individuals that constitute our current and future workforce.

Diversity of the skills, disciplines, experience, and talents needed in our future workforce is critical to our success. Potential at both the individual and organizational levels will be maximized by fostering awareness, understanding, and respect for individual differences. The knowledge, expertise, and unique background and life experiences – including ethnicity, gender, race, geography, religion, and cultural identity – of each individual strengthen the agency and drive creativity, innovation and excellence.

Evaluation criteria for EPSCoR are based on **NASA's Education Operating Principles** as described in the *NASA Education Implementation Plan*. All NASA education projects are evaluated according to these principles:

- Utilize Evidence-Based Strategies
- Promote Diversity
- Facilitate Collaborations
- Ensure Alignment
- Conduct Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria: Intrinsic Merit, NASA Alignment and Partnerships, Management and Evaluation, and Budget Justification: Narrative and Details. The bulleted lists after each criterion below should not be construed as any indication of priority or relative weighting. The bullets are provided for clarity and facilitation of proposal development. Note: **The proposal must contain a section entitled "Relevance to NASA" and a section entitled "Relevance to Jurisdiction."** Proposers should provide specific information on how they determined the relevance of the proposed effort to NASA. The relevance to NASA and the jurisdiction must be balanced.

#### A. Intrinsic Merit (35% of score)

**Proposed Research Proposals** should provide a detailed narrative of the proposed research activity, including the scientific and/or technical merit of the proposed research, unique and innovative methods, approaches, concepts, or advanced technologies, and the potential impact of the proposed research on its field (Proposal Preparation -- Project Description,

Project Purpose, Goals and Objectives, Project Content, to Anticipated Results, and Timeline).

**Existing Research** (see Section C.) Proposals should provide baseline information about current research activities within the jurisdiction in the proposed research area, including projects currently funded under NASA EPSCoR. If relevant, the narrative should include a brief history of NASA EPSCoR Research projects in the jurisdiction and should include a discussion of how these previous NASA EPSCoR research projects and Core or RID activities have helped prepare the institution and jurisdiction for and contributed to the proposed research activities. If the proposed research represents a new direction for the jurisdiction, the ability of the technical team to carry out the research should be explained. Other relevant research and technology development programs within the jurisdiction should be included.

## **B. NASA Alignment and Partnerships (35% of score)**

*NASA personnel will evaluate this section: (Please use the below bolded headings)*

### **1. Relevance to, Partnerships with, and Interactions with NASA.**

Proposals should discuss the value of the proposed research to NASA's research priorities.

- Proposals should describe the use of NASA content, people, or facilities in the execution of the research activities. They should describe current and/or previous interactions, partnerships, and meetings with NASA researchers, engineers, and scientists in the area of the proposed research, and discuss how future partnerships between the institution's researchers and personnel at the Mission Directorates, the OCT, and/or Centers will be fostered. The name(s) and title(s) of NASA researchers with whom the proposers will partner should be included.
- The utilization of NASA venues to publish accomplishments should be also considered. Proposals should describe the use of NASA content, people, or facilities in the execution of the research activities. They should describe current and/or previous interactions, partnerships, and meetings with NASA researchers, engineers, and scientists in the area of the proposed research, and discuss how future partnerships between the institution's researchers and personnel at the Mission Directorates, the OCT, and/or Centers will be fostered. The name(s) and title(s) of NASA researchers with whom the proposers will partner should be included. The utilization of NASA venues to publish accomplishments should be also considered.

### **2. Relevance to, Partnerships with, and Interactions with the Jurisdiction.**

- Proposals should discuss the value of the proposed research to the jurisdiction's research priorities.
- Proposals should articulate clearly how the proposed research activities build capacity in the jurisdiction. In particular, proposers should explain how the current proposed research fits into the strategic plan for NASA EPSCoR-related research in the jurisdiction.
- Proposals should delineate mechanisms for building partnerships with universities, industry, and/or other government agencies to enhance the ability of the jurisdiction to achieve its objectives, to obtain and leverage sources of additional funding, and/or to obtain essential services not otherwise available.

