

OPPORTUNITIES for PARTNERSHIPS in TECHNOLOGY with INDUSTRY (OPT-IN)

FY2014-15 Request for Proposals

DEADLINE DATES:

Last day for questions and answers about this RFP: **December 1, 2014**

Proposals due: **December 8, 2014**

RFP ISSUE DATE: **September 17, 2014**



LA EPSCoR

LOUISIANA EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH (EPSCoR)

Supported by:

**The National Science Foundation and the
Louisiana Board of Regents**

1201 North Third Street, Suite 6-200

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

(225) 342-4253

www.laregents.org

I. Program Description

I.A. Overview

The Louisiana Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (LA-EPSCoR) solicits science and engineering (S&E) research proposals from the State's tenured, tenure-track, or full-time research professors seeking funding to partner with industrial entities to: build sustainable relationships between academia and industry; facilitate the commercialization of research; enhance research competitiveness; and contribute to the economic development of Louisiana.

This program is limited to the science and engineering research disciplines supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF). For more information about which disciplines are supported by NSF please visit:

<http://www.nsf.gov/funding/aboutfunding.jsp>. It is up to the proposer to determine whether the discipline proposed is one that is supported by NSF.

Funding for the **Opportunities for Partnerships in Technology with Industry (OPT-IN)** program is provided through the Board of Regents Support Fund in conjunction with the EPSCoR cooperative agreement between Louisiana and NSF. The program will operate under the guidance of the State's EPSCoR Committee.

I.B. Award Types

The OPT-IN program is designed to support faculty in their efforts to collaborate with private sector industrial/business entities. Two types of awards are offered:

Category I (Research Focus) Award

- Provides funding for one year
- Cash match from industry sponsor(s) is required
- Single or multiple investigators are allowed

Category II (Commercialization Focus) Award

- Provides funding for one year
- Funding is to be used for prototype development, which can result in the commercialization of a product, or formation of a spin-off company
- Requires a letter of support from the PI's Department Chair, Dean of the College, or Center Director that would reflect commitment of time and effort to achieve the goals of the proposed project
- Single or multiple investigators are allowed.

I.C. Financial Considerations

For **Category I** Awards, the minimum award is \$10,000 and the maximum is \$50,000. LA-EPSCoR funds requested must include cash match provided by the industry/business sponsor(s) according to the following guidelines:

- For industry/business sponsors based in, or having a presence in Louisiana (e.g., branch office, laboratory, or production facility), the minimum requirement is \$1 in cash match for each \$2.50 in LA-EPSCoR funds requested. The existence of a company representative residing and/or conducting business in Louisiana **does not** constitute a presence in the State for the purposes of this RFP. It is incumbent upon the proposer to provide appropriate evidence/documentation or discussion to substantiate a company's presence in Louisiana.
- For non-Louisiana industry/business sponsors, the minimum requirement is \$1 in cash match for each \$1 in LA-EPSCoR funds requested.
- Sponsor match must be in cash. In-kind matches (personnel time, use of existing equipment or facilities, etc.) will not count towards the required cash match.

Proposers may not have a substantial financial interest (partial or full ownership) in the industry/business sponsor. Possession of stock in a publicly-traded company does not constitute ownership.

The table below illustrates the funding ratios.

Category I	LA-EPSCoR Award Amount	Louisiana Industrial Sponsor Cash Match required	Non-Louisiana Industrial Sponsor Cash Match required
Minimum award	\$10,000	\$4,000	\$10,000
Maximum award	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$50,000

For **Category II** awards, LA EPSCoR will award funds up to a maximum of \$20,000. Cost sharing from industrial/private entities is encouraged, but not required.

Award dollars from **both** categories may be used to support students, post-doctoral researchers, travel, and the purchase of scientific equipment and supplies. Faculty salaries (tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure track) are **not** allowable expenses for EPSCoR funds, but **are** allowable for Industrial Sponsor funds. Charges for tuition are not allowed. Any scientific equipment requested must have a strong justification included in the project description. Indirect charges (i.e. overhead) are not allowed on the LA-EPSCoR funds awarded under this program.

Funds will be made available by contract from the BoR to the Principal Investigator's (PI) institution.

I.D. Eligibility

Individuals who hold a regular tenured or tenure-track position or a full-time research professor position at any Louisiana public institution of higher education, or at any

Louisiana higher education institution that is a member of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, are eligible to apply. Current or prior OPT-IN recipients are eligible to apply, but should note the additional requirement listed in Section II.B.3. Principal investigators may submit only one proposal under this RFP.

