FY 2027 NASA EPSCoR $750K Research Cooperative Agreement Notice (CAN) Call for Letters of Intent (LOI) and Pre-Proposals

- Letter of Intent Due to SC NASA EPSCoR: Wednesday, November 11, 2026, 11:59 pm
- Institutional Endorsement Due to SC NASA EPSCoR: Wednesday, November 11, 2026, 11:59 pm
- Pre-Proposals Due online through SC NASA EPSCoR submission site: Wednesday, December 2, 2026, 11:59 pm
- South Carolina will be eligible to submit one (1) proposal to the national competition.

I. SUMMARY OF KEY INFORMATION

This is an official call for *Letters of Intent (LOIs)* and *Pre-Proposals* in anticipation of the release of the FY 2027 NASA EPSCoR $750K Research Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) by NASA Headquarters. This statewide call for Pre-Proposals is the mechanism that will be used to identify the single proposal to be submitted by the SC NASA EPSCoR jurisdiction to NASA in response to the FY 2027 NOFO.

NASA EPSCoR proposals are expected to establish research programs that will make significant contributions to: 1) the strategic research and technology priorities of one or more of the five (5) NASA Mission Directorates; 2) one or more of the NASA Centers and Facilities, and 3) contribute to the overall research infrastructure, science and technology capabilities, higher education, and economic development of South Carolina. For this call, proposals must address one or more priority areas listed in the NOFO.

Program parameters:

- The South Carolina jurisdiction will be allowed to submit one (1) proposal to the national competition.
- The proposal may request federal funds of up to $750,000 total costs (direct + indirect) for a three-year project period (i.e., up to $250,000/year). This budget must include a 5% per year management fee for the SC NASA EPSCoR Office ($12,500 per year), and College of Charleston IDC charges withheld in Year 1 only (currently 50% of the first $25K subcontract, or $12,500).
- All NASA EPSCoR funds must be cost-shared at a level of at least 50% with non-federal funds. In-kind matches are allowable.
- **Due to historically high levels of interest in this program, SC NASA EPSCoR has instituted a - per-institution - limit of up to two (2) pre-proposals that may be submitted for consideration in the state-wide competition.**

Note: It is anticipated that NASA will make several awards of up to $750,000, each to be expended over a three-year period of performance.

II. TIMEFRAME / DEADLINES

In consideration of the short timeline and the highly competitive nature of this NASA EPSCoR Program, the SC NASA EPSCoR office has established the following process to identify the single proposal to be put forward from South Carolina to the national NASA EPSCoR competition:

Wednesday, November 11, 2026: Letter of Intent (LOI) due to the SC NASA EPSCoR SUBMIT to email scsgrant@cofc.edu.

Wednesday, November 11, 2026: Institutional Endorsement *due by email* from your institution's Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) to scsgrant@cofc.edu. Please refer to your institution's internal procedures for selection for endorsement. **Each institution may endorse up to 2 pre-proposals for the state-wide competition.**

Wednesday, December 2, 2026: Pre-Proposals **due by 11:59 pm**

- All Proposals shall be submitted (with all signatures on budgets and cover page) through the SC NASA EPSCoR submission website: https://spacegrant.net/proposals/submit/?sponsor_id=14
- LATE OR NON-COMPLIANT APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

December 3 - December 13, 2026: Pre-proposals will be reviewed by experts in fields relevant to each Pre-Proposal. A panel comprised of scientists and engineers who have expertise and knowledge in NASA mission areas will make down-select recommendations. The SC NASA EPSCoR Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will identify one Pre-Proposal that best responds to the federal solicitation and addresses South Carolina research priorities. Non-selected Pre-Proposals will be returned with mail review results only. The selected Pre-Proposal will be provided panel feedback to be incorporated in the development of the final proposal for submission to the national NASA EPSCoR program.

Wednesday, December 14, 2026: Selected Science-PI will be notified.

Friday, January 8, 2027: Fully-developed proposal first draft due to the SC NASA EPSCoR/ SC Space Grant Office. The selected Science-PI will work closely with the SC NASA EPSCoR reach to refine and edit the proposal prior to our office submitting the final version through the NSPIRES system.

Wednesday, January 20, 2027: Final full proposal submitted to SC NASA NSPIRES office

Monday, February 1, 2027: Final proposal submitted to NASA NSPIRES by SC NASA EPSCoR office and the College of Charleston.

