



EPSCoR Eligibility Discussion

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Webinar Topics



- Current EPSCoR Eligibility
 - Criteria & Procedures
 - Entering and Exiting the Program
- FY 2019 Eligibility Table
- Issues to Be Addressed
 - Re-Entry in EPSCoR
 - Eligibility Methodology
- Discussion



Current EPSCoR Eligibility Criteria

- Eligibility calculated annually based on a jurisdiction's portion of NSF's Research (R&RA) support over the prior three years.
 - R&RA does not include EHR or MRE funding
 - Some national facilities (Research Vessels, Polar Activities) are excluded from the calculation.
 - Other national facilities (e.g., Telescopes and Cyberinfrastructure) are not excluded.
 - EPSCoR's own investments are currently not excluded from the calculation.
- Current eligibility threshold is 0.75% of NSF R&RA
- Due to lag in data availability, the eligibility table for the fiscal year is usually not published until the new calendar year.

Historical Context



- For much of NSF EPSCoR's history, there was a tendency toward gradually increasing the eligibility threshold.
 - Effect was to expand the number of eligible jurisdictions, and maintain the eligibility of jurisdictions that would otherwise have become ineligible.
 - Current threshold of 0.75% has been in effect since 2003. Prior to that, eligibility changed every 5-10 years.
- Five jurisdictions crossed the threshold and lost eligibility:
 - IA, TN, UT (FY 2013)
 - MO (FY 2015)
 - NM (FY 2018)

Gaining Eligibility... and Losing It



- When jurisdictions have become newly eligible, they have been required to go through a (funded) planning process to establish the foundational infrastructure the program requires.
 - Steering Committee w/ Bylaws
 - Jurisdictional S&T Plan
- When jurisdictions have lost eligibility due to crossing the threshold, current procedures are to allow a soft exit.
 - Current awards remain in place until completion.
 - Remain eligible for *in-progress* (i.e., announced) competitions
 - Remain eligible for co-funding and outreach for three years.

FY 2019 Eligibility Table



NSF EPSCoR is re-examining its eligibility methodology to ensure that it is simple, transparent, fair, and stable. To avoid uncertainty during the methodology development process, no jurisdiction that was eligible in FY 2018 will lose eligibility until the process is complete.

STATE	FY 2016 Research		FY 2017 Research		FY 2018 Research		FY 2016-18 Research		% of Total \$
	Support		Support		Support		Support		
	Amt \$k	Cnt	Amt \$k	Cnt	Amt \$k	Cnt	Amt \$k	Cnt	
Grand Total	\$5,490,618	18,214	\$5,611,940	17,538	\$5,802,723	17,398	\$16,905,281	53,150	100.00%
Other	\$26,804	30	\$18,894	30	\$23,354	31	\$69,052	91	0.41%
US Total	\$5,463,814	18,184	\$5,593,046	17,506	\$5,779,369	17,367	\$16,836,229	53,057	99.59%
Guam	\$2,107	2	\$2,516	4	\$0	0	\$4,623	6	0.03%
Virgin Islands	\$4,249	2	\$3,684	2	\$4,903	5	\$12,836	9	0.08%
Puerto Rico	\$12,489	29	\$6,795	21	\$12,284	42	\$31,568	92	0.19%
South Dakota	\$6,671	38	\$14,415	32	\$11,747	26	\$32,833	96	0.19%
North Dakota	\$15,689	30	\$5,635	26	\$11,583	28	\$32,907	84	0.19%
West Virginia	\$12,309	38	\$12,605	39	\$13,145	40	\$38,059	117	0.23%
Vermont	\$8,629	31	\$13,755	33	\$16,837	39	\$39,221	103	0.23%
Wyoming	\$15,980	39	\$12,744	33	\$15,167	34	\$43,891	106	0.26%
Nevada	\$15,221	79	\$16,355	60	\$18,607	84	\$50,183	223	0.30%
Mississippi	\$20,940	57	\$12,357	56	\$17,531	63	\$50,828	176	0.30%
Idaho	\$16,070	66	\$17,431	54	\$20,411	55	\$53,912	175	0.32%
Maine	\$13,267	65	\$18,589	60	\$24,624	59	\$56,480	184	0.33%
Arkansas	\$18,610	51	\$14,340	61	\$26,414	65	\$59,364	177	0.35%
Montana	\$28,621	72	\$22,153	78	\$22,216	73	\$72,990	223	0.43%
Nebraska	\$24,454	78	\$28,948	81	\$25,605	95	\$79,007	254	0.47%
Oklahoma	\$25,460	106	\$34,555	103	\$19,582	85	\$79,597	294	0.47%
Kentucky	\$27,402	123	\$23,960	102	\$29,537	108	\$80,899	333	0.48%
Alaska*	\$25,340	98	\$33,745	100	\$33,382	96	\$92,467	294	0.55%
Hawaii*	\$30,881	101	\$28,748	93	\$36,629	95	\$96,258	289	0.57%
Delaware*	\$43,500	121	\$21,105	89	\$34,296	117	\$98,901	327	0.59%
Alabama	\$26,267	139	\$33,202	153	\$40,734	145	\$100,203	437	0.59%
Louisiana*	\$40,717	147	\$27,578	130	\$34,426	148	\$102,721	425	0.61%
Kansas	\$30,713	120	\$36,733	127	\$35,339	103	\$102,785	350	0.61%
New Hampshire*	\$38,300	116	\$35,598	117	\$32,937	106	\$106,835	339	0.63%
New Mexico	\$40,330	152	\$45,661	141	\$32,629	119	\$118,620	412	0.70%
Rhode Island*	\$37,023	182	\$43,627	174	\$38,690	191	\$119,340	547	0.71%
Iowa	\$40,607	179	\$40,452	164	\$42,948	163	\$124,007	506	0.73%
South Carolina*	\$38,546	151	\$48,597	154	\$40,690	164	\$127,833	469	0.76%
Tennessee	\$49,808	215	\$47,685	201	\$46,137	193	\$143,630	609	0.85%



