After six of the twelve fiscal year (FY) appropriations bills were considered and approved by the House Appropriations committee last week, the remaining six were also considered and approved by the committee this week. Full reports for all twelve bills have been released, which offer key insights into the funding priorities of relevant federal agencies; full details on these agencies are below. While Congress hopes to move quickly to pass spending legislation before the election season begins, it remains likely that FY 2023 spending bills will not be passed until after the midterm elections in November. The House and Senate are both not in session this upcoming week due to the July 4th holiday recess but will return the week after with less than a month remaining in the legislative session before the upcoming August recess.

The University of Minnesota Washington Update provides intelligence and analysis on recent federal activities. Faculty visiting Washington, D.C. are encouraged to contact Sarah Neimeyer, Director of Government Relations, at neimeyer@umn.edu. Contact Christina Laridaen, Lewis-Burke Associates LLC, at christina@lewis-burke.com with any questions or comments related to the Update’s content.

Congressional, Administration Updates and Funding, Engagement Opportunities

Congressional Update: House Appropriations Committee Approves FY 2023 Agriculture Bill
On June 23, the House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill with a vote of 31-26. The overall bill provides $27.2 billion in discretionary funding, a $2.1 billion increase or 8 percent above FY 2022, with most of the funding increases going toward child nutrition programs. The House plans to bring
appropriations bills to the floor the week of July 11, but no specific schedule has been announced. The Senate has yet to move on its appropriations bills.

USDA’s intramural research arm, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) would receive $1.736 billion for its Salaries and Expenses account, $102.6 million or 6.3 percent above the FY 2022 level. Within the report, over sixty activities are singled out within ARS, ranging from biotechnology innovation research to human nutrition throughout the lifespan to climate science to whitefly research. Some of these priorities are included to remind ARS of the committee’s ongoing interest in an area, others would receive new or additional funding.

The report emphasizes USDA’s role in assisting underserved farming populations. It suggests USDA strengthen partnerships with land-grant institutions, especially the 1890 and 1994 institutions, and it directs ARS and NIFA to collaborate with agencies in the Rural Development and Farm Production and Conservation Mission Areas to help increase awareness of USDA’s programs through 1890 extension. This focus aligns with Chairman Sanford Bishop’s stated support for these programs and the committee’s substantially increased investments in research and extension at 1890 and 1994 institutions.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) would receive $131 million or 8 percent over FY 2022 with modest growth across its programs. Specifically, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) would receive $500 million, an increase of $55 million over the FY 2022 enacted level but still less than the requested $564 million. Evans-Allen (which provides research capacity support to 1890 institutions), research grants for 1994 institutions, and extension funds for 1890 and 1994 institutions would all see increases of more than 10 percent. Payments to the 1994 institutions would increase from $5.5 million to $10 million, the Women and Minorities in STEM program would more than double its FY 2022 allocation to $2.31 million from $1 million, and Education Grants for Hispanic Serving Institutions would be supported at $20 million, a $6 million increase over FY 2022. Flat funding, $5 million, would be provided for Capacity Building for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture.

As with ARS, the report highlights nearly two dozen specific areas of interest within NIFA. These include timely suggestions, such as encouraging AFRI to support a conference focused on nutrition science, to invest in blockchain technology and cybersecurity, and to hire additional soil health experts. Additionally, many programs the committee highlights are climate-focused or -adjacent, including:

- Genome to Phenome: the bill includes $2 million for the Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative (AG2PI), which represents flat funding from FY 2021. The committee expects this funding to “support the development of tools and datasets for the integration and analysis of phenotypic and genetic variation under different environmental conditions that can be used across multiple livestock and crop species to improve the output and efficiency of agriculture.”
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE): the committee set aside $50 million, representing a $5 million increase, for this popular program, and it “encourages the Secretary to support professional development program activities such as training, grants, and resources for agricultural professionals to build their awareness, knowledge, and skills related to soil health and carbon sequestration.”
- Food Security and Climate Adaptation: the committee encourages NIFA to engage with non-profit ag-biotech research partners to deliver durable resistance to plant diseases, pests, and weeds, thus advancing USDA goals for food security and climate adaptation.”
- Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI): The matching requirement would once again be waived.
• Regenerative agriculture and soil health within the Natural Resources Conservation Service: The report encourages USDA to continue supporting farmers transitioning to climate smart practices via the Environmental Quality Incentives and Conservation Innovation Grant programs.

Of note, the committee would provide $2 million for the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) under the Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics (REE). AGARDA was authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill, but received funding, $1 million, for the first time in FY 2022. There is no funding included for Farm of the Future which was supported in FY 2021 and FY 2022 and is included in the FY 2023 budget request.

Beyond REE, but important to research and extension activities, the bill would also provide $465.5 million for the ReConnect Broadband Pilot authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill.

Finally, just under $200 million is designated for “Community Project Funding”, or earmarks. It is only the second year in more than a decade that earmarks have been included in the congressional appropriations process. Projects supported include the building of new ARS facilities, as well as a multitude of community facilities and broadband expansion. Importantly, the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committee will also support congressionally directed spending requests and the two chambers will have to negotiate on which earmarks make it into a final package.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
Though technically an agency under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is funded through the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Within the House FY 2023 Agriculture Appropriations bill is discretionary funding and user fee totals for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The committee would provide $3.65 billion in direct appropriations for the FDA and recommended $2.84 billion in user fees. The main user fee allocations the committee would fund are detailed below:
• $1.22 billion for prescription drugs
• $248.34 million for medical devices
• $550.45 million for human generic drugs
• $40.84 million for biosimilar biologicals
• $32.32 million for animal drugs
• $29.46 million for animal generic drugs
• $712 million for tobacco products
The committee would provide increases to all of the above user fee programs except for tobacco products, which would be flat funded compared to the FY 2022 enacted level. The largest increase is proposed for prescription drugs, at $24 million above the FY 2022 enacted level.

