



TUFTS UPDATE – JANUARY 28, 2019
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Introduction

This edition of the Tufts Washington Update for late January includes policy updates and funding opportunities. Faculty, staff, and researchers are welcome to schedule calls with the Lewis-Burke Tufts team or meet with the team when they visit Washington, DC. Contact Amber Cassady, Lewis-Burke Associates LLC, at amber@lewis-burke.com with any questions or comments related to the Update's content or for more information on updates and opportunities.

Policy Updates

Shutdown Impacts for Higher Education and Research

On January 25, President Trump agreed to reopen the federal government through February 15 to enable negotiations on a larger border security and immigration compromise. The deal to reopen the government for a three-week period ended the 35-day partial government shutdown. While it is uncertain at this time how the negotiations will proceed, given the shutdown's unprecedented length, there is a great deal of uncertainty as to how federal agencies will recover from this significant disruption and the residual effects on U.S. research and higher education.

While much of the government has already been funded for fiscal year (FY) 2019, including the Department of Defense (DOD), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Energy (DOE), and the Department of Education (ED), a number of science agencies have been impacted directly by the partial shutdown. Relevant agencies impacted include the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). During the shutdown, these agencies had to halt all or most operations, including grant administration and communications. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was also included in the shutdown, but many of its staff were exempted.

As the longest running partial government shutdown comes to an end, the research and education community has experienced both direct and indirect effects. The shutdown has had serious impacts on staff morale across agencies and many staff may choose to leave to their positions, creating a vacuum of experienced federal agency employees. Unlike federal agency staff, it is uncertain that contractors will receive back-pay, and many could seek employment elsewhere. This may have significant impacts on large facilities and instrument construction projects, many of which are key to advancing scientific programs on tight deadlines. Federal employees were also prevented from participating in research conferences and panels during the shutdown, which is a key tool to providing feedback to the community and helping to inform future research directions at the agencies.

As well as lapses in funding for research projects, facilities, postdocs, and graduate students, funding decisions for proposals that have already been submitted will be significantly delayed. Following previous shutdowns, NSF has stated that it took months to reschedule missed review panel meetings and get back on track with reviews and funding decisions. The shutdown will cause significant delay to the delivery of new strategic priorities and initiatives across agencies, including those not directly affected by the shutdown. New research projects cannot start until they have been through the delayed review process, and new funding solicitations for FY 2019 will be delayed significantly or even cancelled. It is possible that agencies will use supplemental awards or other tools to manage the delays and speed the delivery of funds.

Students were also affected by a number of shutdown-related issues. With the E-Verify system shut down at DHS, students seeking extensions to their Optional Practical Training (OPT) status have experienced delays. Although ED has been operating, there have been issues related to student aid decisions as the department relies on verifications from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Selective Service System, both of which were closed during the shutdown.

Despite full funding at certain agencies, interagency working groups and collaborations across federal agencies involving shutdown agencies were halted, which could impact future directions for multi- and interagency initiatives. There have been additional implications for some agencies outside of the shutdown. For example, some staff at DOE were directed to cancel travel plans during the shutdown. Also, NIH experienced problems announcing upcoming proposal review meetings in the Federal Register, which caused delays. Other federal websites experienced temporary problems.

The shutdown is also likely to have considerable impacts on the FY 2020 appropriations process. The President's budget request, which traditionally starts the appropriations process, is likely to be significantly delayed beyond its typical release date in early February. It is unclear how this change will impact the timelines for the appropriations committees. Lewis-Burke will continue to monitor the situation and report on new developments.

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Funding Opportunities

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities Announces Health Disparities Research Institute for Early-Stage Investigators

The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) announced it will host the Health Disparities Research Institute (HDRI) on **August 12-16, 2019** at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus in Bethesda, Maryland. The HDRI is focused on supporting professional development of early-career minority health and health disparities researchers through lectures on current research in the field, mock grant reviews, meetings with NIH staff, and other seminars and discussions. Sessions will discuss best practices in health disparities research and advice on developing research interests into grant applications. By attending this meeting, young investigators will have the opportunity to network with NIH program officers specializing in health disparities research.

Due Date: Applications will be accepted in **early February 2019**.

Eligibility: “Post-doctoral fellows, assistant professors, or early-stage investigators in comparable research positions who are actively engaged in minority health and health disparities research and who plan to submit a K or R grant to NIH within the next 12 months” are eligible to apply.

Additional Sources and Information:

- Additional information, including selection criteria, can be found at https://nimhd.nih.gov/programs/edu-training/hd-research-institute/hdri_logon.asp.