Principal investigators who are delinquent in submitting contractually required reports for prior or existing Board of Regents Support Fund and/or Federal awards managed by the Board of Regents Sponsored Programs Section are precluded from submitting a proposal in response to this RFP until the required report(s) has been received and accepted by the Board.

I.E. Review Criteria

Category One

1. What is the scientific and technical merit of the project relative to research in its general field? Are the research plan, timeline, and expected outcomes realistic? Do the qualifications and accomplishments of the investigator(s) suggest high potential for success? **(40%)**
2. Will the project result in a long-term partnership with industry (rather than solving a short-term or one-time problem), that will sustain the project after the funding period has expired? **(40%)**
3. Will the project provide opportunities for student training, workforce development, job creation/retention, increased competitiveness and economic development in Louisiana? **(10%)**
4. How well does the project align with the State's Science and Technology Plan (FIRST Louisiana). The FIRST Louisiana plan is available at: <http://goo.gl/SSo2w7> **(10%)**

Category Two

1. Will the project develop a prototype that can be commercialized? Do the qualifications and accomplishments of the investigator(s) suggest high potential for success? **(60%)**
2. Is there a realistic plan for sustaining the project after the funding period has expired? What is the potential for commercialization or for a spin-off business to be formed? **(20%)**
3. Will the project provide opportunities for student training, workforce development, job creation/retention, increased competitiveness and economic development in Louisiana? **(10%)**
4. How well does the project align with the State's Science and Technology Plan (FIRST Louisiana). The FIRST Louisiana plan is available at : <http://goo.gl/SSo2w7>. **(10%)**

I.F. Timetable

December 1, 2014	Last day to answer questions concerning this RFP
December 8, 2014	Proposals due at the BoR
January 1, 2015	Expected start date of awarded projects

I.G. Deadline for Submission of Proposals

The **deadline** for receipt of proposals on the BoR server is **4:30 PM on Monday, December 8, 2014**. *Proposals must be submitted electronically; the BoR will not accept hard copy submissions.* Failure to meet this deadline will invalidate the submission.

I.H. Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to submit a final report, due at the completion of the contract term. In addition, a follow-up report will be required one year after completion of the project to help assess the efficacy and impact of the OPT-IN program. Failure of an awardee to comply with these requirements will result in declination of future LA EPSCoR awards to that individual until such time the delinquent report is received.

II. Proposal Submission and Format Requirements

The following proposal requirements must be followed closely. *Proposals that do not adhere to these guidelines will not be considered.*

II.A. General Requirements

The applicant is responsible for any misunderstandings that occur because of incorrect proposal assembly and delivery to the BoR. The proposal submission system is programmed to close at the deadline cited. Note that submission deadlines are absolute and that all work on the application, including final approval and submission to the Board of Regents by the designated campus office, must be completed on or before the deadline date and time.

II.A.1 Electronic Submission

The proposal **must** be submitted to the Board of Regents by the submitting institution's authorized representative. **Proposals directly submitted to the Board of Regents by individual PIs will not be accepted.** All online submissions must be uploaded as a single PDF document through the LOGAN system.

Instructions for PIs:

1. Go to URL: <https://web.laregents.org/logan/index.pl>.
2. Login using your LOGAN credentials.
 - a. If you are new user and do not have a LOGAN login, please click on "New user registration" to register.
 - b. If you have logged into LOGAN before and have forgotten your credentials please send an email to support@laregents.org.
3. After logging in, click on "OPT-IN Proposals" and use the provided online form to select and upload the PDF document.
4. If upload is successful, send the proposal to your sponsored programs office by clicking the "Send Proposal to OSP/OSR". A proposal number will be assigned after the proposal is successfully sent to the PI's Office of Sponsored Programs/Research.

5. An email confirmation will be sent to the PI with the proposal number.
6. The OSP/OSR will review the proposal, and, if approved, send the proposal to the Board of Regents.

Instructions for the OSP/OSR:

1. Go to URL: <https://web.laregents.org/logan/index.pl>.
2. Login using your Institutional credentials.
3. Select "OPT-IN Proposals".
4. Follow simple onscreen instructions to submit the proposal to the Board of Regents, EPSCoR office.
5. An email will be sent to both the PI and the OSP/OSR to confirm successful submission of the proposal.