***Please be aware these dates may shift slightly as we move through this process. All involved parties will be notified.**

III. ELIGIBILITY OF INVESTIGATORS

Principal Investigator Qualifications and Limitations

Science Principal Investigators/Project Directors (Science-PI/PD) of proposed NASA EPSCoR projects must be tenured or tenure track faculty at any of South Carolina's institutions of higher education. A Science-PI may only submit one Pre-Proposal. An investigator may serve as Science-PI or Co-PI on only one Letter of Intent (LOI) or Pre-Proposal submitted in response to this solicitation. **Investigators with strong, established, active relationship(s) with staff at a NASA research and spaceflight center(s) are strongly encouraged to apply.**

> Prior NASA EPSCoR Science-PIs are not permitted to reapply as the Science-PI or for a significant portion of a research effort for at least 3 funding cycles. The NASA EPSCoR program recognizes their experience and would welcome their participation as a mentor and/or in a minor role on a new project proposal.

> Prior NASA EPSCoR Co-Is who did not receive significant funding from a NASA EPSCoR award may submit as PI and/or as a team member. Their proposal should clearly indicate prior support from, and their role / level of effort in, the previous NASA EPSCoR grant(s).

> Individuals and institutions participating in South Carolina's NASA EPSCoR projects need not be members of the South Carolina Space Grant Consortium.

IV. ALIGNMENT OF RESPONSES TO STATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES (REQUIRED)

Pre-Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be evaluated on how well they address NASA's Mission and Basic Research Focus Areas**.** NASA's research priorities are defined by the Mission Directorates: Exploration Systems Development, Space Technology, Science, Space Operations and Aeronautics Research).

NEW!!! Proposals MUST address one of NASA's current basic research focus areas as listed in the NOFO. You will find them listed here: https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/established-program-to-stimulate-competitive-research/research-focus-areas/

NOTE: The goal of the NASA EPSCoR program is to provide funding that will enable designated NASA EPSCoR jurisdictions to develop an academic research enterprise directed toward long-term, self-sustaining, and nationally competitive capabilities in aerospace and aerospace-related research. This capability is expected, in turn, to contribute to the jurisdiction's economic viability and expand the nation's base for aerospace research and development. *Responses to this solicitation should be aligned with the South Carolina Science and Technology Plan, Vision 2030, also available on our website:* http://scnasaepscor.cofc.edu/nasa-epscor-research -page .

V. LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Faculty interested in submitting a Pre-Proposal in response to this call must initially submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). Pre-Proposals received without being preceded by an LOI will be returned without review. Prior to submission of your LOI, investigators should consider that the South Carolina NASA EPSCoR Office will use the information provided in the LOI to identify and recruit external reviewers with the expertise to evaluate the Pre-Proposals. **Please understand that this program is exceedingly competitive, thus please do not submit a Letter of Intent unless a Pre-Proposal will be forthcoming.**

Letters of Intent are **due by 11:59 p.m. EDT November 11, 2026**. These LOIs need to be submitted as a single .pdf file in an email attachment to scsgrant@cofc.edu with the **Subject: "NASA CAN LOI."**

Letters of Intent (LOI) must include:

1. **Cover Letter:** A cover letter from the Chief Research Officer of the institution submitting the LOI or the Dean of the College from which the Pre-Proposal is to originate. This cover letter should clearly delineate the institution's willingness to commit the required 50% cost-share commitments in support of the project, should the Pre-Proposal be selected for full development and submission in response to the NASA EPSCoR NOFO federal solicitation; and commitment to prepare the follow-on Pre-Proposal.

2. **PI and Co-PI contact information** to include department, institution, email addresses and phone numbers for all participants.

3. **LOI Project Summary:** The Project Summary must open with the contact information for the Principal Investigator and the anticipated title of the Pre-Proposal followed by a 3-page summary (12 pt font, 1" margins) that describes the NASA EPSCoR NOFO Project Activities, as aligned with NASA Mission priorities and the South Carolina Science and Technology Strategic Plan (or VI). The Project Summary shall describe the proposed scope and project organization, collaborating team members including student participants, NASA Laboratories and Facilities, and activities in research and education, and their integration.

4. **NASA Basic Research Focus Area – Please list your topic area identified from the website.** All proposals are required to demonstrate relevance, alignment, and impact towards NASA priorities regardless of topics.

   https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/established-program-to-stimulate-competitive-research/research-focus-areas/

5. **Required > Research Discipline:** Provide a specific field title of your research area (e.g., Heliophysics or polymer chemistry). This will help to identify additional reviewers.