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Department of Defense Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) Releases FY 2019 Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program Solicitations (PRMRP)

The Department of Defense (DOD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) released its fiscal year (FY) 2019 Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) solicitations. In FY 2019, Congress allocated \$350 million for PRMRP in 49 topic areas.

Information on each of the funding mechanisms is listed below. Those interested should carefully review the submission requirements for each funding mechanism. Additionally, interested applicants should review the “Areas of Encouragement,” in the appendix of each solicitation, for details on DOD interests in the listed topic areas. Lewis-Burke is available to speak with those interested to provide details on best practices for successful submissions, especially as they pertain to addressing military relevancy and the review processes.

Funding Mechanisms

- The **Discovery Award** supports the exploration of a highly innovative new concept or untested theory in the topic area(s) of interest. Postdoctoral or clinical fellow and above are eligible.
 - **Pre-Application Deadline:** March 28, 2019; 5:00 PM Eastern Time (ET)
 - Solicitation details are available at www.grants.gov under solicitation number “W81XWH-19-PRMRP-DA.”

- The **Focused Program Award** supports multidisciplinary research with multiple investigators, addressing an overarching goal in the topic area(s) of interest. Projects may range from exploratory/hypothesis development through small-scale clinical trials.
 - **Pre-Application Deadline:** March 14, 2019; 5:00 PM ET
 - Solicitation details are available at www.grants.gov under solicitation number “W81XWH-19-PRMP-FPA.”
- The **Investigator-Initiated Research Award** supports novel research and allows for partnering of primary investigators.
 - **Pre-Application Deadline:** March 14, 2019; 5:00 PM ET
 - Solicitation details are available at www.grants.gov under solicitation number “W81XWH-19-PRMRP-IIRA.”
- The **Technology/Therapeutic Development Award** supports the translation of preclinical findings into clinical applications for prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, or quality of life in the topics area(s) of interest. This is a product-oriented award.
 - **Pre-Application Deadline:** March 14, 2019; 5:00 PM ET
 - Solicitation details are available at www.grants.gov under solicitation number “W81XWH-19-PRMRP-TTDA.”
- The **Clinical Trial Award** supports the implementation of clinical trials to evaluate products, pharmacologic agents, devices, clinical guidance and emerging approaches and technologies that may significantly impact one of the diseases listed under the FY 2019 PRMRP topic areas.
 - **Pre-Application Deadline:** March 14, 2019; 5:00 PM ET
 - Solicitation details are available at www.grants.gov under solicitation number “W81XWH-19-PRMRP-CTA.”

Review Process

Although Congress decides which topic areas are funded, DOD program managers and Joint Program Committees (JPCs) retain authority in program directions and are influential in shaping the direction of CDMRP programs. CDMRP employs a rigorous two-tier review process: scientific, peer review and programmatic review. The programmatic review is intended to address the relevance of the proposed research to DOD’s needs; therefore, it is important for both the pre-application and the full proposal to consider the topic area in relation to the mission of DOD and the “Areas of Encouragement” described in the appendix of each solicitation. Additional information about the two-tier review process is available at: <http://cdmrp.army.mil/about/2tierRevProcess>. Additionally, the members of the Programmatic Review Panel are available at <https://cdmrp.army.mil/prmrp/panels/panels19>.

Additional Sources and Information:

- A reference table for the award mechanisms and submission requirements can be found at <https://cdmrp.army.mil/funding/pdf/19prmrpreftable.pdf>.
- Additional information on PRMRP is available at <https://cdmrp.army.mil/prmrp/default>.

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Defense Intelligence Agency Releases Centers for Academic Excellence Funding Opportunity Announcement

The Department of Defense's (DOD) Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) has released a funding opportunity announcement (FOA) for its Intelligence Community Centers for Academic Excellence (IC CAE) program for fiscal year (FY) 2019. DIA, DOD's foreign intelligence agency, established the IC CAE program in 2005 to enhance the number and quality of intelligence professionals graduating from U.S. universities. Funding for the program will support curriculum development, research and professional development, and study abroad opportunities, as well as provide support for student and faculty participation in seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Due Dates: Proposals are due by **February 24, 2019 at 11:59 PM EST.**

Award Size: DIA anticipates funding eight awards of up to \$1.5 million for a total of \$12 million. Each award will consist of a base award of \$300,000 for a period of one year with the option to extend the award for up to 4 years at \$300,000 per year.

