

NASA KENTUCKY FAQ

NASA KY Space Grant Consortium & EPSCoR Programs Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



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1 – GENERAL QUESTIONS

All Programs

1. What is NASA Kentucky?

NASA Kentucky consists of two primary programs – the NASA National Space Grant College & Fellowship Program (Space Grant) and NASA EPSCoR (Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research). Both programs are Federally funded with co-funding from the state of Kentucky and in-kind commitments from participating institutions. Requirements for eligibility vary significantly between the two programs (see below).

NASA Space Grant is a workforce development program primarily focused on NASA-related opportunities for college students in the state.

NASA EPSCoR is a research development program focused on supporting NASA-related research at higher education institutions in Kentucky and enhancing the state’s aerospace-related research infrastructure.

2. As a researcher, how do I find a NASA Collaborator if I do not already have one?

The best way for a researcher to find a potential NASA collaborator is to utilize resources available on the NASA KY EPSCoR web page, such as NASA EPSCoR Research Focus Areas and NASA Techport, and survey conference or journal papers authored by NASA researchers in your area. Contacting NASA researchers to inquire about their research may help introduce your related interests and can lead to possible collaboration or a support letter that is needed for a submission. Contacting them may also lead to productive referrals.

Another approach is to visit the NASA research announcement system (NSPIRES) and enter keywords from your research area to find NASA technical researchers who share similar interests. Again, when talking to NASA researchers – if the topic is not their particular area – they may recommend others who are better aligned.

With an invitation to visit, Kentucky faculty can apply for a NASA Kentucky EPSCoR Research Faculty Travel award to visit a NASA facility and meet potential collaborators.

3. As a Kentucky college student, how do I get involved?

Visit the NASA KY [Kentucky Space Grant Consortium](#) web page to determine the Affiliate Representative from your school and contact them for more information.

Review our website’s project list for faculty at your institution who have received NASA Kentucky awards and contact them for more information about their projects. Also, consider applying for NASA internships and additional student opportunities (links are listed on our website).

4. I am a Kentucky student interested in submitting a proposal for a Space Grant award. How do I do this?

Proposals for student awards are submitted by faculty members. Faculty from your school who will mentor/advise the student(s) must submit the proposal package to NASA KY. The faculty mentor and the student(s) will need to work together to assemble the required proposal package.

5. How does my institution become an Affiliate of the NASA Kentucky Space Grant Consortium?

Kentucky entities interested in becoming Affiliates should contact NASA Kentucky. Eligible organizations include Kentucky institutions of higher learning (e.g., colleges, universities, and community colleges) as well as non-profits (e.g., museums, planetariums) and industry.

6. What are NASA’s objectives for the Space Grant and EPSCoR Programs?

NASA Space Grant national program objectives:

- Establish and maintain a national network of universities with interests and capabilities in aeronautics, space and related fields.
- Encourage cooperative programs among universities, aerospace industry, and Federal, state and local governments.

- Encourage interdisciplinary training, research and public service programs related to aerospace.
- Recruit and train U.S. citizens for careers in aerospace science and technology.
- Promote a strong science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education base from elementary through secondary levels while preparing teachers in these grade levels to become more effective at improving student academic outcomes.

NASA EPSCoR national program objectives:

- Contribute to and promote the development of research infrastructure in NASA EPSCoR jurisdictions in areas of strategic importance to the NASA mission.
- Improve capabilities of NASA EPSCoR jurisdictions to gain support from sources outside NASA EPSCoR programs.
- Develop partnerships among NASA research assets, academic institutions, and industry.
- Contribute to the overall research infrastructure and economic development of the jurisdiction.
- Focus on research of important priority to NASA

2 – ELIGIBILITY

Space Grant

7. Are non-US citizens or Permanent Residents eligible for Space Grant funding?

Funding from certain Space Grant programs requires US citizenship. NASA requires US citizenship for students receiving fellowship support under NASA KY GF and REU awards, as well as students being supported for internships. Non-US citizens at Kentucky institutions may participate in all other NASA KY projects.

8. Does my institution need to be an Affiliate of the NASA Kentucky Space Grant Consortium in order to submit a Space Grant proposal?