**3. Sustainability.** Proposals should state how they plan to develop research competitiveness both in the jurisdiction and nationally.

### **C. Management and Evaluation (15% of score)**

This section should describe the management structure for the proposed research, and coordination with the jurisdiction's NASA EPSCoR project management. The following elements should be included:

**Results of Prior NASA EPSCoR Research Support:** If the current EPSCoR Director has administered NASA EPSCoR research awards (excluding Core & Research Infrastructure Development (RID)) that were completed in the past five years, he or she must demonstrate accomplishments commensurate with the managerial and administrative expectations of the award. The EPSCoR Director will not be assessed on his/her expertise in the specific proposed research area (the Co-I/Science-PI is tasked with managing the scientific/technical development progress). The following information must be provided: the NASA EPSCoR award number(s), amount(s) the title of the projects(s); and period(s) of support; primary outcomes resulting from the NASA EPSCoR award, including a summary discussion of accomplishments compared to the proposed outcomes from the original proposal; coordination with the research and technical development priorities of NASA, and contribution(s) to the overall research capacity of the jurisdiction.

- **Personnel:** A list of the personnel participating in this research program, including Principal Investigator and all Co-Investigators, Research Associates, Post-Doctoral Fellows, Students (projected numbers of both graduate and undergraduates), and other research participants should be included. The credentials of the researchers are important; however EPSCoR includes the concept of encouraging and helping new researchers.
- **Project Evaluation:** Proposals should document the intended outcomes and offer metrics to demonstrate progress toward and achievements of these outcomes. They should discuss metrics to be used for tracking and evaluating project progress. Milestones and timetables for achievement of specific objectives during the award period should be presented. The proposal should describe an appropriate evaluation plan/process to document outcomes and demonstrate progress toward achieving objectives of proposed project elements. Evaluation methodology should be based upon reputable models and techniques appropriate to the content and scale of the project. Projects should implement improvements throughout the entire period of performance based on ongoing evaluation evidence.
- **Tracking of Program Progress:** To the extent reasonable, proposals should discuss how the following will be assessed:
  - the progress and potential towards achieving self-sufficiency beyond the award period of the research capabilities developed under this grant; and
  - the potential for the proposed research area to continue to grow in importance in NASA-related fields in the future.
- **Continuity:** If applicable, proposals should describe the role of EPSCoR in connecting to their other NASA education or research projects. They should include methods for effecting the transition of participants to succeeding levels of involvement or facilitating career opportunities. This principle also refers to continuity in research capability. The proposal may contain project efforts directed

particularly at involving young researchers in new fields of research that have promise to provide NASA with long-term quality research and development.

**D. Budget Justification: Narrative and Details (15%)**

A detailed budget, including NASA and cost-share funds, is required for the three years of performance. All sources of cost-sharing shall be described and documented. The budget will be evaluated based upon the clarity and reasonableness of the funding request. A budget narrative should be included that discusses other budgetary issues such as the extent and level of jurisdiction, industrial, and institutional commitment and financial support, including resources (staff, facilities, laboratories, indirect support, waiver of indirect costs, etc.). The proposed budget should be adequate, appropriate, reasonable, and realistic, and demonstrate the effective use of funds in alignment with the proposed project. This section should include detailed budgets for each of the three years of the funding and a summary budget for all three years. The proposed budget should reflect clear alignment with the content and text of the proposal. The budget should contain sufficient cost detail and supporting information to facilitate evaluation.

**E. NASA Mission Directorate and Points of Contact**

This information is included in a file on the Arkansas NASA EPSCoR webpage, at the bottom left of that page, and will provide topical ideas and contacts at the Directorate and Centers. <https://arkansasspacegrant.org/index.php?page=epscor>