If **both** the PI and the OSP/OSR do not receive confirmation emails within 12 hours, the proposal was not received. In that case, send an email to support@laregents.org.

II.A.2 Format Requirements

The Project Description section must be clear, readily legible, and conform to the following requirements (which are identical to NSF proposal preparation requirements):

- must be formatted to a standard 8-1/2" x 11" page
- all pages are to be numbered consecutively
- Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch
- No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch

One of the following typefaces identified below must be used:

- Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger
- Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger
- Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger

A font size of less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figure, table or diagram captions and when using a Symbol font to insert Greek letters or special characters. PIs are cautioned, however, that the text must still be readable.

These format requirements refer only to the Project Description, not to the required forms attached to this RFP.

II.B Proposal Components (must be compiled in the order given below)

II.B.1 Cover Page (Use attached form.) Note: the list of prospective reviewers must immediately follow the Cover Page.

II.B.2 Summary

A 200-word summary of the proposed activity is required.

II.B.3 Project Description

For Category I Proposals, the project description must not exceed ten (10) pages, and should:

- Describe the significance of the project relative to research in its general field and to the industrial partner(s), elaborating on scientific merit;
- Provide a statement of work, listing the major research tasks to be carried out, a timeline with milestones for accomplishing the tasks, and expected outcomes;
- Explain the potential impact the project will have on workforce training, creation and/or retention of jobs, increasing competitiveness, attracting new investments, and economic development in Louisiana;
- Provide a statement that indicates how your project relates to Louisiana's Science and Technology Plan (FIRST Louisiana) framework.
- Describe plans for sustaining the project after the funding period has expired; e.g., planned proposal submissions that could result from the work.

For Category II Proposals, the project description must not exceed ten (10) pages, and should:

- Describe the prototype to be built, the work that has already been performed, status of disclosures, patents, etc.
- Describe the project's significance relative to commercialization, creation of spin-off companies, and economic development in the State;
- Provide a statement that indicates how your project relates to Louisiana's Science and Technology Plan (FIRST Louisiana) framework.
- Provide a statement of work, listing the major tasks to be carried out, a timeline with milestones for accomplishing the tasks, and expected outcomes;
- Describe specific plans for further development after the prototype is built.

For Current or Prior OPT-IN award recipients, the project description must include a narrative (which is **not** included in the 10-page limit mentioned above), that provides

- Title of current or prior OPT-IN project;
- Amount of award, both State and (if applicable) Industry/Business partner
- Name of Industry/Business partner, if applicable

- Description of accomplishments/outcomes/outputs from all previous/current OPT-IN support; e.g., product commercialization, licensing, additional research dollars generated, evidence of strengthening of relationship with industry partner(s), etc.

For information on proprietary information and confidentiality, see section II.B.10 of this RFP.

II.B.4 References Cited

References Cited are not considered part of the ten-page project description.

II.B.5 Budget and Budget Narrative – Use attached budget form

A summary budget covering the award period is required. A one-page budget justification/explanation must also be included. All industrial sponsor matching commitments must be listed on the budget page and explained in the budget justification/explanation.

II.B.6 Biographical Sketches – Use attached form or NSF form

Biographical sketches of the Principal Investigator (PI) and any faculty collaborators are required and must not exceed two pages each.

II.B.7 Current and Pending Support – Use attached form or NSF form

Current and Pending Support forms for the PI and any collaborators are required.

II.B.8 Facilities, Equipment, and other Resources – Use attached form or NSF form

Do not exceed one page.

II.B.9 Letters of Support/Commitment

All commitments of industry/private cash match require a letter of commitment from the industry sponsor(s) that clearly states the amount of cash match. For **Category II** proposals, a letter of support from the PIs Department Chair, College Dean, or Center Director is required. Letters of interest/support from potential users/developers/investors of the prototype are encouraged. Letters should be addressed to Dr. Michael Khonsari, Associate Commissioner for Sponsored Programs Research & Development.

Letters are to be included at the end of the proposal, and are not considered part of the ten-page project description.

II.B.10 Proprietary Information and Confidentiality

Without assuming any liability for inadvertent disclosure and except for purposes of evaluation, the Board of Regents will limit dissemination of, or access to, information certified to be of confidential or proprietary nature which falls into a category described by R.S. 44:4(16), as long as the following conditions and assurances have been met and guidelines have been followed:

(a) The information to be protected must accompany the full proposal and each page of the information to be protected must be clearly and conspicuously identified and marked as confidential. Revisions, amendments, and addenda will not be accepted after the proposal has been submitted.