6. **Biographical Sketches:** Include a two-page biographical sketch for each Key faculty level participant. Include educational background, professional employment, publications, and any other information deemed relevant.

7. **Current and Pending Support:** List current and pending support for each faculty for which a biographical sketch has been provided. A table listing Current and Pending Support for each research team member must be provided.

8. **Suggested Reviewers:** List five (5) NASA or non-NASA potential reviewers whom you know to be familiar with your area of expertise. Include their name, institution/center, address, phone number and email address. (1 should be a NASA scientist familiar with your research project discipline). Suggested reviewers must be free from conflict of interest with this project. **Suggested reviewers may not have collaborated with you, may not have provided a letter of support in the past 5 years, nor have been your student or advisor, nor be employed at your current institution.**

9. **Cost Share Table:** Provide a table showing total matching funds and their source.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Each institution (defined as a single campus under the SC Space Grant guidelines) may submit an endorsement for up to two (2) pre-proposals for the state-wide competition. (NOTE: This may require an internal selection process depending on the level of interest within your home institution.) Please confer with your institution's sponsored research personnel for information on that process. **Once each institution identifies the pre-proposals it wishes to endorse, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must email the list of 1-2 pre-proposals, including PI name and project title, to scsgrant@cofc.edu by November 11, 2026**. Note: This AOR endorsement is in addition to the cover letter information required in the Letter of Intent. This duplication of information is necessary to avoid any intra-institutional confusion about who has been selected by your institution to compete.

VII. PRE-PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

The South Carolina NASA EPSCoR Office has been charged with overseeing the review process for identification of the South Carolina jurisdiction in response to the federal NASA EPSCoR CAN solicitation.

Successful pre-proposals will demonstrate partnerships or cooperative arrangements among academia, government agencies, business and industry, private research foundations, jurisdiction agencies, and/or local agencies.

Proposers are REQUIRED to address one or more of the NASA priority research focus areas listed here: https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/established-program-to-stimulate-competitive-research/research-focus-areas/

NOTE: NASA-funded, in-kind services provided by NASA Centers, Mission Directorates, and/or the Office of the Chief Technologist should be identified as NASA responsibilities in the proposals and are not to be included in the 50% matching requirement. This must be identified on the LOI cover page, and as LOI requirement #3.

Limitations on use of NASA EPSCoR funds

- Funds shall not be used to fund research carried out by non-U.S. institutions or China. However, U.S. research award recipients may directly purchase supplies and/or services that do not constitute research from non-U.S. sources.
- Travel, including limited foreign travel, is allowed for the meaningful completion of the proposed investigation, as well as for reporting results at appropriate professional meetings.
    - Domestic travel, which is defined as travel that does not require a passport, shall be appropriate and reasonable to conduct the proposed research. Domestic travel does not have a limit.
    - Foreign travel to meetings and conferences in support of the jurisdiction's NASA EPSCoR

research project is an acceptable use of NASA EPSCoR funds, with a limit of $3,000 per trip for up to two (2) separate years of a jurisdiction's proposal (i.e., the maximum amount the jurisdiction can request for foreign travel is $3,000 total in any one year and a limit of $6,000 total for each research proposal).

- EPSCoR support shall be acknowledged by the EPSCoR research project number in written reports and publications as identified on the award documents.
- Computers may not be purchased through this program with NASA funds.
- The construction of facilities is not allowable in any of the NASA programs solicited in this NASA EPSCoR CAN.
- NASA EPSCoR funding cannot be used to purchase general purpose equipment, e.g. desktop workstations, office furnishings, reproduction and printing equipment, etc. as a direct charge.
- Special purpose equipment purchases (i.e., equipment that is used only for research, scientific, and technical activities directly related to the proposed research activities) are allowed and can be reflected as a direct charge.
- NASA EPSCoR funding may not be used to support NASA civil service participation (FTE) in a research project unless that funding is provided through a funding vehicle between the jurisdiction and NASA center, such as a Space Act Agreement or other reimbursable agreement.

The use of NASA EPSCoR funds for support of research students is allowable, and is strongly encouraged, and must be detailed in the Budget Justification and described in the narrative and evaluation sections of the Pre-Proposal.

Pre-Proposals are due by midnight December 2, 2026, and must be submitted (with all signatures on budgets and cover page) through the SC NASA EPSCoR submission website: https://spacegrant.net/proposals/submit/?sponsor_id=14
*LATE OR NON-COMPLIANT APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR REVIEWED.