Yes, your institution must be an affiliate member or partnered with an affiliate member to submit NASA Kentucky Space Grant proposals. The list of Consortium members is available on our website.

EPSCoR

9. Are non-US citizens or Permanent Residents eligible for NASA EPSCoR funding?

Yes, non-US citizens who are legally employed at Kentucky institutions may participate in NASA Kentucky EPSCoR research projects.

10. Does my institution need to be an Affiliate of the NASA Kentucky Space Grant Consortium in order to submit a NASA EPSCoR proposal?

No, faculty at any higher education institution in the state of Kentucky can submit proposals to NASA Kentucky EPSCoR programs. Space Grant Consortium affiliation is not required for NASA EPSCoR programs.

3 – PROPOSALS

All Programs

11. What is the difference between a letter of endorsement and a letter of support from a NASA Collaborator?

A letter of support from a NASA (or related) collaborator should include: 1) a specific commitment of some participation in the proposed research project; 2) specific plans for regular communications; and potentially, 3) an invitation to visit the NASA center or facility or to meet at a conference.

Letters of support may be from NASA or affiliated organizations including NASA Institutes/Laboratories such as JPL, Space Telescope Science Institute, National Space Biomedical Institute, CASIS, and others. Examples of participation include technical advice, attending progress reviews, data sharing, assistance with analysis, student mentorship, etc.

Note: Letters of affirmation or endorsement (*“I am familiar with the Professor’s work and I think the proposed research is a great idea”*) are insufficient for NASA KY programs that require a letter of support. Letters that express

only affirmation may be counted against the page limitations of a proposal, aligned with NASA's policies for support letters.

12. How do we know which research topics are aligned with a particular Mission Directorate (MD)?

Descriptions of the Mission Directorates (MD) and their areas of focus are available on the NASA KY [Space Grant](#) and [EPSCoR](#) webpages. Review each description and identify the NASA MD umbrella that includes the proposed research area. Research topics do not need to be aligned with a specific NASA mission or project.

Space Grant

13. Is a letter from a NASA Collaborator required for a GF proposal?

Yes, see above for description of a [letter of support](#). A primary goal of all NASA Kentucky programs is to establish connections with NASA researchers. The graduate student fellowship proposal should include NASA (or related) participation and a plan to visit your collaborator at NASA or at a conference to discuss the project. The letter they provide should confirm their interest in being involved with the research and commitment to such a visit/meeting.

14. Is there a Space Grant Abstract word count limit?

200-300 words.

15. The RFP lists NASA KY Space Grant strategic themes and NASA areas of emphasis. Should submissions address how they will be aligned with these?

The NASA KY strategic themes and NASA current areas of emphasis are provided as additional information, not requirements. Discussion of how the proposed activities align with these themes will strengthen a proposal and make it more competitive for selection (if the fit is naturally occurring as opposed to a forced fit).

16. What type of projects are appropriate for a Mini-Grant?

The Mini-Grant category is meant to be broad enough to cover many types of proposals, including teacher workshops and recruiting activities for higher education or STEM. For example, bringing a group of teachers and students to campus or to a NASA-related scientific site. Involve institution recruiters as needed. Another example might be an observatory upgrade combined with an outreach program. Current NASA emphasis is on reaching middle school students and teachers, but any K-12 outreach is eligible.

EPSCoR

17. Is it allowable under NASA EPSCoR programs to have Co-Is from other states?

NASA EPSCoR funding must support researchers only in EPSCoR states. Co-Is from outside Kentucky are allowed, as long as the project is primarily building the research capability of Kentucky, i.e. increasing the state's expertise to be competitive for future funding. If a Co-I is in a non-EPSCoR state, then their participation should be unfunded. Funding may be used for travel, services and supplies in non-EPSCoR states. Proposals that keep the majority of the funding inside the jurisdiction (KY) are more competitive.

4 – BUDGETING

All Programs

18. What types of expenses are allowed?

NASA Kentucky awards cover typical grant expenses such as personnel, travel, materials and supplies, and tuition. General restrictions include: no capital equipment on Space Grant or EPSCoR RIDG, domestic travel only, and cost-share must be from non-Federal sources. See RFP guidelines and Budget Form for details on specific programs. Please contact NASA KY with budget related questions: nasa@uky.edu

19. What indirect cost rate will these grants allow?

Indirect costs are not allowed on awards assigned for state funding. Indirect costs are not allowed on Space Grant fellowship programs – GF, REU (see #22 below). Please refer to the specific NASA KY RFP for guidance on indirect rates. PIs may negotiate reduced indirect costs with their institution and use any unrecovered portion of the full rate as cost-share.

