



Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

The Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR)* is a long-standing multiagency federal program that aims to develop and raise states' capacity to compete for federal R&D grants and thus contribute to the national R&D capacity. It is based on the premise that universities and their S&E faculty and students are resources that can influence a state's development in the 21st century just as agricultural, industrial, and natural resources did in the 20th century.

EPSCoR is rooted in the history of the National Science Foundation (NSF) and of federal support for R&D. In 1978, Congress, concerned about a geographic concentration of federal R&D funds, authorized NSF to initiate EPSCoR, which was targeted at states that received lesser amounts of federal R&D funds but demonstrated a commitment to developing sustainable, competitive research capabilities anchored in academic institutions across the jurisdictions. The ultimate aim was to move EPSCoR researchers and institutions into the mainstream of federal and private-sector R&D support.

The experience of the NSF EPSCoR program during the 1980s prompted Congress to authorize the creation of EPSCoR and EPSCoR-like programs in six other federal agencies: the Departments of Energy, Defense (DOD), and Agriculture; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the National Institutes of Health; and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Two of these agencies, EPA and DOD, discontinued issuing EPSCoR program solicitations in FYs 2006 and 2010, respectively.

In FY 2016, the five remaining agencies spent a total of \$562 million on EPSCoR and EPSCoR-like programs, up from \$288.9 million (all agencies) in 2002 (Table 5-A).



TABLE 5-A 





EPSCoR and EPSCoR-like program budgets, by agency: FYs 2002–16



(Millions of dollars)



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
All agencies	288.9	358.0	353.3	367.4	367.1	363.1	418.9	437.2	460.1	436.0	483.4	461.0	488.6	508.8	562.0



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
DOD	15.7	15.7	8.4	11.4	11.5	9.5	17.0	14.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
DOE	7.7	11.7	7.7	7.6	7.3	7.3	14.7	16.8	21.6	8.5	8.5	8.4	10.0	10.0	14.8



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
NASA	10.0	10.0	10.0	12.0	12.5	12.8	15.5	20.0	25.0	25.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
NIH ^a	160.0	210.0	214.0	222.0	220.0	218.0	223.6	224.3	228.8	226.5	276.5	261.6	273.3	273.3	320.8



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
NSF	79.3	88.8	93.7	93.4	97.8	101.5	120.0	133.0	147.1	146.8	150.9	147.6	158.2	165.5	160.0



Agency	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
USDA	13.7	19.3	17.0	18.6	18.0	14.0	28.1	29.0	37.6	29.2	29.5	25.4	29.1	42.0	48.4



^a NIH has an EPSCoR-like program known as the Institutional Development Award program.



DOD = Department of Defense; DOE = Department of Energy; EPA = Environmental Protection Agency; EPSCoR = Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research; NASA = National Aeronautics and Space Administration; NIH = National Institutes of Health; NSF = National Science Foundation; USDA = Department of Agriculture.



Note(s)



EPA and DOD discontinued issuing separate EPSCoR program solicitations in FYs 2006 and 2010, respectively. USDA's reported budget in FY 2012 included \$6.8 million in unobligated funds. NASA made minor revisions to prior-year data in 2014.



Source(s)



Data are provided by agency EPSCoR representatives and are collected by the National Science Foundation Office of Integrative Activities, Office of EPSCoR, January 2017.



Science and Engineering Indicators 2018

*Prior to 2017, the program was known as the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research.