The committee expressed concern at FDA’s handling of the infant formula shortage crisis, particularly regarding inadequate staffing at key offices in the agency, although the committee did not include any measures to address potential future shortages. The bill would provide an additional $7 million for the FDA’s Closer to Zero program, which provides guidance on reducing and eliminating toxic heavy metals in infant and toddler foods. The committee also acknowledged the impact of supply chain disruptions on the supply of medical devices, and encouraged FDA to ensure that it has the resources to withstand shortages in necessary medical devices.

The committee praised recent increases of diversity in clinical trials, but encouraged FDA to continue reviewing prior drug approvals to identify potential risks, and to increase diversity in clinical trials specifically for
Alzheimer’s disease. The bill would also provide an additional $5 million for the Orphan Products Grants Program, which aims to advance clinical trials and approval of treatments for rare diseases including ALS. Additionally, the Committee urged FDA to work with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support research to assess the role of immune response in the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines.

The report expressed that addressing substance use and addiction disorders, particularly among pregnant and postpartum individuals, should be a priority of FDA, encouraging the agency to support the development of non-addictive alternatives to opioids, continue widespread distribution of naloxone to trained professionals, and to work with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) on outreach and education programs to address maternal substance use disorder. Additionally, the committee requests that FDA support research to assess the chemical composition of e-cigarette emissions, and urges FDA to complete its review of e-cigarettes and deemed tobacco products on the market, expressing great concern over the public health problem of widespread use of e-cigarettes among youth.

### FY 2023 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations

*In thousands*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2022 Enacted</th>
<th>FY 2023 Request</th>
<th>FY 2023 House</th>
<th>House vs. FY 2022 Enacted</th>
<th>House vs. FY 2023 Request</th>
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<td><strong>Agricultural Research Service, Salaries &amp; Expenses</strong></td>
<td>1,633,496</td>
<td>1,858,719</td>
<td>1,736,129</td>
<td>102,633 (6.3%)</td>
<td>-122,590 (6.6%)</td>
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<td><strong>National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Discretionary</strong></td>
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<td>-52,859 (2.9%)</td>
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<td><strong>Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)</strong></td>
<td>445,000</td>
<td>564,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>55,000 (12.4%)</td>
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<td><strong>Hatch Act</strong></td>
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<td>265,000</td>
<td>5,000 (1.9%)</td>
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<td><strong>Smith-Lever Act 3(b) and 3(c)</strong></td>
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<td>320,000</td>
<td>330,000</td>
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<td><strong>McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act</strong></td>
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<td>38,000</td>
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<td><strong>Research at 1890 Institutions (Evans-Allen Program)</strong></td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>92,837</td>
<td>92,837</td>
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<td><strong>Research Grants for 1994 Institutions</strong></td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>500 (11.1%)</td>
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<td><strong>Extension Services at 1890 Institutions</strong></td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>76,000</td>
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<td>19,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<td>Payments to the 1994 Institutions</td>
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<td>10,000</td>
<td>4,500</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(81.8%)</td>
<td>(3.3%)</td>
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<td>Education Grants for 1890 Institutions</td>
<td>28,500</td>
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<td>30,000</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(5.3%)</td>
<td>(15.4%)</td>
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<td>Women and Minors in STEM Fields</td>
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<td>2,305</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(130.5%)</td>
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<td>Capacity Building for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture</td>
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<td>Multicultural Scholars, Graduate Fellowship, and Institution Challenge Grants</td>
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<td>Education Grants for Hispanic-Serving Institutions</td>
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<td>20,000</td>
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<td>Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)</td>
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<td>Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Salaries &amp; Expenses</td>
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<td>1,149,286</td>
<td>1,164,209</td>
<td>57,465</td>
<td>14,923</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(5.2%)</td>
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<td>Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Direct Appropriation</td>
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<td>3,642,328</td>
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<td>341,565</td>
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<td>Community Project Funding (CPF)</td>
<td>331,324*</td>
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<td>191,251</td>
<td>-140,073</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(42.3%)</td>
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*The FY 2022 enacted CPF is the combined total of approved House and Senate requests, making the total of only House requests appear as a decrease.

Sources and additional information:
- The accompanying report is available at [https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220623/114947/HMKP-117-AP00-20220623-SD002.pdf](https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220623/114947/HMKP-117-AP00-20220623-SD002.pdf).

[Congressional Update: House Appropriations Committee Approves FY 2023 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill](#)
On June 28th, the House Appropriations Committee approved the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Energy and Water Development appropriations bill with a vote of 32-24. The bill's jurisdiction includes DOE civilian and defense-related programs. The House Energy and Water bill would provide $48.2 billion for DOE, which is $3.3 billion more...
or 7.5 percent, above the FY 2022 enacted level and the same as the President’s budget request. The bill would increase funding for all major DOE programs and advance the Biden Administration’s highest priorities in climate and clean energy research, development, and demonstration activities. The bill also includes $117 million in congressionally directed projects. The full House plans to vote on the Energy and Water bill the week of July 11.

Congressional Update: House Appropriations Committee Approves FY 2023 Defense Bill
The House Appropriations Committee (HAC) approved its fiscal year (FY) 2023 Department of Defense (DOD) appropriations bill. The bill would provide $761.7 billion for the DOD, similar to the FY 2023 President’s budget request (PBR) and an $830 million decrease compared to the FY 2022 enacted level. Like the House FY 2022 bill, the FY 2023 recommendation demonstrates House Democrats’ push to decrease the overall defense budget in favor of other non-defense accounts.

The bill would provide $131.7 billion for Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E), approximately a $1.5 billion increase over the PBR and a proposed $12.5 billion increase over the FY 2022 enacted level. Despite an overall increase in RDT&E, the science and technology (S&T) budget (6.1-6.3 accounts) would be decreased compared to the FY 2022 enacted levels. When compared to the PBR, total basic research (6.1) would receive a slight increase and applied (6.2) and advanced technology development (6.3) research accounts would receive larger increases of $775.6 million and $870.8 million, respectively. This follows Congress and the Administration’s trend of focusing on later-stage research, rapid capability development, and prototyping rather than basic research. Funding details for the RDT&E and S&T accounts are in the chart below.

