

Funding Opportunity Announcement ONRFOA14-005
"National Security Science and Engineering Faculty Fellowship"
Amendment 0001

The purpose of Amendment 0001 is as follows:

1. Revise ONRFOA14-005 Section I entitled, "General Information" paragraph F entitled, "Research Opportunity Description" "Objectives of the Program";
2. Revise ONRFOA14-005 Section II entitled, "Award Information" paragraph B entitled, "Peer Reviews";
3. Revise Section V entitled, "Evaluation Information" paragraph a entitled, "Evaluation Criteria"; and
4. Answer questions received in response to ONRFOA14-005.

The following are revisions to ONRFOA14-005:

1. Section I entitled, "General Information" paragraph F entitled, "Research Opportunity Description" "Objectives of the Program" is hereby deleted in its entirety and revised to read as follows:

"Objectives of the program are to:

- Support scientific research that may lead to extraordinary outcomes
- Educate and train outstanding student and post-doctoral researchers for the defense and national security workforce
- Foster long-term relationships between outstanding university researchers and the DoD
- Familiarize select university researchers and their students with DoD's current and future challenges
- Increase the number of exceptionally talented technical experts that are contributing to DoD's mission and **are able to actively participate in its accomplishment as part of the administration of grants issued under this FOA.**
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The NSSEFF program will focus its funding on innovative basic research projects that have the potential for significant long-term impact and support the development of the next generation of scientists and engineers for the defense and national security workforce. Risk-taking is encouraged; however, all proposals must demonstrate solid judgment and rationale. This FOA is for single investigator grant proposals for basic research in one or more of the following technical subject categories of interest to the DoD:

1. Synthetic Biology
 - a. Mammalian platforms/chassis/systems
 - b. Minimal cells
 - c. Genome scale engineering
2. Quantum Information Science
3. Cognitive Neuroscience

- a. Systems neuroscience
- b. Cellular and molecular neuroscience
- 4. Understanding Human and Social Behavior
 - a. Remote sensing of human and social behavior
 - b. Computational social science
 - c. Social dynamics and complexity
- 5. Novel Engineered Materials
 - a. Functional materials
 - b. Structural materials
- 6. Nanoscience
- 7. Other fields of research with high potential

All proposers should ensure that they propose to conduct basic research as previously defined in this section. NSSEFF is oriented towards research that may lead to extraordinary outcomes such as: revolutionizing entire disciplines, creating entirely new fields, or disrupting accepted theories and perspectives”.

2. Section II entitled, “Award Information” paragraph B entitled, “Peer Reviews” is hereby deleted in its entirety and revised to read as follows:

B. Peer Reviews-

In the case of proposals funded as basic research, **DoD** may utilize peer reviewers from academia, industry, and Government agencies to assist in the periodic appraisal of performance under the awards, as outlined in ONR Instruction 3966.1. Such periodic program reviews monitor technical performance of funded basic research efforts. Peer reviewers who are not U.S. Government employees must sign nondisclosure agreements before receiving full or partial copies of proposals and reports submitted by the basic research performers. Offerors may include travel costs for the Principal Investigator (PI) to attend the peer review.

3. Section V entitled, “Evaluation Information” paragraph a entitled, “Evaluation Criteria” is hereby deleted in its entirety and revised to read as follows:

a. Evaluation Criteria

The NSSEFF program seeks to invest in basic research and to identify challenging fundamental scientific areas of investigation that may have potential for long term benefit to DoD. Proposed research should describe cutting-edge efforts on basic scientific problems. White papers deemed to be applied research, as opposed to basic research, will not advance to the proposal stage of the competition. Refer to the DoD definitions of basic research and applied research at http://comptroller.defense.gov/fmr/current/O2b/Volume_02b.pdf.

Subject to funding availability, white papers and proposals deemed to be basic research will be evaluated under the following criteria:

- **Scientific and technical merits of the proposed research; and**
- **The principal investigator's qualifications, ability to perform the proposed work;**
- **Potential interest of the proposed research to the DoD.**
- **The overall management approach**
- **The realism and reasonableness of proposed costs; and**
- **The relevance of the proposed project to NSSEFF program objectives and priorities**

The technical and cost information will be analyzed simultaneously during the proposal evaluation process. The U.S. Government does not guarantee an award in each research area. Further, be advised that as funds are limited, otherwise meritorious proposals may not be funded

The following are answers to questions received under ONRFOA14-005:

Q#1: What are the most significant changes to the current National Security Science and Engineering Faculty Fellowship (NSSEFF) solicitation since the last one?