(b) A letter must be included in the appendix which:

- i. Briefly explains and certifies the need for confidentiality;
- ii. Contains complete identification and mailing addresses of all entities (faculty or staff members, private or public concerns) which have a right to, or ownership of, the confidential information;
- iii. In the case of public institutions of higher education, provides assurance that this request is in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the institution's management board with respect to R.S. 44:4(16); and
- iv. Is signed by all entities identified in II.B.10.b.ii.

The information to be protected and the letter described in II.B.10.a. and II.B.10.b. must be reviewed by the chief administrator of the applicant's university or his/her designee, and he/she must certify in writing that the information is of a confidential or proprietary nature which falls into a category described by R.S. 44:4(16). This signed certification must be included as an appendix to the proposal.

A person or entity wishing access to documents and/or records as defined previously in this section may request such access by making a specific request to the researcher(s) and any other entity having a proprietary interest. Unanimity among all entities having a proprietary interest is required prior to release of information previously deemed confidential. In cases of denial of a request for access to protected information, the only recourse is an appeal through a court of law. The Board of Regents does not assume any liability for the release of protected information when the release is ordered in accordance with State or Federal laws.

III. Questions About This RFP

Specific questions concerning this RFP and the requirements set forth herein should be directed **in writing** to Mr. Jim Gershey, Executive Director of Special Programs, by sending an email message to jim.gershey@la.gov. Questions will be accepted and answered **through 4:30 PM, Monday, December 1, 2014**. A running compilation of all questions asked about this RFP and all answers provided in response to those questions will be periodically posted on the BoR website at <http://laregents.org>.

COVER SHEET FOR PROPOSAL TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS

FOR CONSIDERATION BY BoR ORGANIZATION UNITS(S) LOUISIANA EPSCoR		CHECK ONE: CATEGORY I ____ - CATEGORY II ____	
PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT/SOLICITATION NO./CLOSING DATE OPT-IN/FY2014-15/December 8, 2014		Institution's Proposal ID (optional)	
NAME OF ORGANIZATION TO WHICH AWARD SHOULD BE MADE:		ADDRESS OF AWARDEE ORGANIZATION, INCLUDING ZIP CODE:	
TITLE OF PROPOSED PROJECT:			
REQUESTED \$ AMOUNT OF EPSCOR FUNDING \$		TOTAL \$ AMOUNT OF INDUSTRIAL PARTNER CASH MATCHING \$	
NAME OF INDUSTRIAL PARTNER		AMOUNT OF CASH MATCH	IS INDUSTRIAL PARTNER BASED IN (OR HAVE A BUSINESS PRESENCE IN) LOUISIANA? YES/NO
NAME OF INDUSTRIAL PARTNER		AMOUNT OF CASH MATCH	IS INDUSTRIAL PARTNER BASED IN (OR HAVE A BUSINESS PRESENCE IN) LOUISIANA? YES/NO
PI NAME (TYPE or PRINT)		Highest Degree, Yr	Telephone Number
Email Address			
PI STATUS (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Tenure-track <input type="checkbox"/> Tenured <input type="checkbox"/> Not Tenure-track			
PI RANK (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Research Professor <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Professor <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Professor <input type="checkbox"/> Full Professor			
PI/PD DEPARTMENT NAME AND ADDRESS			
Co-PI NAME, INSTITUTION, AND DEPARTMENT (TYPE or PRINT)		Highest Degree, Yr	Telephone Number
Email Address			
Co-PI NAME, INSTITUTION, AND DEPARTMENT (TYPE or PRINT)		Highest Degree, Yr	Telephone Number
Email Address			

APPLICANT MUST PROVIDE NAMES OF PROSPECTIVE REVIEWERS – SEE BELOW:

On a separate page immediately following this cover sheet, provide the name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address for at least three U.S. out-of-state scholars in the specific field of your proposal who are qualified to evaluate your proposal and/or who can recommend other individuals who are qualified to evaluate your proposal. Names of potential reviewers from institutions where the applicant has taught or was a student should not be provided.