In the report, committee members state that cuts in the budget would not affect the safety and readiness of the DOD. Instead, they identify opportunities for savings by reducing “unjustified new programs and cost increases, funds requested ahead of need for the year of budget execution, projected or historical under execution,” and contract or schedule delays, which was noted as problematic during the FY 2023 defense budget hearings held in recent weeks. The report emphasizes the importance of the National Defense Strategy, which was released alongside the PBR in March and highlights the importance of integrated deterrence, campaigning, and growing in capability in part through the development of allyship. Further, the
report reflects on the war in Ukraine and notes the importance of funding the recruitment, training, equipment, and retention of the U.S. military and the power of diplomatic efforts.

The Committee would continue to prioritize microelectronics, cyber, and climate change. The report notes that areas of interest regarding microelectronics include new materials and architectures, prototyping in domestic university facilities, and accelerating the transition to domestic manufacturers. In cyber, the Committee directs DOD to provide a report clarifying which offices are responsible for cyber, cybersecurity, and cyberspace policy and activities, including an organizational chart to understand the collaboration between offices/positions and information on cyber education programs and scholarships. Regarding climate change, the Committee recommends $2.5 billion, the same as the PBR, to improve energy efficiency, military facilities, and research on reducing energy demand to help combat climate change.

Highlights from HAC’s recommended defense RDT&E appropriations include:

- $4.1 billion for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)
- $322.3 million for the Defense Manufacturing Science & Technology program, a $66.2 million increase from the PBR
- $68.7 million for Defense-wide Basic Research Initiatives, which includes $5 million for the Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPScoR)
- $88.4 million for the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP), a $30 million increase from the PBR, and $104.6 million for the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP), a $20 million increase from the PBR
- $59.2 million for the DOD Manufacturing Technology Program, a $13 million increase from the PBR, which includes a $3 million increase for AI-based market research system
- $100.5 million for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) in unrestricted 6.1 funding, a $67 million increase from the PBR
- $15 million increase compared to the PBR for the Navy Defense University Research Instrumentation Program (DURIP)
- $137.3 million for the National Defense Education Program, including a $3 million increase for the manufacturing engineering education program (MEEP)
- $57.2 million for Joint Hypersonics Technology Development and Transition, which includes a $5 million increase for university research
- $10 million increase compared to the PBR in Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment for a pilot program to promote awareness and development of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs

The bill would include these relevant adds to Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Procurement:

- $404.1 million for the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), a decrease of $25 million under the PBR
- $175 million for the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program for conservation activities on land buffering military installations
- $514.3 million for the Space Development Agency (SDA), a $200 million increase over the PBR
- $30 million increase compared to the PBR for the Defense Manufacturing Community Support Program

Defense health research and development would be funded at $2.2 billion, an 11.1 percent decrease compared to the FY 2022 enacted level. The House bill would provide $1.14 billion for the Congressionally
**Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP).** HAC does not include the Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program in its bill; it is recommended by the Senate traditionally.

The Committee would allocate $15.5 billion for **Space Force RDT&E**, 2.3 percent less than the PBR. This amount would include $286.5 million for space technology applied research, which is $42.7 million above the request. It would support investment in next-generation small satellite technology, applying artificial intelligence to sensor systems, establishing a university consortium for space technology through the University Partnership Program, and university research for microelectronics and hybrid space architecture. Additionally, the Committee expressed concern that the Space Force requested a 20 percent increase from FY 2022 for new programs without adequate long-term planning across the portfolio and would direct the Office of Space Acquisition and Integration to provide a risk assessment and risk management plan for cost and schedule.

In addition, the report included several notable recommendations to urge the DOD to collaborate further with colleges and universities to recruit a civilian cyber workforce, urge the Director of the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) to emphasize investments in clean energy technologies, and grow the STEM workforce pipeline in partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) through the establishment of additional centers of excellence. Also, the Committee would allocate $5 million for the establishment of the Ronald V. Dellums Memorial Fellowship for Women of Color in STEAM to provide scholarships for women of color who are pursuing degrees and/or academic careers in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM).

HAC would appropriate over $54 million for defense **“Community Project Funding.”** Projects would include military health, artificial intelligence and machine learning, workforce readiness, and space research. The Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee did not accept congressionally directed spending requests. The two chambers will negotiate on which earmarks make it into a final appropriations bill.

The full House will consider the bill in the coming weeks. The Senate Appropriations Committee has not scheduled a markup of the defense bill, nor released a draft. Congress will likely pass a continuing resolution to fund the federal government past the end of the fiscal year in September, continuing debate on appropriations through fall and into the lame duck session.

**Sources and Additional Information:**
- The draft bill text is available at [https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220622/114945/BILLS-117na-FC-AP-FY2023-AP00.pdf](https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220622/114945/BILLS-117na-FC-AP-FY2023-AP00.pdf).
- The Committee report is available at [https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220622/114945/HMKP-117-AP00-20220622-SD005.pdf](https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220622/114945/HMKP-117-AP00-20220622-SD005.pdf).
### Department of Defense

*As reported by the House Appropriations Committee on June 22, 2022*

(in thousands of $)