VIII. PRE-PROPOSAL FORMAT

Pre-Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are to be prepared in 12 point font with 1" margins. Tables and figure captions may not be less than 10 point font. Each pre-proposal must include the following information in the order listed and be within the page limitations as indicated below. Pre-Proposals not adhering to these guidelines will not be reviewed or considered for selection.

1. **Pre-Proposal Cover Page:** The Cover Page shall include the following information: PI information, proposal title, proposed start and end dates, submitting institution information, certification and authorization. This may be downloaded from the SCSGC web site: http://scnasaepscor.cofc.edu/nasa-epscor-research-page .

2. **NASA Basic Research Focus Area – Please list your topic area identified from the website below.** All proposals are required to demonstrate relevance, alignment, and impact towards NASA priorities regardless of topics. https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/established-program-to-stimulate-competitive-research/research-focus-areas/

3. **Project Summary** (up to 1 page or 4,000 characters): Include a brief description of the project, objectives, method of approach, and anticipated outcomes.

4. **Budget:** Using the NASA budget page, which may be downloaded from the SCSGC web site: http://scnasasepscor.cofc.edu/nasa-epscor-research-page, prepare an annual budget not to exceed $250,000 for each year of support and a three-year summary budget not to exceed $750,000 total request (direct + indirect) from NASA. Institutional cost sharing must be provided at a minimum of 50% of NASA request up to $125,000/year ($375,000 for all years). This budget must include a 5% per year management fee ($12,500 annually) for the SC NASA EPSCoR Office and College of Charleston IDC charges in Year 1 (currently 50% of the first $25K subcontract or $12,500).

5. **Budget Justification** (up to 2 pages): Provide a detailed budget justification, which delineates requested funds from NASA and cost-share provisions.

6. **Project Description** (up to 5 pages): Provide a detailed description of the proposed research plan. Page limit includes all illustrations, tables, and figures.

   A. ***Project Purpose/Alignment to NASA and SC***: Describe how the proposed research activities will make significant contributions to the strategic research and technology development priorities of one or more of the Mission Directorates and/or the Office of the Chief Technologist and contribute to the overall research infrastructure, science and technology capabilities, higher education, and economic development of South Carolina.

   B. ***Proposal Abstract***: include a 250-word abstract summarizing the proposed research.

   C. ***Goals and Objectives*****:** Clearly state goals and objectives for the proposed effort and provide a rationale for the approach that will be used to achieve them.

   D. ***Project Content***: Clearly describe the proposed effort and how the goals and objectives will be achieved. Please note, when preparing a proposal that involves the use of human subjects, animals, hazardous materials, select agents, and/or recombinant DNA, the proposers will need to address applicable compliance issues.

   E. **Anticipated Results:** Describe the anticipated results of the proposed effort.

7. **Partnerships and Interactions:** Describe any partnerships or cooperative arrangements among academia, government agencies, business and industry, private research foundations, jurisdiction agencies, and local agencies.

8. **Timeline:** Include a timeline for achieving the stated goals and objectives, including significant milestones.

9. **Biographical Sketches** (up to two pages each): Include a biographical sketch for each Key faculty

level participant. Include educational background, professional employment, research experience, publications, and any other information deemed relevant to the proposed effort.

10. **Current and Pending Support**: List current and pending support for each faculty member for which a biographical sketch has been provided.

11. **Letters of Support and Commitment**: Must be included. At least one letter must indicate institutional match commitment. Each Pre-proposal must include at least one letter of support from a colleague at a NASA Center.

For more information, contact the South Carolina NASA EPSCoR office:

- Dr. Cassandra Runyon, Director, SC NASA EPSCoR and SC Space Grant Consortium
  Telephone: (843) 953-8279, email: runyonc@cofc.edu

- Tara B. Scozzaro, MPA, Program Manager, SC NASA EPSCoR and SC Space Grant Consortium Telephone: (843) 953-5463, email: scozzarot@cofc.edu

NASA EPSCoR Cooperative Agreements are awarded to the College of Charleston as the lead institution of the South Carolina jurisdiction for the NASA EPSCoR Program. Per NASA requirements, the SC NASA EPSCoR jurisdiction Director, Dr. Cassandra Runyon, serves as the Principal Investigator (PI) for South Carolina. Ms. Tara Scozzaro is the jurisdiction Program Manager. The selected lead faculty member will propose and serve as the Science-I per NASA requirements.