National Council of Space Grant Directors’ Fall 2017 National Meeting
Hosted By: North Dakota Space Grant Consortium
Alerus Conference Center, Grand Forks, ND

NASA HQ Space Grant Program Office Update

Lenell Allen, Ph.D.
Program Manager
September 15, 2017
Aerospace Research & Career Development Staff

- **Space Grant:**
  - Dr. Lenell Allen – Program Manager
  - Dr. Erica Alston – Deputy Program Manager
  - Ms. Kim Butler – Office of Education Budget Analyst
  - Mr. Michael Cherry – Program Analyst (Valador)
  - Dr. Sonya L. Greene – Senior Program Analyst (Valador)
  - Dr. Frank McDonald – Senior Program Analyst (Valador)

- **Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR):**
  - Mr. Jeppie Compton–Project Manager (KSC)
  - Ms. Crystal Bassett–Program Coordinator (KISS III, KSC)
Overview – Discussion Topics

- **Introduction of Aerospace Research and Career Development (ARCD) Staff and NASA Representatives**

- **NASA Business Services Assessment (BSA) – Implications**
  - Increased Grants Management Oversight

- **Drawing Down Funding from NASA**

- **No Cost Extensions (NCE)**

- **On the Horizon**
  - 2018 Spring and Summer Internship Applications Deadlines
  - National Evaluation Update
  - New 5-Year Solicitation Update
  - FY 2018 Budget Update

- **2018 Fall National Meeting Date and Location**

- **Space Grant New Directors**
  - In Place (Alabama, Minnesota and Wyoming)
  - Near Future (District of Columbia, Iowa and North Carolina)

- **FY2018 Funded Extension Solicitation Overview and Q&A**
Increased Grants Management Oversight

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report:

- Grants Management: Actions Needed to Address Persistent Grant Closeout Timeliness and Undisbursed Balance Issues – (GAO-16-362, April 2016)  
  (http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/676558.pdf)

- At the end of fiscal year FY2015, approximately $994 million in funding remained in expired grant accounts in the Payment Management System (PMS), operated by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
The NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC) will be closely monitoring the frequency of drawing down or invoicing grant funds. The NASA HQ Space Grant Program Office will send letters to Consortia with significant “Balances Left To Draw Down or Undisbursed Balances.”

- Maximum “Balances Left to Draw Down” To Receive 4th Year Funding Extension
  - 75% of Prior Year Funding is Drawn Down or Disbursed (25% of funds remaining)
  - Example 1: Designated – Prior Year Funding = $760,000
    Remaining Undisbursed Balances are less than or equal to $190,000
  - Example 2: Program Grant & Capability Enhancement – Prior Year Funding = $570,000
    Remaining Undisbursed Balances are less than or equal to $142,500

- Lead institutions must work closely with affiliate institutions and Office of Sponsored Research or Grants Administration staff to ensure timely invoicing of project activities and labor.

- The NSSC reserves the right to place a hold on financial accounts with large balances and inadequate explanation for delays in drawing down funds.
Space Grant FY 2018
Period of Performance (POP) End Dates

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No-Costs Extensions (NCE)

- Officially request NCEs here: https://www.nssc.nasa.gov/nocostextension

- **NCE Request** - Submitted **no earlier than 30 days** and no later than **10 days** before the established expiration date of the award.

- **Example:** Space Grant award will expire on April 9, 2018.

  ➢ 1st NCE request – Submitted **no earlier than March 9, 2018**, and no later than **March 30, 2018**.
On the Horizon

- The **2018 Spring internship** application period is open until **October 17, 2017**.

- The **2018 Summer internship** application period is anticipated to open on **November 1, 2017**.

