

# Office of Research & Economic Development Internal Funding Programs



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## Overview

The EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement: EPSCoR Research Fellows program provides awards to build research capacity in institutions and transform the career trajectories of investigators and further develop their individual research potential through collaborations with investigators from the nation's premier private, governmental, or academic research centers. The fellowship provides opportunities to establish strong collaborations through extended or periodic collaborative visits to a selected host site. Through collaborative research activities with the host site, Fellows will be able to learn new techniques, develop new collaborations, advance existing partnerships, benefit from access to unique equipment and facilities, and/or shift their research toward potentially transformative new directions. The experiences gained through the fellowships are intended to have lasting impacts that will enhance the Fellows' research trajectories well beyond the award period. The benefits to the Fellows are also expected to improve the research capacity of their institutions and jurisdictions more broadly.

### REVIEW DEADLINE

March 2, 2026 @ 11:59pm

### HOW TO DOWNLOAD

Log in to InfoReady at <https://southalabama.infoready4.com/>.

Under the "Reviews" tab is a button that allows you to "Download All Unreviewed Applications."

### USE THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

While reviewing, consult the evaluation criteria included in this document.

### SUBMIT REVIEWS ONLINE

Reviews should be submitted for each proposal in InfoReady.

## Instructions to Reviewers

Each institution is limited to four submissions. **Reviewers should be selective, and use the full range of criteria scores.** Reviewers should familiarize themselves with the funding opportunity and read all applications prior to performing their reviews.

We use a standardized format for our internal competitions which provides the following instructions: "Project Description: In a description that addresses the key requirements of the funding opportunity, describe the project's objectives, methods, analysis, significance, and anticipated impact. Not to exceed one page. Budget and Justification: Provide a draft budget and justification. Not to exceed one page total."

Reviews are submitted in InfoReady using the Evaluation Criteria, which are provided below for your convenience. The online review form is structured in the same way as the criteria are presented.

## Conflict of Interest

For conflict of interest on internal reviews, being a member of the same department does not automatically disallow a review. Current close collaboration, such as being co-PIs on a proposal, or being longtime close collaborators, are disqualifying conflicts in many cases. The same goes for any kind of shared financial interest, either professional or personal, as well as personal relationships such as marriage or kinship. If you have questions about what constitutes a conflict of interest for the purposes of this competition, please contact [ajordan@southalabama.edu](mailto:ajordan@southalabama.edu) or 251.460.6507.

## Evaluation Criteria

### SCORING SCALE:

1. **Exceptional:** Meets all criteria; highly compelling and likely to be competitive at the national level.
2. **Very Good:** Strong proposal with minor weaknesses; demonstrates high potential for career transformation.
3. **Satisfactory:** Meets most criteria; some areas could be strengthened for the full submission.
4. **Fair:** Lacks clarity in key areas (e.g., host site collaboration or career impact) and requires significant revision.
5. **Poor:** Does not clearly address key requirements or lacks significant detail.

**PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE & IMPACT:** Does the pre-proposal describe a project with clear objectives and significant potential for scientific impact? Does it align with NSF's goal of building long-term research capacity?

**RESEARCH TRAJECTORY & CAREER TRANSFORMATION:** How well does the applicant articulate how this fellowship (and the collaboration with the host site) will transform their career trajectory?

**QUALITY OF COLLABORATION & METHODS:** Are the proposed methods sound (to the extent you can determine, as an educated non-expert)? Is the role of the host site clearly defined, providing access to expertise or facilities not available at the home institution?

**BUDGET FEASIBILITY & JUSTIFICATION:** Is the draft budget reasonable and clearly justified? Do you see anything that raises potential questions for reviewers?

### REVIEWER RECOMMENDATION:

- **Highly Recommend:** Excellent candidate for institutional nomination.
- **Recommend with Reservations:** Strong project, but needs refinement to be nationally competitive.
- **Do Not Recommend:** Proposal does not align with program goals or internal requirements.

**APPLICANT FEEDBACK:** Please provide 2-3 actionable points to help the PI strengthen their proposal for submission or future applications.