

ALABAMA EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM to STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH
(ALEPSCOR)

Alabama EPSCoR Steering Committee

BYLAWS

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ARTICLE I:

OVERVIEW

The Alabama EPSCoR (ALEPSCoR) Steering Committee (AESC) is a consortium of Ph.D. granting research institutions responsible for the oversight of various federally funded awards granted to the State of Alabama and for the administration of the state funded Graduate Research Scholars Program (GRSP).

In 1986 the AESC was created by seven Ph.D. granting institutions of higher education in the State of Alabama for the purpose of establishing eligibility to receive federal funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR program. NSF requires that each EPSCoR jurisdiction receiving funds under this program establish and utilize a governing committee that works closely with leaders in academe, government, and the private sector.¹ EPSCoR competitive grant proposals are submitted on behalf of the jurisdiction's governing committee. In addition, the jurisdiction's EPSCoR governing committee must designate a fiscal agent/proposing organization as the awardee for the RII grant. The intent of these bylaws is to establish the rules for AESC; these bylaws can be amended.

Since its inception, the AESC has solicited funding from a variety of federal sources including but not limited to, the NSF, the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Energy (DOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), United States Department of Agriculture, (USDA), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Every participating member institution is subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the NSF Grant Policy Manual, or the grant policy manual for a respective federal agency as amended; any federal, state and local laws; and the rules, regulations, and policies of the participating institution of higher education.

ARTICLE II:

MISSION

The AESC is dedicated to enhancing the quality and increasing the quantity of competitive science, technology, engineering, and math research and development in the state through initiatives that:

1. Increase R&D funding in Alabama, especially from agencies in which Alabama is EPSCoR-eligible;
2. Increase the research competitiveness of all EPSCoR institutions in the state;
3. Increase participation of individuals from underrepresented groups in all EPSCoR funded programs;
4. Increase the numbers of scientists and engineers trained in the state of Alabama; and
5. Increase effective participation with a broad range of public and private sector organizations to enhance economic development opportunities in Alabama.

¹ ALEPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Grant (RII) Program Solicitation NSF Publication Number 08-500, Section II, page 6.

ARTICLE III:

MEMBERSHIP

The Alabama EPSCoR Steering Committee will consist of a two-tier structure:

1. Standing Committee (StdC) – Vice Presidents for Research or designee, representatives from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) and the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA).
2. Advisory Committee (AC)- public or private sector individuals who will serve in an advisory role or as a technical expert.

Official Voting Members (Standing Committee). The Vice Presidents for Research, or the equivalent individuals designated in writing by the Presidents of the participating Ph.D. granting Universities; a representative from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE), and a representative from the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA), will each constitute the official voting membership of the AESC. The participating Ph.D. granting universities at the time of adoption of these bylaws are the following: Alabama A&M University, Auburn University, Tuskegee University, University of Alabama, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Alabama in Huntsville, and the University of South Alabama. The fiscal agent for receiving and administering ALEPSCoR state funding is the host institution of the Executive Director of ALEPSCoR or as otherwise determined by the State legislature.

Alternate Voting Members. Each Official Voting Member designates an alternative member to the AESC who serves as a proxy for the Official Voting Member with all voting privileges in the absence of the Official Voting Member and will be counted toward establishment of a quorum. (See Operating Procedures)

Non-Voting Members.

Executive Director. The Executive Director of ALEPSCoR is a non-voting member who serves as the Secretary of the AESC. The Executive Director is not eligible to be an agency director for any of the EPSCoR programs funded by the federal agencies. In the event that the Executive Director is also a Vice President for Research or equivalent position, the President of the participating Ph.D. granting institution appoints in writing another person to serve as the Official Voting Member of AESC from that institution.

Advisory Committee. The AESC, at its sole discretion, may invite representatives from public agencies or private organizations to serve in an advisory capacity. The Advisory Group members are vetted and non-voting. Members in the Advisory Committee will serve a period of three years, with two-thirds of the members being retained while one-third rotate off each year. Any member will have the option to be re-nominated by majority vote of the AESC Standing Committee. The Advisory Committee will undergo a period of transition initially (pending AESC approval Oct 2014) until the rotation of membership is established. See Operating Procedures for nomination/acceptance details. AGC member quantity is not limited or specified. Advisory Committee members may serve on Advisory Boards of Alabama EPSCoR research proposals/projects.

New Members. The AESC at its sole discretion may by a simple majority vote, or fifty-one (51%), of Official Voting Members present, add new members as Official Voting Members or non-voting members.

University Members: To qualify as a Ph.D. granting institution for Official Voting Membership, the following condition must be satisfied:

The institution must have one or more active Ph.D. programs that have a portion of its operating budget from the state of Alabama in a discipline that is comparable with the focus of the EPSCoR program. As such, the institution must have a Ph.D. program in a scientific or engineering area that might foster research in subjects funded by NSF, DOE, USDA, NIH, NASA, DOD, or EPA.**ARTICLE IV:**

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Participating universities pay annual dues to the Coalition of EPSCoR States. The division of the annual Coalition dues among the participating institutions is established by the AESC.

ARTICLE V:

DUTIES OF THE AESC

The AESC provides fiduciary and programmatic oversight for all ALEPSCoR activities including the ALEPSCoR Office (AEO), located on the campus of the Executive Director. The AESC works closely with the Executive Director of the AEO to evaluate and monitor EPSCoR related funding.