- **Space Grant “External Evaluation” Update**
  - Preliminary Interim Report – Late 3rd Quarter of FY2018
  - **Please Update Space Grant Consortium Websites by October 15, 2017**

- **Space Grant “New 5-Year Base Award” Solicitation”**
  - Anticipated Release Date – Early 4th Quarter of FY2018

- **FY 2018 Budget – Continuing Resolution Until December 8, 2017**
Since the Spring 2017 National Meeting - 6 SG Director Changes:

- **In Place:**
  - Alabama
  - Minnesota
  - Wyoming

- **Near Future:**
  - District of Columbia
  - Iowa
  - North Carolina

New Shoes to fill…
Former Director: Dr. John Gregory

Ph.D. Systems Engineering, University of Alabama in Huntsville, 1988
M.S. Industrial Engineering, North Carolina State University, 1983
B.S. Industrial & Systems Engineering, University of Alabama in Huntsville, 1981

Research Interests:
Perform and guide research in systems engineering theory, with focus on systems complexity, systems integration, technical performance measurement, and systems engineering planning and management. Educate system engineering students in the art and science of systems architecture and design, systems integration, test, and verification, and systems management. Work closely with local and national organizations to assess and assure relevance of University’s systems engineering research focus, facilities, and curricula, and participate in and lead local and national forums to determine systems engineering research agenda and advance educational and training methodologies.

- Professor and Eminent Scholar in Systems Engineer, University of Alabama in Huntsville, 2015-2017
- NASA Johnson Space Center, Program Manager, Constellation Program, 2010-2011
Former Director: Dr. Ulysses J. Sofia

Ph.D. Theoretical Participle Physics, University Texas-Austin, 2001
B.S. Double major: Physics and English, Duke University, 1995

Research Interests:
Theoretical physics, focusing on the intersection of quantum information theory and particle physics. Professor Harshman explores how to quantify and detect entanglement in composite particle systems such as molecules and atoms and fundamental particles like electrons and photons.

- Department Chair, Department of Physics, American University, 2012-Present
- Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) Visiting Research Faculty Institute for Quantum Physics, University of Ulm, Germany, 2009-2010
- Fulbright Junior Lectureship in Physics at University of Trento, Italy Arlington, Virginia, 2009-2012
Former Director: Dr. Richard Wlezien

Ph.D. Aerospace Engineering, University of Florida, 1991
M.S. Aerospace Engineering, University of Florida, 1987
B.S. Aerospace Engineering, University of Florida, 1986

Research Interests:

- Interim Department Chair, Department of Aerospace Engineering, Iowa State University, 2017
- Program Director for Engineering Systems and Design (ESD), System Science (SYS), Design of Engineering Material Systems (DEMS) and Origami Design for Integration of Self-Assembling Systems for Engineering Innovation (ODISSEI), National Science Foundation (on IPA to NSF), Arlington, Virginia, 2009-2012
Introduction

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Office of Education (OE) is accepting proposals for the National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program (Space Grant) Training Grant Funding Extension. This is an extension to the existing FY 2015-2018 Base Award entitled, Space Grant Opportunities in NASA Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) (training grant announcement number NNH15ZHA003N.)

This funding opportunity is intended to provide one additional year of funding to sustain the current Space Grant Opportunities in NASA STEM (NNH15ZHA003N) award.
Eligibility

• Proposals will be accepted from the lead institution of Space Grant consortia in each state plus the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

• **NASA will only accept one proposal per consortium.** For a list of eligible Space Grant lead institutions and state-based Space Grant Directors, visit:

https://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/national/spacegrant/home/Space_Grant_Consortium_Websites.html
Designated, Program Grant and Capability Enhancement Funding Amounts

The Government’s ability to make an award is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds each fiscal year from which payment can be made. Designated consortia are eligible to apply for NASA extension funds in the amount $760,000 per year, and Non-Designated consortia (consisting of Program Grant and Capability Enhancement consortia) are eligible to apply for $570,000 per year. Please note, if a lower amount of funds is appropriated in FY 2018, grant recipients may be required to submit a revised budget.