Conflict of Interest Criteria:

Reviewers cannot 1) have been a Louisiana faculty member during the previous five years; 2) have collaborated on a publication, funded project, or as a paid consultant with the applicant during the past five years; or 3) have supervised the master's thesis, doctoral candidacy, or post-doctoral work of the applicant.

Reviewers will be required to sign the following statement:

By signing this form (or printing your name where indicated and returning this form electronically), you agree to maintain in confidence any information, documentation, and material of any kind (hereafter referred to as "Material") included in this proposal. You further agree not to divulge, publish, file patent application on, claim ownership of, exploit or make any other use whatsoever of said "Material" without written permission of the principal investigator. You also certify that, to the best of your knowledge, no conflict of interest exists or is created as a result of your review of this proposal.

OPT-IN Budget Page

INSTITUTION:		
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	EPSCoR Funds Requested	Industry Match
A. SENIOR PERSONNEL: (Not allowed under this program for EPSCoR funds only)		
B. OTHER PERSONNEL (show #s in parentheses)		
[] Other Professionals		
[] Graduate Students		
[] Undergraduate Students		
[] Secretarial/Clerical		
[] Other		
Total Salaries & Wages (A+B)		
C. FRINGE BENEFITS (if charged as direct costs)		
Total Salaries, Wages, & Fringe (A+B+C)		
D. PERMANENT EQUIPMENT (List item & dollar amount for each item exceeding \$5000)		
Total Permanent Equipment		
E. TRAVEL		
1 Domestic (Incl. Canada & U. S. possessions.)		
2 Foreign		
F. PARTICIPANT SUPPORT COSTS		
1 Stipends		
2 Travel		
3 Subsistence		
4 Other		
Total Participant Costs		
G. OTHER DIRECT COSTS		
1 Materials and Supplies		
2 Publication Costs/Pages Charges		
3 Consultant Services		
4 Computer (ADPE) Services		
5 Subcontracts		
6 Other		
Total Other Direct Costs		
H. Indirect Costs (not allowed on LA EPSCoR funds requested)		
I. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A thru G)		

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Provide the following information for the senior personnel on the project. Begin with the Principal Investigator/Project Director.
DO NOT EXCEED 2 PAGES PER PERSON.

- A. Vitae, listing professional and academic essentials and mailing address.
- B. List up to 5 publications most closely related to the proposed project and up to 5 other significant publications, including those being printing. Patents, copyrights, or software systems developed may be substituted for publications. Do not include additional lists of publications, invited lectures, etc. Only the list of up to 10 will be used in merit review.
- C. List of persons, other than those cited in the publication list, who have collaborated on a project or a book, article, report or paper within the last 48 months, including collaborators on this proposal. If there are no other collaborators, please indicate that fact.
- D. Names of graduate and post-graduate advisors and advisees.
The information in C. and D. is used to help identify potential conflicts or bias in the selection of reviewers.

CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT

(From ALL sources, including Support Fund)

NAME OF INVESTIGATOR:

Status of Support: Current Pending Submission Planned in Near Future

Project/Proposal Title:

Source of Support:

Award Amount (or Annual Rate): \$ _____ Period Covered: _____

Location of Activity:

Person-Months or % of Effort Committed to the Project: Cal Yr Acad Summ

Status of Support: Current Pending Submission Planned in Near Future

Project/Proposal Title:

Source of Support:

Award Amount (or Annual Rate): \$ _____ Period Covered: _____

Location of Activity:

Person-Months or % of Effort Committed to the Project: Cal Yr Acad Summ

Status of Support: Current Pending Submission Planned in Near Future

Project/Proposal Title:

Source of Support:

Award Amount (or Annual Rate): \$ _____ Period Covered: _____

Location of Activity:

Person-Months or % of Effort Committed to the Project: Cal Yr Acad Summ

FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT & OTHER RESOURCES

FACILITIES: Identify the facilities to be used at each performance site listed and, as appropriate, indicate their capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity, and extent of availability to the project. Use "Other" to describe the facilities at any other performance sites listed and at sites for field studies. USE additional pages if necessary.

Laboratory:

Clinical:

Animal:

Computer:

Office:

Other: _____

MAJOR EQUIPMENT: List the most important items available for this project and, as appropriate identifying the location and pertinent capabilities of each.

OTHER RESOURCES: Provide any information describing the other resources available for the project. Identify support services such as consultant, secretarial, machine shop, and electronics shop, and the extent to which they will be available for the project. Include an explanation of any consortium/contractual arrangements with other organizations.