A#1:

1. Only doctoral degree-granting academic institutions are eligible to nominate applicants.
 - NSSEFF Fellows are no longer required to hold security clearances as a condition for receiving a NSSEFF grant. Select NSSEFF Fellows may be invited to actively participate as part of the administration of grants issued under this FOA for which a security clearance is required, but participation in such groups will not be a requirement for NSSEFF Fellows.
2. Eligible applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

Q#2: How can I access the full announcement for the competition?

A#2: Search for Funding Opportunity Number "ONRFOA14-005" on www.Grants.gov.

Q#3: What are my chances of receiving a NSSEFF grant?

A#3: The table below shows the number of white papers meeting BAA acceptance criteria and the number of grants awarded in the NSSEFF competitions to date.

Fiscal Year	Number of White Papers Meeting FOA Acceptance Criteria	Number of NSSEFF Grants Awarded
2008	331	8
2009	468	10
2010	667	11

Q#4: May I apply for an NSSEFF grant if I am a scientist or engineer in a non-profit or for-profit research institution that is not a university or college?

A#4: No. Nominations will be accepted only from faculty or staff at doctoral degree-granting, accredited academic institutions.

Q#5: Are sub-awards to companies or non-profit institutions permitted?

A#5: Yes.

Q#6: Are sub-awards to the Department of Defense (DoD) labs (such as AFRL, ARL, NRL), Department of Energy labs, or Federally Funded Research & Development Centers (FFRDCs) permitted?

A#6: No.

Q#7: Are sub-awards to DoD academic institutions (such as the Naval Postgraduate School) permitted?

A#7: No.

Q#8: I am currently working as a faculty member at a foreign university. Am I eligible to apply for a NSSEFF fellowship?

A#8: No. The NSSEFF program is for faculty members and staff at U.S. universities. As a faculty member at a foreign university, you would not be eligible to apply.

Q#9: I am currently working as a faculty member for a U.S. university but at a branch campus that is in another country. Am I eligible to apply for a NSSEFF fellowship?

A#9: The NSSEFF program is restricted to faculty working at locations in the U.S.

Q#10: Is collaboration allowed on research projects?

A#10: Yes. Collaboration is permitted and encouraged, but awards will be disbursed to the academic institution of the principal investigator. This is a single investigator award.

Q#11: Can I list more than one principal investigator (PI)?

A#11: No. Only one PI is permitted, but you may list other members of your research team.

Q#12: What are research topics of particular interest for this program?

A#12: This is a basic research program. As defined by the DoD, basic research is “the systematic study directed toward greater knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications towards processes or products in mind. It includes all scientific study and experimentation directed toward increasing fundamental knowledge and understanding in those fields of the physical, engineering, environmental, and life sciences related to long-term national security needs. It is farsighted high payoff research that provides the basis for technological progress.” (http://comptroller.defense.gov/fmr/current/02b/Volume_02b.pdf). The DoD’s basic research program invests broadly in many scientific fields to ensure that it has early cognizance of new scientific knowledge.

DoD’s basic research investment in this program will also contribute to the development of the next generation of high performing scientists and engineers, who will be educated and trained as a part of the NSSEFF Fellows’ research. The NSSEFF program helps to ensure that our Nation has an active, long-term and aggressive research portfolio that attracts the foremost creative, innovative and productive university researchers and their students.

Q#13: How many individuals may a university or college nominate for the Fellowship competition?

A#13: There is no limit on the number of nominees from each institution. Each geographically separate campus of a major educational system is considered an institution.

Q#14: Is a separate “intent to nominate” letter necessary for each nominee from the same institution?

A#14: No. An institution may submit one “intent to nominate” letter that contains the information required for all the candidates it intends to nominate. If more candidates request nomination after the letter is sent, additional “intent to nominate” letter(s) may also be submitted.

Q#15: Are separate, formal nomination letters necessary for each individual white paper?

A#15: Yes. Each white paper must be accompanied by a separate formal nomination letter from the author's institution.

Q#16: I made a mistake while submitting the application materials. Can I edit my submission?

A#16: Yes, submissions can be edited until the due date and time stated in the FOA by logging back into the submission portal.

Q#17: May a PI submit more than one white paper?

A#17: A PI may submit only one white paper.

Q#18: Are there restrictions on publication of research results from this program?

A#18: No, all work at the university is unclassified and able to be published.

Q#19: I am a Permanent Resident and tenure/track. Am I eligible for submitting a proposal to your program?

A#19: Outstanding faculty with tenure and full-time research staff with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to conduct the proposed research as the principal investigator (PI) are invited to work with his/her institution to submit an application. If you are not tenured, you are not eligible to apply.