The AESC appoints the ALEPSCoR Executive Director, the ALEPSCoR Associate Executive Director, as well as the ALEPSCoR Agency Directors who each serve at the pleasure of the AESC. The AESC operates in concert with the Executive Director to see that excellent research programs are funded in the state of Alabama.

ARTICLE VI:

AESC OFFICERS

Officers of the AESC are the Chair and Vice Chair. From time to time the AESC, with a simple majority vote of the Official Voting Members, may establish other positions, elect other officers, or rearrange positions.

ARTICLE VII:

ELECTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

Chair. The Chair of the AESC is elected by simple majority vote of the Official Voting Members of the AESC in attendance at a scheduled AESC meeting. The Chair is responsible for convening and presiding over all scheduled meetings and other activities of the AESC.

Vice Chair. The Vice Chair of the AESC is elected by simple majority vote of the Official Voting Members of the AESC in attendance at a scheduled AESC meeting. The Vice Chair assists the Chair and serves in the absence of the Chair.

ARTICLE VIII:

NOMINATION, ELECTION AND REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

Nomination Committee. The nomination committee consists of three Official Voting Members appointed by the Chair to present a slate of officer(s) to the AESC for election. The Secretary verifies that the nominees have agreed to have their names placed in nomination. See Operating Procedures for the election of officers.

Term of Office. The term of the Chair and Vice Chair of the AESC is two years. An incumbent may be elected for an additional two year term.

Removal of an Officer. An officer may be removed by a simple majority vote of the Official Voting Members of the AESC. See Operating Procedures for the details of removing an officer.

ARTICLE IX:

MEETINGS AND QUORUM

The Chair of the AESC or the ALEPSCoR Executive Director may call a meeting of the AESC. Any official voting member of the AESC may also request that a meeting be called under special circumstances. A meeting may only take place when a majority of the AESC voting membership is present and a quorum is declared. A quorum is constituted when fifty-one percent (51%) of the Official Voting Members are present in accord with provisions of the Alabama Open Meetings Act (OMA) as it may be amended from time to time. See Operating Procedures for additional details.

ARTICLE X:

RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order are followed during all meetings of the AESC.

ARTICLE XI:

OVERVIEW OF THE ALABAMA EPSCoR OFFICE

Alabama EPSCoR Office (AEO). The AEO reports to the AESC.

Host Institution. The Host Institution of the AEO is the Executive Director's institution of record. Prior to appointment of the Executive Director, the Host Institution agrees to serve as ALEPSCoR headquarters. In doing so, the Host Institution functions as administrator providing oversight for all EPSCoR funds received from the State of Alabama. The Host Institution may enter into subcontracts with other participating institutions of higher education and other entities on behalf of the AESC.

Executive Director. The AEO is headed by an Executive Director appointed by the AESC. The Executive Director serves as the Secretary to the AESC and has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day operation, management and coordination of the ALEPSCoR program. The ALEPSCoR Executive Director is charged to create policies and procedures for the operation of the ALEPSCoR program which is subject to approval by the AESC. The Executive Director is not eligible to be an ALEPSCoR Agency Director for any program funded by a federal agency.

Associate Executive Director. The Associate Executive Director is appointed by the AESC and reports to the ALEPSCoR Executive Director. The Associate Executive Director carries out duties assigned by the Executive Director and serves in the absence of the Executive Director.

ALEPSCoR Agency Directors. ALEPSCoR Agency Directors are appointed by the AESC, report to the ALEPSCoR Executive Director, and work in consultation with the respective federal EPSCoR program agency.

The home institution of the ALEPSCoR Agency Directors and EPSCoR Principal Investigators (PI) must support the responsibilities undertaken by their faculty member relative to ALEPSCoR.

NASA Program Director. The Alabama Space Grant Consortium Director also serves as the Alabama NASA EPSCoR Agency Director. The Director has oversight responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the NASA EPSCoR Program including the coordination, notification and supervision of the NASA EPSCoR announcements and awards issued by the federal program office. This may include coordination and facilitation of pre-proposal reviews as deemed appropriate and requested by NASA or the AESC.

GRSP Program Director. The GRSP Program Director is appointed by the AESC, serves at the pleasure of the AESC, and reports to the ALEPSCoR Executive Director. The GRSP Program Director has oversight responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the state funded GRSP including coordination of activities of the Campus Coordinators and announcement of state awards.

ARTICLE XII:

REVIEW AND SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals submitted to the ALEPSCoR are subject to the provisions, regulations, policies and procedures of the respective federal agency that funds the research. This may include as an example the NSF Grant Policy Manual, OMB Circular A-110, OMB Circular A-21, the Federal Acquisition Regulations or other grant policy manuals applicable from each respective federal agency designated as an EPSCoR program in Alabama, as amended. Specific review and selection procedures for proposals are part of the work product of the AESC and are not included in these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII:

RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS AND CONFLICTS

Any member of the AESC may file a written petition to the AESC or state his/her concern orally for consideration at an AESC meeting. The AESC discusses the issue in a formal meeting or appoints a subcommittee for study and recommendation when needed. Any decision by a simple majority of the members present is final and binding on all members.

ARTICLE XIV:

CHANGES TO BYLAWS

A simple majority of the Official Voting Members of the AESC in attendance at a scheduled AESC meeting is required to amend these bylaws. Amendments to the bylaws become effective upon passage.