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<th>FY 2022 Enacted</th>
<th>FY 2023 Request</th>
<th>FY 2023 House</th>
<th>FY 2023 House vs. FY 2022 Enacted</th>
<th>FY 2023 House vs. FY 2023 Request</th>
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<td><strong>RDT&amp;E, total</strong></td>
<td>119,211,192</td>
<td>130,097,410</td>
<td>131,667,180</td>
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<td><strong>S&amp;T, Total</strong></td>
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<td>18,323,986</td>
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<td><strong>6.1, Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6.2, Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6.3, Total</strong></td>
<td>9,220,573</td>
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<td>9,158,521</td>
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<td>870,814 (10.5%)</td>
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<td><strong>Army RDT&amp;E</strong></td>
<td>14,539,417</td>
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<td>15,004,405</td>
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<td><strong>Army 6.1</strong></td>
<td>609,725</td>
<td>466,823</td>
<td>536,123</td>
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<td><strong>Army 6.2</strong></td>
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<td>883,759</td>
<td>1,252,091</td>
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<td><strong>Army 6.3</strong></td>
<td>2,191,638</td>
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<td>1,828,313</td>
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<td><strong>Navy RDT&amp;E</strong></td>
<td>22,139,080</td>
<td>24,078,718</td>
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<td><strong>Navy 6.1</strong></td>
<td>698,319</td>
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<td><strong>Navy 6.3</strong></td>
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<td>865,755</td>
<td>1,040,787</td>
<td>68,591 (7.1%)</td>
<td>175,032 (20.2%)</td>
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<td><strong>Air Force RDT&amp;E</strong></td>
<td>41,592,913</td>
<td>44,134,301</td>
<td>43,173,883</td>
<td>1,580,970 (3.8%)</td>
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<td><strong>Air Force 6.1</strong></td>
<td>540,706</td>
<td>546,517</td>
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<td>11,611 (2.1%)</td>
<td>5,800 (1.1%)</td>
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<td><strong>Air Force 6.2</strong></td>
<td>1,585,571</td>
<td>1,305,787</td>
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<td><strong>Air Force 6.3</strong></td>
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<td>Space Force 6.3</td>
<td>288,584</td>
<td>564,215</td>
<td>580,988</td>
<td>292,404 (101.3%)</td>
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<td>Defense Wide RDT&amp;E</td>
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<td>530,601 (1.7%)</td>
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<td>Defense Wide 6.1</td>
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<td>Defense Health R&amp;D</td>
<td>2,633,488</td>
<td>1,047,350</td>
<td>2,341,015</td>
<td>-292,473 (11.1%)</td>
<td>1,293,665 (123.5%)</td>
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Congressional Update: House Appropriations Committee Approves FY 2023 Homeland Security Bill

On June 24, the House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Homeland Security spending bill with a 32-25 vote. The bill proposes $85.8 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which would represent a $4.5 billion increase above the FY 2022 enacted level and a $2.5 billion increase above the FY 2023 President’s Budget Request (PBR).

This bill is traditionally one of the most contentious of the annual appropriations measures, especially considering the strong partisan disagreements over how to address border security issues. Of note for this fiscal year, appropriators emphasized investments that would direct the Department to pursue alternatives to detention and embrace more border security technologies and operations. The bill would also make investments in ongoing bipartisan priorities, including providing $2.93 billion for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which would be an increase of $334.1 million above the FY 2022 enacted level and $417.1 million above the FY 2023 President’s Budget Request (PBR). The Committee also approved over $247.5 million for Community Project Funding, or earmarks, mostly in support of local emergency and disaster resiliency efforts.

For the DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T), the House bill would provide $963.7 million, which would represent a $62.5 million increase over the PBR and $77.4 million increase over the FY 2022 enacted level. Within this amount, the House bill would provide $530.9 million for research and development, including $53.5 for the Office of University Programs (OUP), which would be $2.5 million above the PBR but $12 million less than the FY 2022 enacted level. The OUP account includes the university-based Centers of Excellence (COE) program, for which the bill would provide nearly $45.9 million, a figure consistent with the PBR but $11.9 million less than the FY 2022 enacted level. The bill would also provide around $7.6 million for the Minority Serving Institutions Program, an increase of $2.5 million above the PBR but $100,000 less than the FY 2022 level. Under OUP, the bill further “encourages S&T to work with research universities to develop a national testing capacity to assess vulnerabilities and mitigate biological risks, including COVID-19.” The Committee also encourages S&T to further research by the current COE on Cross-Border Threat Screening and Supply Chain Defense on mitigating risks to the food and agricultural supply chains. Finally, the bill’s report
language notes Congress’ support for emeritus COEs and directs DHS to report on S&T’s efforts to leverage emeritus COEs to address homeland security challenges.

Below are some of the research and development priorities the Committee encourages S&T to pursue with FY 2023 funds.

- Advanced research using “high resolution magnification to improve the detection of potential structural defects in emerging semiconductor technologies (including microchips, light emitting diodes, batteries, and processors) that could allow the unintended manipulation of hardware.”
- Collaborations with CISA and other organizations to support research on voting technologies and election procedures.
- Develop secure composite shipping containers that improve sensor integration and reduce costs.
- Enable Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) testing and technology evaluations at DHS’s designated UAS test site and support “collaboration with the appropriate Center of Excellence where practicable.” Additionally, Appropriators encourage DHS to fund research exploring the risks and countermeasures to small UAS activity along the southern border.
- Continue partnerships between S&T, the Army Corps of Engineers and an “academic sedimentation lab that has experience in cooperative research with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service” to “develop capabilities for maintaining and improving the integrity of our nation’s existing levee and dam systems.”
- Establish a Maritime/Port Resiliency and Security research program to “support the design and development of tactics, techniques, and procedures for effectively responding to critical maritime infrastructure threats.”
- Develop a partnership with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency “to develop additional technological solutions to: (1) target and detect low-purity fentanyl, especially in counterfeit pressed tablets; (2) enhance targeting of counterfeit pills through nonintrusive, noninvasive, and other visual screening technologies; and (3) improve data-driven targeting to increase seizure rates of fentanyl and its precursors.”
- Research that would enhance “the resiliency and reliability of domestically manufactured, multi-modal wildfire fire detection systems to protect the Wildland Urban Interface, including the hardening of any such system against future cybersecurity threats and expanding pilot deployments and system validation.”
- “Evaluate technologies that record actual shots fired during law enforcement operations, communicate that information to police dispatchers, and archive the information for the purposes of post-incident reviews.”
- In support of improved narcotics and contraband detection at ports of entry and within transportation hubs, the Committee encourages the “development and deployment of a multipurpose, high-yield active neutron interrogation system.”
- Research on advanced modeling and three-dimensional (3D) simulation technologies that may support FEMA’s disaster resilience, mitigation, and recovery operations.
- “Advanced development, transition, fielding, and sustainment of critical detection capabilities for rapid detection of aerosolized biological threats and to consider adapting the digital Matrix Assisted Laser Desorption and Ionization (MALDI) technology for rapid screening of infectious diseases.”
- “Advanced research associated with viable alternatives to concrete dam design and performance.”