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Issues to be Addressed

1. Re-Entry into ESPCoR (Immediate Implementation)

- Two jurisdictions (Iowa and New Mexico) fell back below the threshold for the first time in 2019 after losing eligibility in prior years.
- No policy was in place to determine if/how jurisdictions could re-establish eligibility after having exited the program.

2. Eligibility Methodology (For Completion in FY 2019)

- Jurisdictions moving in and out of eligibility creates instability and uncertainty for both the affected jurisdiction and NSF EPSCoR.
- Occasional questions about why eligibility calculation is the way it is.
- Timely to examine the overall process to make eligibility determination more stable, transparent, and fair.



Issue #2: Eligibility Methodology

Overarching Context

- It is in NSF's and the jurisdictions' interest to avoid circumstances where eligibility fluctuates from year to year, and where there is uncertainty about whether a given jurisdiction will be eligible for an upcoming competition.
- There is also interest in making the eligibility calculations as simple as possible, while also being judicious in determining what parts of NSF's overall portfolio should or should not be included in the calculation.
- Numerous interested stakeholders in this process:
 - EPSCoR research community;
 - Agency partners w/ EPSCoR or EPSCoR-like programs;
 - OMB and Congress (esp. from EPSCoR jurisdictions)



Issue #2: Eligibility Methodology (cont.)

Interagency Context

- EPSCoR and EPSCoR-like programs in different federal agencies operate under varying eligibility criteria.
 - NASA and DOE EPSCoR adopt NSF's eligibility list on an annual basis. (DoD is currently reinitiating their EPSCoR program.)
 - USDA EPSCoR calculates their own eligibility annually.
 - NIH IDeA has been locked into the same eligibility list for many years.
- In FY 2015, there was an effort to more tightly link eligibility across agencies using the median approach, but that effort was not successful.
- Agencies continue to coordinate EPSCoR agendas through the EPSCoR Interagency Coordinating Committee (EICC).



Eligibility Methodology: Development Process

- Engagement with Agency partners early on to determine desired level of coordination;
 - One call in December; more discussion planned.
- Inform OMB, OSTP, and Congress as appropriate;
 - Conference calls and email communication as needed (coordination w/ NSF Office of Legislative & Public Affairs)
- Engagement with jurisdictional research leadership to consider their input and concerns;
 - Starting with this webinar;
 - Extended discussion at May EPSCoR PD/PA/PI Meeting ←
 - Email, phone discussions as needed
- Final Decision Process within NSF
- Plan launch at Fall 2019 EPSCoR National Conference, to be implemented starting with the release of the FY 2020 calculation.
- To avoid uncertainty during the methodology development process, no jurisdiction that was eligible in FY 2018 will lose eligibility until the development process is complete.



Methodology and Policy Questions for Stakeholders

- Which overall methodology strategy should be used?
For example: average, hysteresis, median, etc.
 - Pros and cons for each
- How often should eligibility be calculated?
 - To minimize year-to-year fluctuations
- Should the eligibility timeframe be shifted?
 - Calendar year vs. fiscal year
- What's the right approach for transitioning into/out of eligibility?
 - Entering for the 1st time vs. re-entry
 - Possible “levels” of eligibility, or different thresholds?