Eligibility: The FOA is open to U.S. higher education institutions offering current academic programs focused on intelligence or national security studies. Institutions must be part of a consortium to collaborate with under-resourced schools in the region.

Additional Sources and Information:

- The BAA can be found at www.grants.gov under solicitation number "HMM402-19-FOA-399."

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Department of Energy Solicits Proposals for Materials and Chemical Sciences Research for Quantum Information Science

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has released the first fiscal year (FY) 2019 quantum information science (QIS) funding call. The Office of Basic Energy Sciences (BES) within the DOE Office of Science (SC) issued a \$45 million Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) soliciting proposals from research universities and National Laboratories for materials and chemical sciences research related to QIS. Proposals must address one of two specific topics: Quantum Computing in Chemical and Materials Sciences; and Next-Generation Quantum Systems. Both solicitations specify that DOE will only support basic experimental and/or theoretical research as part of this effort. Proposals focused on engineering and/or device design are explicitly discouraged. Required pre-applications are due **February 13, 2019.**

The success rate for the first round of BES awards in FY 2018 was below 20 percent and this second FOA is intended to further expand BES' portfolio in quantum materials and chemistry. Since a larger share of awards in FY 2018 were in quantum materials, DOE plans to fund a greater share of awards in quantum chemistry. Future awards emphasizing quantum chemistry and correlated electron systems are seen as the most likely early applications for quantum computing. In particular, investments in quantum chemistry are divided into two categories:

- Opportunities for chemical sciences to advance QIS which involve designing and creating tunable qubits; developing probes such as nonlinear, ultrafast x-ray spectroscopies of quantum phenomena; and contributing to the understanding of fundamental principles of quantum phenomena for quantum control; and
- Opportunities to exploit QIS for chemical sciences which involve quantum sensing of chemical processes (e.g., coherence in photosynthesis) and quantum computing.

This is the second QIS-focused solicitation from BES and is part of a larger, SC-wide effort aimed at advancing QIS research relevant to the agency's mission needs. These activities will also serve to establish a broader QIS research community capable of sustaining up to five large-scale, QIS research and development centers that DOE plans to establish in FY 2020. DOE plans to release additional QIS-focused solicitations over the next several months through its other program offices, including Advanced Scientific Computing Research, High Energy Physics, and Nuclear Physics.

DOE is becoming the largest source of federal funding for QIS, a trend that is being driven by the agency's involvement in the National Quantum Initiative (NQI). DOE awarded \$105 million for QIS research for universities and National Laboratories in FY 2018 and plans to increase its investments over the next several years. DOE's unique role in the NQI is defined by SC's status as the largest federal sponsor of physical sciences and its network of National Laboratories and user facilities. The NQI is being overseen and coordinated by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and also involves QIS research activities within the National Science Foundation and National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Funding: Subject to appropriations, DOE has allocated \$15 million each year over three years to support up to 20 awards under both the FOA and a separate National Laboratory Announcement (NLA). DOE expects to support a mix of single investigators/small groups and larger teams. The former will be funded at \$150,000-\$500,000 annually while the latter will be funded at \$500,000-\$1.5 million annually.

Performance Period: The performance period for each award will range between 12 and 36 months. Continuation funding after the first year will be contingent upon the availability of appropriations, scientific progress, and administrative and contract compliance.

Eligibility: All types of institutions, with the exception of Federal Funded Research and Development Centers, are eligible to apply through the FOA. DOE National Laboratories are eligible to apply through the NLA.

Cost Sharing: Cost-sharing is not required.

Due Dates: Pre-applications are due on **February 13, 2019**. Full Proposals are due on **May 3, 2019**

Additional Sources and Information:

- The FOA is available at https://science.energy.gov/~media/grants/pdf/foas/2019/SC_FOA_0002054.pdf.

- The NLA is available at https://science.energy.gov/~media/grants/pdf/lab-announcements/2019/LAB_19-2054.pdf.
- Interested proposers should consult the two reports that correspond to the abovementioned research topics. These include:
 - *Basic Energy Sciences Roundtable on Opportunities for Quantum Computing in Chemical and Materials Sciences*, available at https://science.energy.gov/~media/bes/pdf/reports/2018/Quantum_computing.pdf; and
 - *Basic Energy Sciences Roundtable on Opportunities for Basic Research for Next-Generation Quantum Systems*, available at https://science.energy.gov/~media/bes/pdf/reports/2018/Quantum_systems.pdf.
- A list of FY 2018 BES QIS awards are available at https://science.energy.gov/~media/bes/pdf/Funding/BES_QIS_Research_Awards_FY-2018.pdf.

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