With the bill, the Committee also encourages S&T to provide $6 million for the U.S.-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation grant program to “support cybersecurity research and development and demonstration and
commercialization of cybersecurity technology,” as well as $2 million to “continue research that allows S&T to work with Israeli partners to develop innovative technology solutions for homeland security needs.”

The bill further emphasizes the importance of MSI participation in homeland security activities and encourages the Department to provide “learning opportunities through science and engineering teaching initiatives, curriculum development, and scholarships within MSI communities and increased engagement with the Nation’s MSIs.”

### FY 2023 Homeland Security Appropriations

*(In thousands)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2022 Enacted</th>
<th>FY 2023 Request</th>
<th>FY 2023 House</th>
<th>House vs. FY 2022 Enacted</th>
<th>House vs. FY 2023 Request</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DHS, total</td>
<td>81,258,456*</td>
<td>83,353,442*</td>
<td>85,875,325*</td>
<td>4,616,869 (5.5%)</td>
<td>2,521,883 (3.0%)</td>
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<td>Science and Technology Directorate</td>
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<td>901,291</td>
<td>963,777</td>
<td>77,374 (8.6%)</td>
<td>62,486 (6.9%)</td>
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<td>University Programs</td>
<td>65,537</td>
<td>51,037</td>
<td>53,537</td>
<td>12,000 (-23.5%)</td>
<td>2,500 (4.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total discretionary appropriations not including disaster response allocations and other fees from page 3 of the explanatory report.

**Sources and Additional Information:**
- The draft explanatory report can be found at: [https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220624/114951/HMKP-117-AP00-20220624-SD003.pdf](https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220624/114951/HMKP-117-AP00-20220624-SD003.pdf).

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**Congressional Update: House Passes Bipartisan Mental Health Legislation**

On June 23, the House of Representatives passed the *Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act*, H.R. 7666, with a vote of 402-20. Introduced by House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and Ranking Member Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), the bill authorizes new and existing programs within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that directly address mental health and substance use disorder treatment and recovery. The bill would create a Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office, which would coordinate efforts regarding behavioral health crisis care across agencies within HHS, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and external stakeholders. The bill also seeks to establish a Mental Health Crisis Response Partnership Pilot program, which directs the Secretary of HHS to award competitive grants to States, localities, territories, and tribes to establish or enhance mobile crisis response teams that divert the response for mental health and substance use crises away from law enforcement.
The bill would also require the Secretary to publish best practices for a crisis response continuum of care to be used by healthcare and crisis services providers, as well as crisis services administrators. The best practices are intended to outline a core set of services for a crisis response that do not require prior authorization by a health insurer, a referral from a provider, and can serve anyone regardless of their ability to pay.

The bill would provide funding to states to partner with community programs, primary care providers, or health centers to provide evidence-based, integrated behavioral health services. It would also provide $60 million in grant funding for technical assistance for primary behavioral healthcare integration for fiscal year (FY) 2023 through FY 2027.

The bill would reauthorize several programs that support mental health and substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery between FY 2023 and FY 2027, and would direct SAMHSA to develop best practices and promote the availability of recovery housing for individuals with substance use disorders during the same five-year period. The bill would also authorize funding for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a corresponding study of best practices for recovery housing.

The legislation would reauthorize and rename SAMHSA’s Substance Use (from Substance Abuse) Prevention, Treatment, Recovery Block Grant and seeks to provide $1.9 billion each year for the program for FY 2023 through FY 2027. The block grants provide states and tribes funding to plan, carry out, and evaluate substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

The bill would provide funding for the following programs for infants, children, and adolescents:

- The Pediatric Mental Health Care Access grant program at $14 million annually for FY 2023 through FY 2025 and $30 million annually for FY 2026 through FY 2027.
- The Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Reauthorization at $9 million annually for FY 2023 through FY 2027.
- The Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program at $50 million for the period of FY 2023 through FY 2027.
- Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children with Serious Emotional Disturbances Grants at $125 million annually for FY 2023 through FY 2027.
- The Enhancement and Expansion of Treatment and Recovery Services for Adolescents, Transitional Aged Youth, and their Families (Youth and Family TREE) at $29.6 million annually for FY 2023 through FY 2027.

The legislation seeks to reauthorize programs across SAMHSA and HRSA that strengthen the behavioral health care workforce. Reauthorized programs would include the Minority Fellowship Program at $25 million for the period of FY 2023 through FY 2027; mental and behavioral health training grants, which fund the Behavioral Health Workforce and Education Training (BHWET) Program, through FY 2027; and mental and behavioral health training demonstration grants administered by HRSA at $31.7 million through FY 2027.

The bill calls for research on the effects of smartphone and social media use on adolescents, requiring the HHS Secretary to study the effects of such use on emotional, behavioral, and physical health and development as well as any disparities in the mental health outcomes of rural, minority, and other underserved populations. The bill would also direct the National Institute of Health (NIH) to conduct and support research concerning the health and developmental effects of media on infants, children, and adolescents, which may include the positive and negative effects of exposure to and use of media, including social media, websites, mobile devices, computers, video games, among others.
In addition, the legislation would strengthen parity for mental health and substance use services by requiring self-funded and non-governmental health plans to comply with parity requirements and by funding state implementation efforts. The legislation would also extend Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage for health screenings of juvenile inmates and includes a provision requiring the HHS Secretary to issue guidance to states on how to expand pediatric behavioral health services for children covered by Medicaid and CHIP.

