



E-CORE White Paper Request

For the development of a statewide National Science Foundation (NSF) Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) Collaborations for Optimizing Research Ecosystems (E-CORE) proposal

Program Announcement

Statewide: E-CORE White Paper Solicitation

Submission Deadline

October 15, 2026

Eligibility

Organization: All public and private colleges and universities in West Virginia; community and technical colleges; state agencies or regional authorities; industry partners; nonprofit organizations; Tribal Nations or community-based organizations; multi-institutional or cross-sector teams. Collaborative white papers involving multiple institutions are encouraged.

Limit on Submissions: There is no limit on the number of white papers an individual or institution may submit.

Award Information

Type of Award: White Paper (non-binding expression of interest)

White Paper Length: Maximum 1,000 words (excluding abstract, references, and author information)

Estimated Number of White Papers Sought: 15-25

Funding Note: This white paper solicitation does not constitute a funding commitment, guarantee selection, or obligate STaR or the State to pursue any specific concept. STaR will use these white papers in the development of a statewide E-CORE proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Important Information and Revision Notes

- Added definition of "jurisdiction" as the state of West Virginia
- Included problem statements in list of welcomed submission types
- Highlighted areas of special interest to STaR in "Scope of White Papers"
- Clarified that competitive proposals will include institutional support
- Indicated that applicants may be invited to participate in subsequent project development
- Made editorial changes for clarity

Program Description

The STaR Division is soliciting non-binding, exploratory white papers to inform the development of a statewide proposal to the National Science Foundation's EPSCoR Collaborations for Optimizing Research Ecosystems (E-CORE) program. Following the solicitation of white papers, STaR will coordinate the submission of a proposal

for a Planning Grant to the NSF to support subsequent proposal development. E-CORE awards support jurisdiction-wide efforts (i.e., across the state of West Virginia) to build research capacity and infrastructure, strengthen STEM ecosystems, and translate research into economic and societal impact. Please refer to [NSF 25-523](#) for the E-CORE Program Solicitation.

By submitting a white paper, individuals acknowledge that the ideas presented are offered to inform a statewide planning process. STaR encourages the submission of white papers representing a range of concept development, including early-stage exploratory ideas, emerging concepts, and compelling, evidence-based problem statements describing a research capacity need in West Virginia.

Submission of a white paper is an acknowledgement that the ideas presented are offered to inform a statewide planning process. Similar or overlapping ideas may be submitted independently by multiple parties. STaR may incorporate, adapt, or combine elements of submitted concepts in the development of a unified E-CORE proposal, and inclusion of specific ideas does not guarantee participation of the original submitter in subsequent proposal development activities.

Scope of White Papers

The topics listed below align with NSF-defined E-CORE “cores”. White papers may address one or more of the following illustrative areas (not exhaustive; emboldened text indicates areas of special interest to STaR found in the State Science and Technology Plan):

- **Research administration or coordination capacity**
- **STEM education pathways (K–12, higher education, workforce)**
- **Workforce development aligned with research strengths**
- **Entrepreneurship, use-inspired research pathways, and technology transfer**
- Shared research infrastructure or facilities (including cyberinfrastructure)
- Early-career investigator or faculty development pathways
- Broadening participation and inclusive research ecosystems
- Industry, nonprofit, government, or community partnerships
- Statewide or regional coordination models that connect existing initiatives
- Other jurisdiction-specific needs

This solicitation is open to individuals at all West Virginia institutions. See eligibility requirements above and in [NSF 25-523](#).

Application

White papers must be submitted via the [Grant Opportunity \(GO!\) System](#). Visit GO! to request an account. Submissions to the GO! System must first be initiated by the home institution’s authorized representative (e.g., personnel in an Office of Sponsored Programs). If you do not know who your institution’s authorized representative is, please contact STaR staff.

Competitive proposals will show evidence of coordination with and support from the applicant’s institution, including engagement with the Research Office or equivalent.

White Paper Abstract: Provide a 250-word summary of proposed area, its relevance to E-CORE priorities, and potential for statewide impact as it relates to Vision 2030: West Virginia Science & Technology Plan.

White Paper Narrative: The narrative should not exceed 1,000 words and should address the following:

1. Overview of the Idea

- What is the challenge or opportunity being addressed?
- Why does this matter for West Virginia's STEM ecosystem?
- How does this concept contribute to systemic transformation rather than a single project?

2. Proposed Collaboration and Partnerships

- What types of partners are involved or envisioned (e.g., universities, federal laboratories, industry, community organizations, state agencies)?
- What roles or contributions would these partners provide (conceptual level only)?
- How would this concept foster new or strengthened connections across institutions?

3. Alignment with State and NSF EPSCoR Priorities

- How does this concept connect to the priorities described in [Vision 2030](#), the West Virginia State Science & Technology Plan?
- How does it support E-CORE ecosystem goals such as research coordination, workforce development, translation, broadening participation, or sustainability?

4. Anticipated Outcomes or Value

- What are the potential long-term benefits for West Virginia (e.g., increased research capacity, enhanced connectivity across institutions, improved economic competitiveness)?
- How might success in this area position West Virginia for future opportunities?

5. Optional: Readiness or Next-Step Considerations

- Are there early ideas on sustainability, coordination mechanisms, or pathways to scaling?
- What groundwork already exists that could accelerate implementation?
- What key questions or uncertainties would need to be resolved?

Budget: No budget is required at the white paper stage.

Appendices: No appendices are permitted.

Author Information: Please include the following information and a short bio (1-2 sentences per contributor):

- Full name (including degree/credentials)
- Institutional affiliation (department, university/organization)
- Title/position
- Email address
- Phone number (optional)
- Designation as primary/corresponding author

References: References are welcomed but not required.

Following submission, white papers will be reviewed to identify concepts that can inform a coordinated, jurisdiction-wide E-CORE strategy. Selected contributors may be invited to participate in planning activities and collaborative development efforts leading to submission of a Planning Grant proposal to NSF, followed by continued proposal development in coordination with partners. Participation in this solicitation represents an initial step in this broader, iterative process.

Important Note: Submission of a white paper does not guarantee inclusion in the final E-CORE proposal. Final proposal composition will depend on review outcomes, thematic coherence, NSF requirements, alignment with Vision: 2030, and strategic considerations. Nevertheless, submission of a white paper represents an expression of interest, and those individuals whose white papers are not ultimately incorporated into a final E-CORE proposal may be offered inclusion in the proposal development process commensurate with qualifications and need.

Notification of white paper status will be provided to all submitting authors by November 1, 2026.

Disclaimer: *This RFP is issued for planning and informational purposes only. Submission of a white paper does not imply endorsement, funding, or inclusion in a future NSF proposal. Any subsequent proposal development will require additional review, coordination, and approvals consistent with state and NSF requirements.*

Contact Information

For questions, please contact the program officer:

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For technical assistance or help using the GO! system,
please contact:

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