Eligibility Data Questions for Stakeholders

- Which NSF data should eligibility be based on?
 - NSF Total, or one or a combination of: Research Support, Education and Human Resources, and/or Major Research Equipment?
- Should there be any normalization factors? If so, what?
 - Please consider reproducibility and transparency concerns.
- Should there be exclusions? If so, what should they be?
 - Examples: Research Vessels, Polar Activities, Telescopes, Cyberinfrastructure, EPSCoR funding, etc.)
 - Again, please consider reproducibility and transparency concerns.



Please send your feedback to: nsfepscor@nsf.gov

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Bottom Half of FY 2019 Eligibility Table



Kansas	\$30,713	120	\$36,733	127	\$35,339	103	\$102,785	350	0.61%
New Hampshire*	\$38,300	116	\$35,598	117	\$32,937	106	\$106,835	339	0.63%
New Mexico	\$40,330	152	\$45,661	141	\$32,629	119	\$118,620	412	0.70%
Rhode Island*	\$37,023	182	\$43,627	174	\$38,690	191	\$119,340	547	0.71%
Iowa	\$40,607	179	\$40,452	164	\$42,948	163	\$124,007	506	0.73%
South Carolina*	\$38,546	151	\$48,597	154	\$40,690	164	\$127,833	469	0.76%
Tennessee	\$49,808	215	\$47,685	201	\$46,137	193	\$143,630	609	0.85%
Utah	\$53,958	232	\$50,103	198	\$55,460	206	\$159,521	636	0.94%
Connecticut	\$66,481	267	\$55,364	262	\$54,215	239	\$176,060	768	1.04%
Missouri	\$58,693	234	\$59,697	219	\$63,732	228	\$182,122	681	1.08%
Oregon*	\$73,775	307	\$70,742	278	\$55,215	258	\$199,732	843	1.18%
Minnesota*	\$73,213	286	\$84,628	279	\$78,936	248	\$236,777	813	1.40%
Wisconsin	\$95,005	323	\$97,688	291	\$87,393	289	\$280,086	903	1.66%
Georgia*	\$114,718	493	\$118,390	437	\$126,219	447	\$359,327	1,377	2.13%
Washington*	\$115,012	417	\$123,942	441	\$125,217	430	\$364,171	1,288	2.15%
Arizona	\$136,236	392	\$140,169	405	\$96,798	372	\$373,203	1,169	2.21%
Indiana	\$130,057	444	\$136,184	477	\$131,874	443	\$398,115	1,364	2.35%
New Jersey	\$137,036	470	\$123,906	453	\$138,463	488	\$399,405	1,411	2.36%
Ohio	\$130,931	503	\$150,458	451	\$152,426	412	\$433,815	1,366	2.57%
North Carolina	\$165,626	564	\$141,863	539	\$161,630	529	\$469,119	1,632	2.77%
Florida*	\$155,950	527	\$139,835	502	\$177,812	527	\$473,597	1,556	2.80%
Maryland*	\$129,956	481	\$242,647	423	\$124,526	431	\$497,129	1,335	2.94%
Virginia*	\$187,753	483	\$194,618	451	\$120,680	458	\$503,051	1,392	2.98%
Michigan	\$185,099	622	\$190,909	586	\$174,154	563	\$550,162	1,771	3.25%
Pennsylvania	\$233,695	951	\$228,656	923	\$221,247	887	\$683,598	2,761	4.04%
District of Columbia*	\$203,924	291	\$190,919	257	\$372,782	292	\$767,625	840	4.54%
Illinois	\$269,304	782	\$274,236	804	\$246,592	776	\$790,132	2,362	4.67%
Colorado	\$256,605	550	\$270,405	510	\$302,735	522	\$829,745	1,582	4.91%
Texas*	\$300,430	1,003	\$312,347	1,033	\$354,660	991	\$967,437	3,027	5.72%
Massachusetts*	\$334,860	1,168	\$364,051	1,186	\$394,351	1,213	\$1,093,262	3,567	6.47%
New York*	\$409,570	1,405	\$416,564	1,392	\$424,738	1,365	\$1,250,872	4,162	7.40%
California*	\$735,586	2,360	\$711,024	2,220	\$798,328	2,212	\$2,244,938	6,792	13.28%

**NOTE: Research support numbers were adjusted for large-scale logistical operations. Totals differ from those in BIRS due to adjustment for exemptions.*