Notable amendments added to the final bill include revising SAMHSA’s Project AWARE program to provide comprehensive school-based mental health services for children and adolescents, including screening, treatment, and outreach programs; and an amendment that requires HHS to develop best practices for establishing behavioral intervention teams in educational settings, consisting of elementary schools, secondary schools, and institutions of higher education.

While the legislation passed the House with broad bipartisan support, it is unclear whether the legislation will pass the Senate. Currently, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee and the Senate Finance Committee are drafting and releasing their own mental health reauthorization packages. It is likely that both the Senate HELP and Finance committees will release their own legislation before producing a final package in the fall or winter. Nevertheless, mental health and substance use disorder research, treatment, and care continue to be a priority for both Congress and the Biden Administration.

Sources and Additional Information:

Congressional Update: House Armed Services Committee Advances FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act
The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) approved its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), H.R. 7900, on June 23, 2022. The NDAA is an annual bipartisan bill that authorizes programs and sets policies pertaining to the Department of Defense (DOD) and U.S. national security. However, it is ultimately up to the defense appropriations process to allocate funding to defense programs.

HASC’s nearly $840 billion package would authorize $810 billion in base spending for DOD and $29.9 billion for national security programs overseen by the Department of Energy. HASC’s version of the bill would provide a $37 billion topline boost defense spending compared to the Biden Administration’s $802 billion request. Although HASC’s original version of the bill offered by Chairman Adam Smith (D-WA) more closely aligned with the Administration’s request, HASC Members from both parties argued the original bill fell short given current inflation levels and increased conflict with Russia. An amendment sponsored by Representatives Jared Golden (D-ME) and Elaine Luria (D-VA) added $37 billion to the original draft, bringing the HASC figure more in line with the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), which recently approved a $45 billion increase. These two versions of the bill will ultimately be considered on the floor of each chamber and reconciled before Congress approves a final NDAA.

Related to defense research and development, HASC’s NDAA would authorize a total of $131.3 billion across DOD’s Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) accounts, an increase of more than $1.2 billion
over the President’s Budget request. DOD’s Science and Technology (S&T) accounts would authorize $17.1 billion for basic research (6.1), applied research (6.2), and advanced technology development (6.3).

Of selected research provisions in the bill, the FY 2023 NDAA would:

- Authorize $158 million for the National Defense Education Program (NDEP), including $5 million for community colleges and $20 million for the SMART Scholarship-for-Service program
- Authorize a $5 million increase for the Minerva Initiative, DOD’s premier social science research program
- Authorize a $4 million increase for AI for supply chain within defense research sciences
- Authorize modest increases for university research initiatives for the Navy and Air Force of $7 million and $6 million, respectively
- Authorize a $38 million increase for the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU)
- Authorize a $5 million increase for PFAS remediation technologies within the Strategic Environmental Research Program (SERDP)
- Require the establishment of a military-civilian consortia to research and make recommendations for military education; and the establishment of a consortium of military and civilian education institutions to share information on matters of cybersecurity.

**Expanding the Innovation Ecosystem**

The bill would authorize nearly $102 million for defense research activities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), a program increase of $66.7 million compared to the President’s budget request (PBR). The bill would also require the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering to produce a report on actions to increase the participation of minority-serving institutions in the research, development, test, and evaluation activities of the Department of Defense. Additionally, the bill would establish a fellowship program to provide STEM scholarships and internships for students, especially women of color.

**Sources and Additional Information:**

- The text of the HASC Chairmans mark can be found [here](#) along with its accompanying summary.
- A summary of the Senate Armed Services Committee’s bill can be found [here](#).

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**Administration Update: ED Releases Proposed Title IX Regulations and Invites Public Comment**

On June 23, the fiftieth anniversary of Title IX, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) released a draft of its proposed Title IX regulations after over a year of review. The proposed rules, which are anticipated to be published officially in the Federal Register in the next couple of weeks, will provide a 60-day public comment period. Title IX regulations were last changed during the Trump Administration and garnered significant controversy, particularly among sexual assault survivor groups for the rules’ limited scope of coverage and live hearing requirements. As highlighted in the Department’s summary of the proposed regulations, those changes prompted the Biden Administration to undergo new rulemaking with aims to undo many of the Trump era rules.

The Biden Administration's proposed Title IX regulations would expand the definition of sex-based harassment to include harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, and pregnancy, in addition to harassment based on sex. The proposed regulations emphasize “fairness for all parties to a recipient’s grievance procedure,” highlight the goal of ED to provide “clear rules to help schools
meet their Title IX obligation to eliminate sex discrimination,” and state ED’s intention to protect academic freedom as well as freedom of speech.

The proposed regulations would get rid of the Trump Administration’s definition that harassment is “so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive,” and return the definition to the pre-2020 definition of “severe and pervasive.” The proposed regulations generally provide more flexibility to institutions of higher education than the 2020 regulations. Of note, the proposed regulations would:

- Require institutions of higher education to respond to incidences of hostile environments and sexual discrimination or harassment that occur at off-campus buildings controlled by student organizations officially recognized by the postsecondary institution or out-of-country educational programs;
- Ensure each institution of higher education designates a Title IX coordinator, “adopt(s) prompt and equitable grievance procedures,” and shares its nondiscrimination policies;
- Clarify that postsecondary vocational and professional education programs, along with institutions of higher education, are included in Title IX’s definition of “postsecondary institution;”
- Expand eligibility to file a complaint of sexual harassment from a student or employee to a student, employee, or third party who was “participating or attempting to participate in the recipient’s education program or activity” when the discrimination occurred, as opposed to at the time of filing the complaint and allows for complaints to pursue an informal complaint process instead of filing an official report;
- Repeal the requirement for cross-examination and in-person hearings during Title IX investigations and require postsecondary institutions provide a virtual hearing option and complete investigations promptly;
- Allow students and faculty who leave an institution due to sexual harassment to file a complaint after they have left the institution;
- Require Title IX Coordinators to communicate regularly with all parties on the status of the case; and
- Modify employee obligations for reporting sexual harassment and discrimination.

