

# NSF Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research



**NSF EPSCoR**  
ADVANCING GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY IN STEM



## EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII): EPSCoR Research Fellows

*—An Opportunity for Early and Mid-Career Investigators*

November 14, 2024

# Webinar Overview

- The US NSF EPSCoR Program
- The EPSCoR Research Fellows Funding Opportunity
- Merit Review Criteria
- Closing Remarks



# EPSCoR Research Fellows: Key Information

- Funding opportunity that supports PIs from EPSCoR-eligible institutions in the development of research collaborations
- Solicitation Number: **NSF 24-528**; up to \$300,000 for up to 2 years
- Deadline: **April 8, 2025**, by 5 PM submitting institution's local time
- Please use the links below to access the solicitation and resources to assist with proposal preparation:
- Solicitation: <https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/epscor-research-infrastructure-improvement-track-4-0>
- This pre-recorded webinar presentation: [https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/epscor/epscor-office-hours?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/epscor/epscor-office-hours?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)



# NSF EPSCoR: Building Jurisdiction-wide Research Capacity



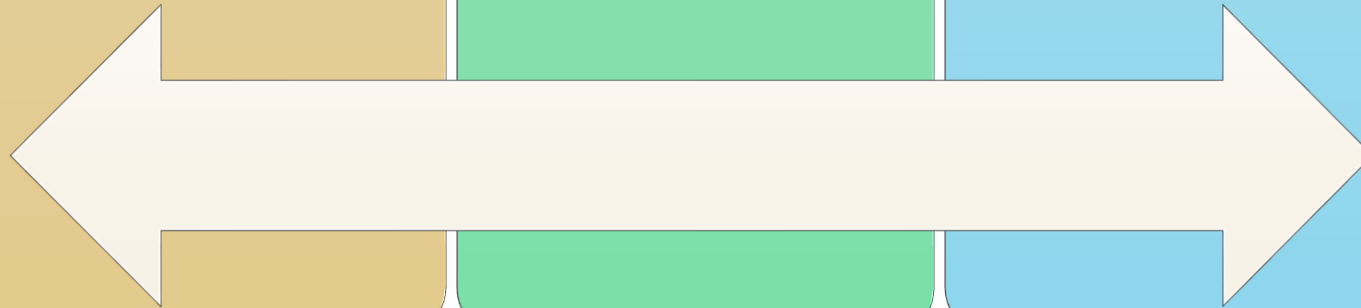
**Discovery &  
Innovation**



**Education &  
Workforce**

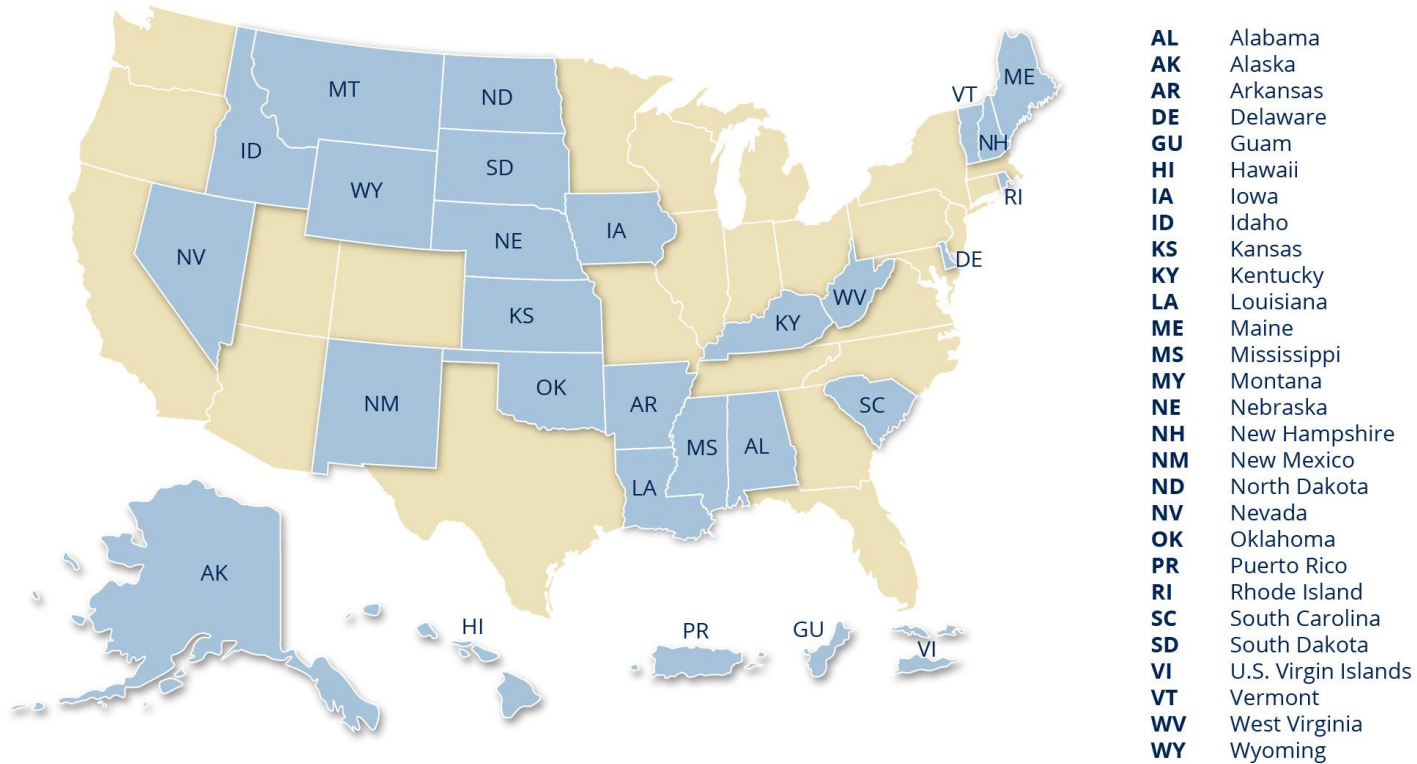


**Economic  
Development**





# NSF EPSCoR Eligibility



- States, Commonwealths, and Territories are eligible for funding if their most recent 5-year level of total NSF funding is equal to or less than **0.75%** of the total NSF budget.
- Eligibility table updated annually and publicly available:

[https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/epscor/nsf\\_oiaa\\_epscor\\_eligible.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/epscor/nsf_oiaa_epscor_eligible.jsp)



# EPSCoR Research Fellows Opportunity

- Provides opportunities for **non-tenured** (or equivalent) and **tenured, early and mid-career** investigators to further develop their individual research potential through extended visits to the nation's premier **private, federal, or academic institutions**.
- Fellows will be able to:
  - learn new techniques
  - benefit from access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities
  - strengthen collaborative partnerships
  - extend their research toward transformative directions
- Experiences gained through fellowships are intended to provide:
  - Time to develop new or extend current research directions
  - A pathway to strengthen research connections with partners nationwide
  - benefits that will impact the recipient's career in years to come
- Fellowship outcomes are also expected to in turn enhance the research capacities of their **home institutions and/or jurisdictions**.

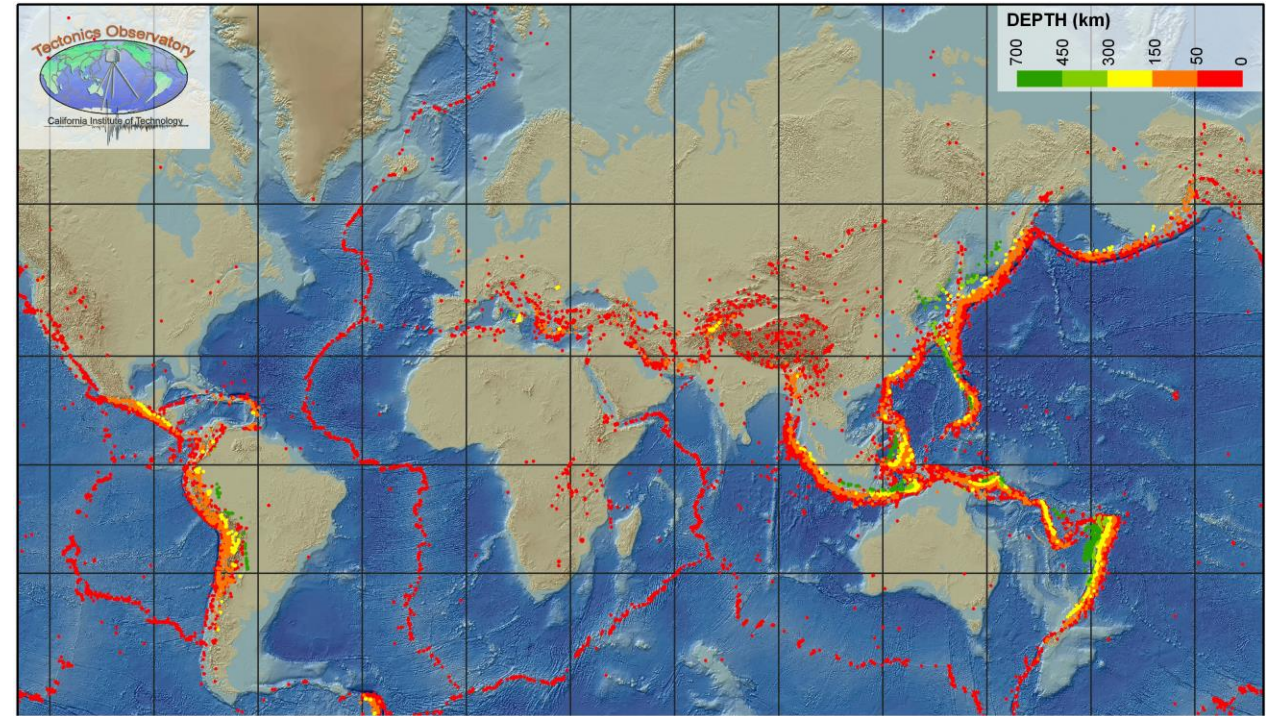


# EPSCoR Research Fellows Tracks

- EPSCoR Research Fellows: NSF, host sites may be **any** research institution **within the United States or its territories/possessions.**

Generally expected to be beyond easy commuting distance from the home institution.

- Any topic that NSF funds is eligible.

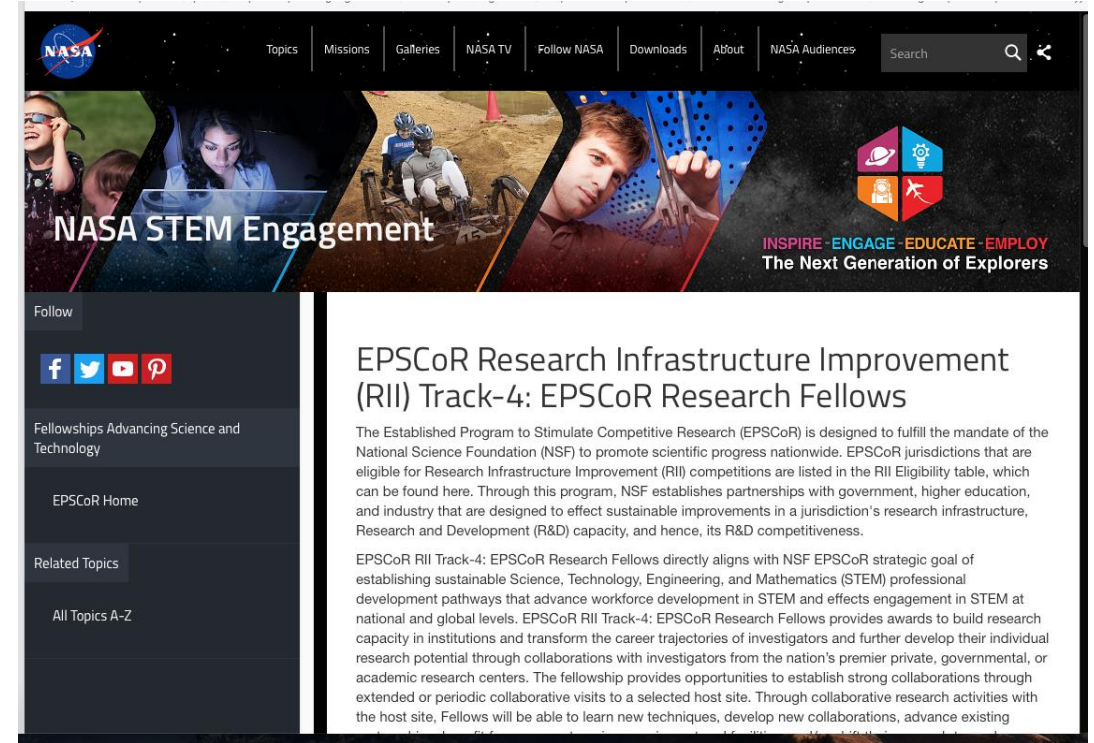


Global Map of Earthquakes Credit: Lisa Christiansen, Caltech Tectonics Observatory



# EPSCoR Research Fellows: @NASA

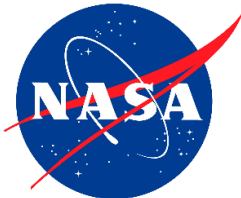
- EPSCoR Research Fellows: @NASA is a collaboration between the NASA EPSCoR and NSF EPSCoR programs.
- Host sites are NASA Research Centers.
- Specific Institution types are eligible.
- Specific topics are eligible based on the NASA Research Center (links to these topics are available in the solicitation).
  - Research Focus Areas:
  - [EPSCoR RII: Research Fellows - NASA](#)
  - <https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/established-program-to-stimulate-competitive-research/research-fellows/>



## NASA Research Focus Areas:

 [nasa\\_research\\_focus\\_areas-01-09-2023.xlsx](#)

 [nasa\\_research\\_focus\\_areas-1-09-2023.pdf](#)

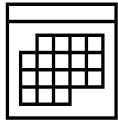




# EPSCoR Research Fellows:@NASA Funding Information



Planning to fund up to 10 proposals.



Access to NASA facilities starting as early as Q1 2026.



Teams can visit NASA facilities for 4-24 weeks during the two-year timeline.



The NASA Subject Matter Expert, serves as research collaborator and mentor to the PI and Technical Monitor for the project; will provide site visits and annual reports.



U.S. citizenship is required for research opportunities at specified NASA Centers. Lawful permanent residents are eligible for research opportunities at specified NASA Centers.



# EPSCoR Research Fellows: Finding a NASA Collaborator

- For this track, PIs must email their CVs, contact information, and research interest to the **NASA EPSCoR coordinator**, through the [Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov](mailto:Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov)
- Once a matching research topic is identified, the NASA EPSCoR coordinator will facilitate research discussions and collaborations with a NASA collaborator.
- In some cases, PIs may have prior research collaboration with NASA Scientists/Engineers, this information should be shared with the NASA EPSCoR coordinator to proceed.
- For additional information, including NASA's research interests, go to:
  - <https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/established-program-to-stimulate-competitive-research/research-fellows/>
- Be sure to justify the choice of host site and collaborator in your proposal.
- NASA EPSCoR coordinator will provide a letter of support for proposal submission.



# EPSCoR Research Fellows Budget Request Overview

- For both tracks, NSF budget requests may be **up to \$300,000** for duration **up to 24 months**.
  - 1 to 6 months of salary support for the PI and **one** trainee-level participant.
    - It is expected that the PI will complete a **minimum of a one month** extended visit to the host institution, or an equivalent of several periodic visits totaling one month.
- There are no budget caps on travel, lodging or other direct costs.
  - PIs are not allowed to split their fellowship period between two or more host sites.
- Up to \$10,000 may be requested for the collaborator for travel related to the fellowship project which includes visits to the PI's home institution and/or participation in conferences where the collaborative work is presented.
- For EPSCoR Research Fellows:@NASA, an additional \$60K Research Infrastructure Development (RID) grant from NASA for research infrastructure at home institution is available.
  - Please do not include this request in budget requests to NSF.





# Required Letters

	Home Institution	Host Institution: Administrative Manager	Host Institution: Primary Collaborator	PUI: Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)
EPSCoR Research Fellows: NSF	✓	✓	✓	
EPSCoR Research Fellows: @NASA	✓	✓		✓

Additional Letters from other parties may be submitted **only if** they are **needed to verify specific tangible commitments** related to activities described in the proposal. PIs will be asked to remove these additional letters that do not meet this standard.



# What Goes in the Proposal?

- Successful EPSCoR Research Fellows proposals will present exciting, vibrant fellowship ideas that will positively impact and potentially **transform** the PI's individual career trajectory and more broadly impact his/her research field, institution, and/or jurisdiction.
- All proposals should include:
  - **Motivation and research context** for the work to be conducted
  - Well Defined, reasoned, and organized research objectives which could be driven by specific research questions or hypotheses
  - PI's specific plans for the fellowship period; and
  - Discussion for how the **benefits** gained from the fellowship would be sustained beyond the award;
  - Clear specifications of fellowship **goals, performance metrics, and a timetable**
- Explain how/why the EPSCoR Research Fellows award **will advance the PI's research program** – what specific opportunities will be made possible via the PI's extended visit(s) to the host site?
  - The parameters for the partnership should be **clearly established**
- Describe how the activities will lead to long-lasting impacts for both the PI's career **and the home institution and /or jurisdiction.**



# Merit Review Criteria

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of two National Science Board approved merit review criteria.

- Intellectual Merit—the potential to advance knowledge
- Broader Impacts—the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes

—From PAPPG NSF 24-1 Ch.III.A.2





# Merit Review Criteria cont.

## ■ Solicitation-Specific Criteria:

- What evidence is presented to demonstrate that the proposed research outcomes can be achieved within the constraints of the fellowship period, **with the work being performed primarily at the host site?**
- How will the fellowship have a **transformative** impact on the trajectory of the PI's research career both during the period of the award and beyond?
- How will the fellowship yield tangible benefits to the home institution and/or jurisdiction **beyond** the individual benefits to the PI?
- What evidence is there that the home institution and the host site are **each committing** the **necessary resources**, both scientific and administrative, to lend confidence that the fellowship project will be **successful in achieving its intended outcomes?**



# Contact information

## ■ National Science Foundation:

- Hongmei Luo, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8867, email: [hluo@nsf.gov](mailto:hluo@nsf.gov) (Co-Lead)
- Lisa Cliggett, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-2759, email: [lcligget@nsf.gov](mailto:lcligget@nsf.gov) (Co-Lead)
- Chinonye Nnakwe Whitley, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8458, email: [cwhitley@nsf.gov](mailto:cwhitley@nsf.gov)
- Pinhas Ben-Tzvi, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-8246, email: [pbentzvi@nsf.gov](mailto:pbentzvi@nsf.gov)
- Andrea Johnson, NSF, telephone: (703) 292-5164, email: [andjohns@nsf.gov](mailto:andjohns@nsf.gov)

## ■ National Aeronautics and Space Administration:

- Kathy Loftin, NASA, email: [Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov](mailto:Agency-EPSCoR-RII-Track-4@mail.nasa.gov)
- Frank McDonald, NASA, email: [frank.mcdonald@nasa.gov](mailto:frank.mcdonald@nasa.gov)



# EPSCoR Research Fellows Outreach

PIs are encouraged to attend outreach events regarding this opportunity.

Find Office hours dates and registration information on the solicitation website:

- EPSCoR Investment Strategies - Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) | NSF - National Science Foundation

<https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/epscor/epscor-investment-strategies>





# In Summary

Steps to a successful application:

1. Consult with your sponsored research office regarding internal competitions
2. Identify a collaborator at a host site or NASA Center\*  
\* For EPSCoR Research Fellows:@NASA: Review the research focus areas to find alignment with available opportunities and contact the NASA EPSCoR Agency Coordinator
3. Write the proposal narrative and obtain letters of support
4. Contact NSF and NASA POC regarding questions
5. Submit your proposal through Research.gov **well before** the deadline of April 8, 2025

If you are interested in reviewing for this opportunity, please send your CV to an NSF PO and you will be asked to complete a reviewer survey in advance of the deadline.



**Thank for Listening!**

Time for Q & A . . .