20. Are pre-award costs allowed?

Pre-award costs are possible, but are not automatic and must receive approval from NASA KY. Pre-award costs up to 90 days must be requested in advance and approved in writing by the NASA Kentucky Director prior to the start of any pre-award expenditures. Institutions that incur pre-award costs/expenses are responsible for all costs/expenses if the proposal is not selected or if pre-award requests are not approved.

21. Does a match of 0.5:1 mean NASA Kentucky will fund \$0.50 for every \$1.00 my institution provides, or vice versa?

0.5:1 (\$CS:\$Award) means that \$0.50 of cost-share (non-Federal funds, in-kind, etc.) will be provided by the proposing institution for every \$1.00 of funding awarded.

Space Grant

22. Are any indirect costs allowed on student fellowship programs: GF, REU?

Indirect costs are not allowed for Space Grant student fellowship programs. For these programs, the indirect costs are precluded by NASA. However, unrecovered indirect costs on sub-recipient direct cost-share may be used as cost-share.

23. What if the GF fellowship is insufficient to include tuition and the usual annual PhD candidate stipend at my institution?

An option would be to support the student for less than 12 months. Total funding from NASA KY for a GF project may not exceed the amount set in the corresponding RFP.

24. Is equipment not allowed on any Space Grant programs as direct cost or cost share?

Equipment is not allowed as direct cost on any Space Grant programs. It is possible that equipment could be used as cost share with prior approval from NASA KY. Submitted proposals must be consistent with the PI institution's policies and practices. PIs are encouraged to consult with their institution's research organization to determine the institution's definition of equipment vs materials/supplies.

5 – AWARDS

All Programs

25. How do I request a No Cost Extension (NCE) for my NASA KY grant?

No-cost extensions for NASA Kentucky awards are not automatic. Requests for extensions must be received *no later than 45 days prior to the current end date* of the award. Requests must include detail of the programmatic justification for an extension:

- 1) Delays that prevented completion of the planned effort on time, along with a plan for completion; or
- 2) Details of new opportunities that can be realized by adding additional scope, along with a plan for completion.

While having remaining funds may be necessary for an NCE, this alone is not a sufficient or appropriate justification for requesting a No-Cost Extension.

Requests may be submitted via email to nasa@uky.edu

Note that the overarching goals of NASA Kentucky programs are to establish and build relationships with NASA partners and to train students and faculty for research supporting NASA and Kentucky priorities. Details of progress toward these goals are important to include in any request for extension.

26. How do I request a re-budget of the funding categories for my NASA KY grant?

Please contact NASA KY with any re-budget questions or requests at nasa@uky.edu. PIs have flexibility to re-budget minor amounts as needs of the project develop, provided that the total budget still meets the budget guidelines described in the corresponding RFP. GF and REU grants are awarded for a specific student and may not be re-budgeted to reduce support for the student (for example increasing materials expenses) or to support a different student.

27. How are renewal proposals processed?

Current projects may be accepted for a renewal period and additional funding via the next program RFP. This additional funding may be applied to the current funding account or subaward.

28. How do I acknowledge NASA KY support on publications, posters and presentations?

Determine your award year and please use the acknowledgement suggested below:

NASA KY Space Grant 2020-2025 (GF, REU, TP, RIA, MG, EMG): “The material is based upon work supported by NASA Kentucky under NASA award No: 80NSSC20M0047.”

NASA KY Space Grant 2015-2020 (GF, UF, TF, RIA, MG, EMG): “The material is based upon work supported by NASA Kentucky under NASA award No: NNX15AR69H.”

NASA KY EPSCoR 2022-2026 (RIDG, WCS): “The material is based upon work supported by NASA Kentucky under NASA award No: 80NSSC22M0034.”

NASA KY EPSCoR 2019-2021 (RIDG, WCS): “The material is based upon work supported by NASA Kentucky under NASA award No: 80NSSC19M0052.”