The Department is expected to issue a separate notice of proposed Title IX rulemaking regarding students’ participation in male or female athletics, the timeframe for which will be announced at a later date.

Public comment on these proposed regulations will be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal up to 60 days post official publication in the Federal Register. The national higher education associations are currently seeking institutional feedback on the proposed regulations to inform their responses and it is anticipated the American Council on Education (ACE) will lead a joint association letter as in years past. A draft of the ACE comments is expected to be available to member institutions prior to the deadline to assist in development of institutional responses.

The proposed regulations are expected to receive tens of thousands of public comments, which ED is required to review and respond to before issuing final regulations. Due to this, it is unlikely institutions of higher education will be expected to make changes to their Title IX procedures before the 2023-2024 school year.

Sources and Additional Information:
- The proposed regulations are available at https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/t9nprm.pdf.
- A summary of the proposed regulations are available at https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/t9nprm-factsheet.pdf.

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Funding Opportunity: ED Announces NIA for Promise Neighborhoods Program

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) issued a Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for new awards under the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Promise Neighborhoods (PN) program. The Promise Neighborhoods program is focused on helping students living in distressed areas improve educational and developmental outcomes. The program supports neighborhoods with high concentrations of low-income individuals; high poverty rates and other signs of distress such as high levels of obesity or juvenile delinquency; and schools implementing comprehensive support services. This competition includes three absolute priorities, three competitive priorities, and one invitational priority. Applications must address at least one absolute priority to be considered.

The absolute priorities are the same as they were in the FY 2021 competition and relate to the type of community served by the proposed program:

1. Absolute Priority 1: Non-rural and non-tribal communities
2. Absolute Priority 2: Rural Applicants
3. Absolute Priority 3: Tribal communities

The competitive preference priorities are all new from the FY 2021 Promise Neighborhoods competition. In the NIA, ED notes that it will add up to ten points to an application for how well it meets the following competitive priorities:

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and Community Engagement to Advance Systemic Change
   - Projects must be designed to take an evidence-based approach to improving outcomes for underserved students in coordinating efforts with Federal, State, or local agencies, or community-based organizations that support students to address community violence prevention and intervention. Examples of federal programs include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Choice Neighborhoods, the Department of Labor’s Growth Opportunities or YouthBuild programs, and other federal programs.

2. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Increasing Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion, and Post-Enrollment Success
   - Projects must be designed to increase student access to, affordability of, and success in higher education by focusing on one of the following four areas: increasing the number and proportion of underserved students who attend and finish degrees; supporting the creation and implementation of evidence-based student success programs; and increasing the number of students or adult learners who return to the educational systems.
   - The competition’s only **invitational priority** is included within Competitive Preference Priority 2, and it is for projects plan to increase the number of students who submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

3. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Evidence-Based Activities to Support Academic Achievement
   - Projects must propose to use evidence-based methods to improve student achievement.

Applicants must provide a plan that significantly improves the lives of children living in one or more specified geographic areas and provide of a description of the geographic area to be served by the application. Applicants are required to submit a “preliminary memorandum of understanding, signed by each
organization or agency with which it would partner in implementing the proposed PN program” with their application. ED intends to hold an informational webinar for interested applicants in the coming weeks. Once announced, it will post webinar details on the ED Promise Neighborhood website.

**Deadline:** Applications are due September 27, 2022. Applications are strongly encouraged to notify the Department of their intent to submit an application.

**Award Information:** With an estimated project period of 60 months, estimated range of award sizes is $4,000,000 to $6,000,000 per year, with 4-5 awards expected to be distributed.

**Cost sharing:** An applicant must demonstrate a commitment from one or more entities in the public or private sector, which may include Federal, State, and local public agencies, philanthropic organizations, and private sources, to provide matching funds. Applicants pursuing the non-rural non-tribal absolute priority must obtain 100 percent matching funds or in-kind donations equal to at least 100 percent of its grant award. Applicants pursuing the rural or tribal absolute priorities need to obtain a fifty percent match or in-kind donations equal to at least 50 percent of its grant award.

**Eligibility:** An institution of higher education; an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization; or a non-profit entity working in partnership with a high-need local educational agency.

**Sources and Additional Information:**


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**Funding Opportunity: NSF Releases Solicitation for Building Synthetic Communities for Biology, Mitigating Climate Change, Sustainability, and Biotechnology (Synthetic Communities)**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released a new solicitation titled “Building Synthetic Communities for Biology, Mitigating Climate Change, Sustainability, and Biotechnology (Synthetic Communities).” NSF seeks proposals that improve understandings of synthetic microbial communities and their unique properties that allow for practical applications in many sectors ranging from industry and production to agriculture and conservation. This solicitation comes among NSF’s stated mission to increase its role in contributing valuable basic research relevant to combating climate change. While the new Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships Directorate has played a leadership role on this goal, this is an example of how the Biological Sciences (BIO) Directorate has been rapidly increasing its interest in sustainability and climate-related science.

According to the solicitation, proposals must align with at least one of three themes:

1. “Defining the mechanisms or rules that drive the formation, maintenance, or evolution of synthetic microbial communities,
2. Using synthetic microbial communities to address fundamental biological questions, including questions in molecular biology, cellular/organismal biology, ecology, and evolution,
3. Building synthetic communities with biotechnology or bio-economy applications, including but not limited to the production of novel bio-renewable chemicals, bio-degradation of harmful or recalcitrant
environmental chemicals, enabling a circular bio-economy, fostering sustainable agriculture, and mitigating the impacts of climate change.”

Competitive proposals must address broader impacts as a part of the application. The assessment of broader impacts may consider potential social, ethical, and biosafety ramifications of research on synthetic microbial communities. Additionally, proposers must address plans to demonstrate “replicability of sample collection and preparation, experimental design, data analysis, model generation and/or validation of mathematical and computational methods.”