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NIFS Minimum Requirements

Proposers are required to meet the minimum NIFS requirement for this announcement. Designated consortia shall allocate at least $197,600 per year for NIFS, and Non-Designated consortia shall allocate at least $142,500 per year for NIFS. The purpose of the dollar threshold is to ensure that a significant amount of NASA’s investment is applied directly to student internships, fellowships, and scholarships. Any proposal that does not meet this requirement will be deemed non-compliant, and will not be considered for funding until all requirements are met.
Cost-Sharing Requirement

- Cost-Sharing Requirements

Proposers shall meet the minimum cost-share requirement for this announcement. The annual cost share minimum for Designated consortia is $562,400. The annual cost-share minimum for Capability Enhancement and Program Grant consortia is $427,500. If the proposed budget is less than the maximum NASA budget, the amount of the cost-share shall be determined based on the following formula:

Total Requested NASA Funds – Required NIFS Allocation = Cost-share Minimum Requirement

Please note that Cost-share minimum requirements are not flexible.
Proposal Format

- **Proposal Format**
  - Cover Pages (Page limit: As needed)
  - Consortium Affiliate Concurrence (Page limit: As needed)
  - Proposal Executive Abstract (Page limit: 1)
  - Principal Investigator (PI) Curriculum Vitae (Page limit: 2)
  - Body of Proposal (Page limit: 10)
  - Budget Table, Narrative and Details (Page limit: As needed)
  - Statements of Commitment and Letters of Support (Page limit: As needed)
  - Summary Table of SMART Goals and Objectives (Page limit: 2)
Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- Proposal Evaluation Criteria

  • Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by NASA personnel based on standards established by the NASA OE and the Space Grant Program Manager.

  • All sections of the proposal will be individually evaluated. Quality of content and adherence to specified format as described in the solicitation will be considered.

  • Proposals that do not meet the established criteria in evaluation areas will not be accepted and will be deemed non-compliant.

  • No funding will be awarded unless the proposal meets all requirements of the solicitation.
Data Submission

- Data Submission

  - Consortia shall submit annual performance data from this award via the OEPM system. In addition to OEPM reporting, consortia will be responsible for submitting an Annual Performance Document (APD) to the Space Grant Program Office no later than 90 days after the anniversary date of the award.
    - OEPM
    - Student Data Tables/Expenditure Summary
    - Annual Performance Document
Proposal Submission Deadline

- **Proposal Submission Deadline**
  - All proposals shall be submitted via NSPIRES (http://nspires.nasaprs.com) or Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov).
  
- **Proposal Submission Date and Time**: All proposals are due by 11:59 p.m. (ET) on October 12, 2017.
Examples of Proposal Weaknesses

- Space Grant Portfolio Emphasis Area
  - Space Grant is a higher education program – college and university projects are the primary program elements. Proposals included higher emphasis and funding support on Precollege projects, a secondary program element.

- Consortium Management/Operations
  - Administration costs are unusually high.
  - Insufficient data regarding role/purpose, and meeting frequency of Advisory/Executive Committee(s).

- Statement of Commitments & Letters of Support
  - Concurrence emails were not included in the proposal.
Examples of Proposal Weaknesses

- **Evaluation Plan**
  - The proposal does not include, or mention, an evaluation plan.
  - The proposal includes evaluation plans for some projects, but not all projects. The proposal must include a complete evaluation plan, for all projects, according to the guidelines outlined in the augmentation solicitation. Additionally, the evaluation plan(s) must be submitted in one section, labeled program evaluation.

- **S.M.A.R.T. Goals**
  - The proposal does not include the required S.M.A.R.T. goals table for each section (Higher Education, Research Infrastructure, Pre-College, and Informal Education).
Examples of Proposal Weaknesses

- **Verification of NIFS Requirements**

  - Affiliates budgets or subcontracts are not granular enough to identify the breakdown of funds at institutions that participate in more than one programmatic area. As a result, there is no way to verify that the NIFS minimum requirement is actually met.

  - Need to document funding for interns to ensure that they meet the NIFS definition standards as an intern. **Note:** Space Grant NIFS requirements does not support high school interns.
Examples of Proposal Weaknesses

- **Budget “Deal Breakers”**
  - Omitting key personnel labor.
  - Lack of alignment between the budget narrative, budget spreadsheets and the intent of the solicitation.
  - Budget errors, incorrect totals, significant dollar amounts proposed to an activity without an adequate description of the activity.
  - Budgets items that are not reasonable, allowable, allocable.
  - Budgets that don’t make a distinction between key personnel labor and direct labor associated with a specific project/activity.
  - Cost-share amount listed in the budget section are incorrect.
FAQ’s – Eligibility

FAQ #1: Will Guam still be part of Hawaii Space Grant or will they submit their own proposal?

A1. As this funding opportunity is an extension of the current base award, Guam will still be a part of the Hawaii Space Grant and the Virgin Islands will still be a part of South Carolina Space Grant. Guam and the Virgin Islands are not eligible to submit individual proposals.

FAQ #2: On page four, the Designated Consortia budget total for NIFS is $190,000 with cost share minimum of $570,000. In the current grant, the NIFS total is $199,000 with cost share of $561,000. We are wondering if there is a specific reason for the change in the amounts, or if it’s possible that this is a typo? With this as an extension of the current award, we just would like to have verification that this is indeed the intended amount for the extension, reflected in Table 1.

A2. Table 1 has been updated to include the following NIFS minimum and Cost-Share requirements. See also Amendment 1.

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*Total Requested NASA Funds – Required NIFS allocation = Cost-share minimum requirement
FAQ’s – POP & NCE

Period of Performance (POP) & No Cost Extension:

FAQ #3: With the FY2018-19 program year being funded as an “extension” to the current FY2015-2018 three-year cycle grant, does that mean that we can assume at this point that FY2017 (Year 3) funds can be spent through the end of the FY2018-19 program year?

A3. Program funds should be spent during the proper year of execution. Should a grantee’s programmatic and spending plans change, the Space Grant consortium should promptly notify the NASA Space Grant program office.

FAQ #4: We were planning on submitting a NCE for the current Base Award (FY2015-FY2017). Now that FY2018 is an extension of the existing base award, do we still need to continue with a NCE request or will the new end date be adjusted via extension?

A4. No. Grantees do not need to continue with a NCE request since the FY2018 Funding Extension Solicitation is an extension of the existing base award. Therefore, the existing grant’s period of performance end date will be extended by one year.
FAQ’s – NIFS

NASA Internships Fellowships and Scholarships (NIFS) Awards:

FAQ #5: The 2017 Space Grant Extension solicitation states that “All direct-funded participants and those significant awards shall be a US National.” This statement is found in two sections, both relating to NIFS (pgs. 5, 11).

During the 2017 DC Directors meeting, Dr. Allen presented a Space Grant policy update on citizenship requirements. Her presentation slide stated that NIFS (fellowships, scholarships and internships) shall be awarded only to nationals of the United States. The slide also stated that the previous policy – students and faculty receiving direct support under a NASA training grant must be US citizens – had been rescinded. In short, the new policy continued the citizenship requirement for NIFS awards but now allowed for direct support of non-US faculty and students under other programs (ie., Higher Education, Research Infrastructure).

Can you clarify that the solicitation language refers only to NIFS awards, in line with the policy update described above? Or does “all direct-funded” now refer to non-NIFS program areas as well (i.e., Higher Education, Research Infrastructure)?

Example: Can a non-US student participating in a Higher Education project receive direct funding that wouldn’t be classified as a NIFS award?
A5. A person who is receiving a NIFS award shall be a U.S. National; that is, either a citizen of the United States or a native resident of a possession of the United States. If a person is not receiving a NIFS award, then he/she is not required to be a U.S. National.

The National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program regulations at 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1259.503(a) states: “Fellowships shall be awarded only to Nationals of the United States.” While the regulations do not define the term “fellowship,” as a policy matter, NASA has determined that the term also includes scholarships and internships. A “National of the United States” is defined at 14 CFR Part 1259.101(c) as “a citizen of the United States or a native resident of a possession of the United States. It does not refer to or include a citizen of another country who has applied for United States citizenship.” Therefore, a student, faculty member, or educator receiving a NIFS grant award shall be a “National of the United States.”

Please refer to the definitions on page 29 for NASA Internships, Fellowships, and Scholarships (Solicitation Appendix C, page 22).
Definitions of NASA Internships Fellowships and Scholarships (NIFS) Awards

• **Fellowships** are designed to support independently conceived or designed research by highly qualified faculty, and graduate students, in disciplines needed to help advance NASA’s missions; thus affording the students the opportunity to directly contribute to advancements in NASA’s STEM-related areas of study or STEM Education fields. NASA fellowship opportunities are focused on innovation, and generate measurable research results which contribute to NASA’s current and future science and technology goals.

• **Internships** are educational hands-on traineeships that provide unique NASA-related research and operational experiences for educators and high school, undergraduate, and graduate students. Internships integrate participants with career professionals emphasizing mentor-directed, degree-related, work-place task completion. NASA internships must consist of at least 400 contact hours (320 for H.S. students or teachers) of mentored, degree-relevant, work-activity.

• **Scholarships** provide financial support to undergraduate and graduate students pursuing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees and provide the opportunity for students to deepen their inquiry within STEM through a myriad of channels including a research experience, technical collaborations and professional development.
Letters of Support:

FAQ #6: For the statements of commitment and letters of support section – Does the Consortium Concurrence signature of each affiliate as well as a signed subcontract budget breakout page for each affiliate with signature suffice for this requirement or does each affiliate also need to submit a separate signed statement of commitment?

A6. The Consortium concurrence signature of each affiliate, as well as a signed subcontract budget breakout page for each affiliate, with signature, will meet this requirement.

Cost Share Requirements:

FAQ #7: Can faculty effort of non-US nationals be used as cost-share, as long as the faculty member doesn’t receive direct NIFS support?

A7. A faculty member who is receiving a NIFS award shall be a U.S. National; that is, either a citizen of the United States or a native resident of a possession of the United States per the definition of 14 CFR Part 1259.101(c)). If a faculty member is not receiving a NIFS award, then he/she is not required to be a U.S. National. Please refer to the definitions in A5 for NIFS and the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.306) regarding Cost sharing or matching requirements.
FAQ’s – Cost Share Requirements

Cost Share Requirements:

FAQ #8: With regard to the AO, page 10, that states 'nor indirect costs shall be charged to NIFS':

The question we have is: May unrecovered indirect costs from NIFS be used towards our cost share?

A8. Yes. Unrecovered indirect costs from NIFS may be used towards cost share. Please refer to the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.306) regarding Cost sharing or matching of unrecovered indirect costs (Section 7c).
FAQ’s – Data Management Plan (DMP)

Data Management Plan (DMP):

FAQ #9: P.8  Section 1.9 Data Management Plan (DMP). When we wrote the last grant proposal for 2015-2018, we were exempted from providing a DMP. Is that also the case for this proposal?

A9: The DMP or an explanation as to why one is not necessary given the nature of the work proposed “will be submitted by responding to the NSPIRES cover page question about the DMP (limited to 4000 characters).” Any research project that does not require a DMP to be submitted shall explicitly indicate this fact in the DMP block. The type of proposal that requires a DMP is described in the NASA Plan for Increasing Access to Results of Scientific Research (see link below):


Publications:

FAQ #10: There is a requirement to submit peer-reviewed publications into PubMed Central system. Does this also include proceedings papers?

A10: Any peer-reviewed scientific research publications authored or co-authored by investigators funded, in whole or in part by NASA, shall ensure that those publications are submitted to PubMed Central system.
FAQ’s – S.M.A.R.T. Goals

S.M.A.R.T. Goals:

FAQ #11: There is a requirement to compile the SMART goals and objectives from the original base grant and any additional added in this proposal into an appendix document. We are limited to 2 pages. In the original proposal, as well as the APDs, it takes 3-4 pages to list our goals and objectives. Suggestions on how to deal with this? May we put them in an 8 pt. font table?

A11. S.M.A.R.T. goals may be included in an Appendix, with no page limit.
Questions

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