

NASA Kentucky EPSCoR RA RFP Telecon Notes

September 4, 2019

Telecon Notes:

- Proposers should note several factors can affect selection of proposals at the national level, in addition to having a good research plan. A general description of these factors can be found in the proposal evaluation section of the national NASA EPSCoR RA RFP, to be released in late 2019. A link to the most recent national RFP is in the NASA KY RFP-19-004 document (pg.2) on our website. Kentucky selects pre-proposals based on evaluation of the research as well as competitiveness among programmatic factors, including:
 - 1) Return on Investment (ROI) – ROI is higher if the proposal offers a research plan that establishes research capacity with a high chance of follow-on competitiveness for non-EPSCoR funding, including factors such as specialized equipment and research mentoring that would enable further research. This program is considered a multi-investigator seed award with the intent of supporting career development for young researchers to help the state achieve more research capability. Typically teams of 2-3 investigators and pairings of an experienced researcher with a younger researcher are often successful.
 - 2) Diversity among institutions and researchers are considered favorably, as are partnerships among institutions, industry, and government agencies.
 - 3) It is a plus to involve more than a single NASA Center and mission directorate.
 - 4) NASA expects a tightly-aligned research relationship. Proposals that lack existing strong relationships with NASA collaborators will not be competitive. There is a strong focus at NASA to emphasize their missions and mission directorates (Space Tech, Science, Aeronautics, Human Exploration).
 - 5) EPSCoR funding leaving EPSCoR states is not desired.
- Only 1 proposal is allowed to be submitted per state. It is the intent of the NASA Kentucky EPSCoR program to submit Kentucky's most competitive proposal. Typically there are 10-12 proposals in-state. 28 states submit proposals to the national competition – all are usually very competitive. Selections by the national program vary, from 6-8 to up to 17. National selection is usually balanced among Mission Directorates.
- Kentucky's pre-proposal process:
 - 1) NASA KY receives pre-proposal submissions.
 - 2) Submissions go to external reviewers
 - 3) NASA KY selects and develops a proposal to meet the national RFP timeline; selection of a pre-proposal will be approx. mid-November 2019.
 - 4) National submission deadline expected to be Jan/Feb 2020
- Additional notes:

- 1) Specialized equipment is allowable as an expense and existing equipment can be used as cost-share when appropriately documented and certified by the institution
- 2) Cost-share must be from non-Federal sources
- 3) The state EPSCoR office will provide cost-share for the selected proposal, however the university should also show cost-share; helps to indicate institutional support for the research
- 4) Only a 1 pg budget narrative is needed for the pre-proposal, including potential sources of cost-share

- Q & A:

- 1) NASA collaborators should be unfunded in the proposal. NASA collaborators should provide commitment through support for the research.
- 2) Limited funding can go to facility/lab use at NASA Centers.
- 3) Average number of Kentucky researchers per proposal is 2-3
- 4) Researchers are encouraged to refer to the NASA Technology Roadmaps and identify multiple lines of research in order to expand partnerships.
- 5) Travel funding will be provided for the selected PI to meet with NASA collaborators prior to final proposal submission. A collaboration meeting is highly encouraged.
- 6) How many awards are typical at the national level? 15-20

See the FAQ linked on the [NASA KY EPSCoR page](#) for additional information.