Priority will be given to proposals that increase the participation of underrepresented groups in research and education, including women, disabled individuals, people of color, and those that are geographically underrepresented.

**Due Dates:** Full Proposals are due **October 3, 2022 at 5:00 PM**. The following year, and the subsequent years, applications will be due on August 1.

**Total Funding and Award Size:** NSF has anticipated a funding level of $9.5 million for all new awards in each fiscal year and plans to make seven to twelve awards. The duration and size of the award will be in accordance with the scope of the project.

**Eligibility and Proposal Limitations:** Proposals may be submitted by U.S. academic institutions. Letters of intent and preliminary proposal submissions are not required. There are no restrictions on the number of proposals submitted by an organization or principal investigator (PI).

**Sources and Additional Information:**


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**Funding Opportunity: NSF Releases Solicitation for Synthesis Center for Molecular and Cellular Sciences (SCMCS)**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released a new solicitation to establish a Synthesis Center for Molecular and Cellular Sciences (SCMCS). This new Center, supported by the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO), aims to advance research on “complex molecular and cellular phenomena through innovative synthesis and integration of available biological data and related scientific knowledge.” NSF envisages that the Center will help revolutionize our understanding of the “molecular and cellular underpinnings of life” and drive new directions in many scientific fields.

The Center will provide the vision, infrastructure, and expertise to support community coordination of information in the molecular and cellular biosciences. The Center will support open science principles and a team science approach to ensure effective data sharing and collaboration between the biological, chemical, computational, mathematical, and physical sciences and engineering fields, as well as training programs for the next generation of researchers to engage in “data-intensive, cross-disciplinary, and collaborative science.”
Center is also expected to facilitate participation of a diverse group of researchers from different types of institutions across the U.S.

This Center will build on previous NSF BIO investments in mechanistic, quantitative, and theory-driven research that has generated a “high dimensionality and volume of data.” This data combined with new analytical and computational tools has opened up new opportunities to better explain and predict complex molecular and cellular phenomena. However, as stated in the solicitation, there are many barriers to fully utilizing this information, including: heterogeneity of the data, divergent data types, dynamic nature of the data, disparity in access to the data, and insufficient coordination across research communities. The solicitation states that, “Synthesis centers are a form of scientific organization that catalyzes and supports research that integrates diverse theories, methods and data across spatial or temporal scales to increase the generality, parsimony, applicability, or empirical soundness of scientific explanations.”

According to the solicitation, specific objectives of the Center must:

- “Address a compelling set of scientific questions in molecular and cellular biosciences that require or are ripe for breakthroughs from synthesis of available data.
- Enable synthesis research, i.e., integration of diverse theories, methods, and data, bringing together cross-disciplinary expertise to advance mechanistic and predictive understanding of complex molecular and cellular systems.
- Develop or provide the necessary resources to enable data management and integration; advance open science strategies that increase data access, sharing, and reuse; enhance access to existing infrastructure, e.g., computing power; foster collaboration and team science; and promote standards and best practices in the community for synthesis research.
- Build an effective and evidence-based training enterprise for the next generation of scientists.
- Integrate efforts to broaden participation across demographic, geographic, institutional, and disciplinary lines in all activities.”

Note that the Center will not support the creation of new data, instead will facilitate synthesis of existing data.

**Due Dates:** Preliminary proposals are required and are due January 13, 2023. Principal Investigators (PIs) will be informed in March 2023 if their proposal is either encouraged or discouraged. Full proposals are due July 7, 2023. Awards are anticipated to start on February 15, 2024.

Pre-application Webinar: NSF will hold an informational webinar in September 2022, the date and registration link will be posted on the Program website closer to the date.

**Total Funding and Award Size:** NSF plans to make one award of $20 million as a cooperative agreement for an initial period of five years, with the option of an additional (single) five-year renewal.

**Eligibility and Proposal Limitations:** There are no restrictions or limits for eligible organizations. Individuals may be listed as PIs or co-PIs
Engagement Opportunity: HHS Issues Request for Information for Initiative to Strengthen Primary Health Care

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a request for information (RFI) for input from individuals, communities, health care providers, purchasers and payers, educators, researchers, and other members of the public about how the Administration can better advance the goals of the HHS Initiative to Strengthen Primary Health Care (Initiative).

The Initiative was launched in September 2021 by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Health (OASH). The first task of the Initiative was to develop an initial action plan for strengthening primary health care that provides a pathway for improved health outcomes and advancing health equity. The plan, which HHS is seeking to release this year, will include actions that establish an infrastructure to strengthen primary health, develop subsequent HHS plans that build on the initial plan, and monitor progress and impact. In this RFI, OASH is seeking input from diverse perspectives to develop the initial plan and to inform future steps for the Initiative.

Respondents are asked to provide information on any or all of the following topics:

- Successful models or innovations that improve primary health care and help achieve the HHS goal state for primary health care;
- Barriers to implementing successful models or innovations;
- Successful strategies to engage communities; and
- Proposed HHS actions.

Within the responses, OASH is seeking information on successful approaches and innovations in primary care payment and delivery, access, service integration, workforce education and training, digital health, primary care measurement, and research. OASH is also interested in receiving responses from individuals and entities in community-based settings (such as public housing, personal homes, group homes, and assisted living facilities), and is encouraging respondents to address health equity in their responses.

Other groups and organizations OASH is interested in receiving input from include, but are not limited to, paid and unpaid caregivers, community-based organizations, health care providers, professional societies, community health centers, Rural Health Clinics, public health departments, educators, academic researchers, global partners, health insurance payers and purchasers, health technology developers, policy experts, and state, local, tribal, and territorial governments.

Respondents should submit all responses via email to OASHPrimaryHealthCare@hhs.gov as a Word document attachment or in the body of an email. The email must include “Primary Health Care RFI” in the subject line. Submissions must not exceed four pages in 12-point or larger font, with a page number provided on each
page. Responses should include the name of the person(s) or organization(s) filing the comment. Interested entities should only submit one response.

Sources and Additional Information: