

The Future of EPSCoR in Arkansas, presented by NSF Program Officer, Dr. JD Swanson  
February 8, 2024

Q&As start at about 59:30 in the recording.

**Q1.** Are IHEs in Arkansas who are involved in the current NSF RII Track-1 eligible to submit to the July 9, 2024, deadline for the NSF 23-587 E-CORE RII?

A1. Yes, Institutions or organizations in jurisdictions that meet the EPSCoR eligibility criteria and that are without a collaborating role in a current or potentially pending EPSCoR RII Track-1 award unless the current EPSCoR RII Track-1 award is in its final year of the award (e.g., year five or a no cost extension year). See <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23148/nsf23148.jsp#q8>

**Q2.** Are we limited to a single jurisdictional steering committee? Can we have multiple and/or sub-committees of the jurisdictional steering committee?

A2. Yes, we have left it up to the jurisdictions; however, caution should be exercised if multiple jurisdictional steering committees are proposed to ensure that it does not result in siloing.

**Q3.** Could you explain more about the requirement of a Science and Technology (S&T) Plan?

A3. With regards to Arkansas specifically, the last version of the jurisdiction's S&T that was approved was in 2018. An updated S&T plan is currently being developed by the existing State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee) in Arkansas and will be ready in time for July 9, 2024, submissions to the NSF 23-587 E-CORE RII opportunity. Some submissions that have been received in response to the solicitation thus far include in their proposal a plan for re-envisioning their jurisdiction's S&T Plan.

**Q4.** Could you talk a little bit about the workshops and workshop assistance that NSF will offer to help re-envision the development of the State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee)?

A4. NSF is hosting a series of workshops on this subject. There will be two (2) online components and NSF envisions having a broad range of individuals involved across the EPSCoR piece to identify challenges. Following these online workshops, an in-person meeting will be held that includes some representatives from every single EPSCoR

jurisdictions to help develop some "best practices" for developing a State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee).

**Q5.** Within a jurisdiction to you envision that there will be only one (1) functioning E-CORE and/or E-RISE at a time? Or do you envision that more than one of these can run simultaneously?

A5. The E-CORE and E-RISE do not have to be simultaneously partnered and interrelated. The E-CORE's function is to support areas that are fundamental to supporting the research ecosystem in the jurisdiction, irrespective of scientific discipline. The E-RISE's function is to develop one or more jurisdictional strengths. As additional E-CORE proposals are funded, there would be an expectation that they will address how they will complement other existing E-CORE awards in the jurisdiction.

**Q6.** Is there a scenario where you could get an E-CORE or an E-RISE without the other?

A6. Yes, in the solicitation, a jurisdiction must have an active or pending E-CORE; or a current Track-1; to submit for an E-RISE.

**Q7.** Does the State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee) need to be in place before submitting an E-CORE or E-RISE proposal?

A7. Yes, and there is currently a State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee) in Arkansas that is made up of the "Chief Research Officers" from select institutions in Arkansas. If you do not know who your representatives are contact [dart-admin@groups.uark.edu](mailto:dart-admin@groups.uark.edu).

In some E-CORE's the development or re-envisioning of the State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee) is included as part of the E-CORE submission. There will be 5% in each E-CORE that is set aside for supporting the State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee).

**Q8.** In the past, EPSCoR proposals have been coordinated at the State level and went through a model of multi-institutional proposals; E-CORE and/or E-RISE feels like more of a hybrid. How should jurisdictions approach balancing institutional interests versus state interests?

A8. With the new/revised role of the State S&T Committee (aka Science Advisory Committee) - the State will no longer have the role of gatekeeper, which it has historically had. Institutions will not necessarily have to convince the State that their proposal is important - it is now merit review, which means providing evidence that you have worked with, and among your, jurisdiction to coproduce evidence that supports and convinces a panel of your peers that your proposal is important.

For example, a proposal that is submitted by an Institution that is misaligned with the State and EPSCoR jurisdiction goals will not be funded.