



NSF EPSCoR
ADVANCING GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY IN STEM



STEM Research Funding Available

The NSF EPSCoR funded initiative *Maine-SMART* seeks to expand Maine's research and pipeline infrastructure. More specifically, it encourages the integration of research and education, convergent research, and STEM faculty recruitment and retention using seed grants and other methods.

- **Goal:** Seed Grants are being offered to fund collaborative STEM research projects in the range of **\$1,000 to \$15,000** towards efforts leading to the application of external funding.
- **Focus:** Projects should advance research and development in STEM fields with a strong emphasis on their ability to attract external funding.
- **Collaboration:** Collaborative efforts are highly encouraged whether they are between departments within one university or institutions within Maine.
- **Workforce Development:** Workforce development and STEM Education within the state of Maine is also encouraged.

****Maine-SMART is available to assist with faculty grant writing development, forming teams, and locating appropriate funding to apply for. If assistance is needed please email Jeremy.Qualls@Maine.edu for more information.*

Proposal Request for Maine-SMART EPSCoR

Maine-SMART Goals and Objectives:

The need for increasing strategic R&D investments and addressing skilled worker shortages are urgent motivators for E-CORE RII: Strengthening Maine's Research Ecosystem and Pathways Through Strategic Capacity Building (Maine-SMART). The project aims to address challenges related to STEM workforce preparation and shortages, federal and state investment in research, lack of coordination across educational and nonprofit organizations with similar missions related to STEM education and R&D, and a limited ability to analyze and convey the results of investments in research infrastructure.

The overarching societal benefit of Maine-SMART is a more productive research ecosystem fully engaging different institution types and sectors. Sustainable impacts will include (i) more federal grant submissions and awards involving PUIs and emerging research institutions, (ii) improved educator and student understanding of STEM education and careers and improved



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STEM pathways, helping to meet the needs of STEM employers and diversifying Maine's STEM workforce, (iii) larger grant awards, as statewide collaboration increases and research resources are better understood, (iv) greater collaboration among critical masses of investigators across Maine's R&D ecosystem leading to better science and measurable increases in research funding (v) greater research translation across a more diverse innovation network and (vi) improved public understanding of the impact of R&D on Maine's economy that results in more funding from private and public sources.

Please note:

- For questions related to your proposal, please contact Jeremy Qualls (Jeremy.Qualls@Maine.edu).
- The range of allowable requests is between **\$1,000 to \$15,000**.
- Planned applicants to any federal agency will be considered, while applications to NSF will be prioritized in the ranking of received proposals.
- Instructions for submitting a proposal
 - Proposals must be submitted as a PDF.
 - Email the final proposal to maine.epscor@maine.edu.

Deadline and Timeline:

- Applications due by **March 28**
- Announcement of awards by **April 30**
- Funding available for **FY25 - FY26** [May 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026]
- Reports on progress will be due on **December 15th**.

Proposal Format

Title of the Proposal: [max 100 characters]

Proposers: (include first and last name, title, full affiliation, and email address)

Project Description: [max 3 pages] (Include the intellectual merit of the project, along with the questions that are considered and the methods to address them. Emphasize why this proposal is important, system-wide impact, and any relevant background or context along with references.)

How the proposed activities will generate additional funding for the project or for the university: [max 3 pages] (This may include, without being limited to, targeting external funding, or targeting a certain enrollment increase.)



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Budget Table: (Please add more rows as necessary.)

Item/Expenditure	Cost	# Needed	Total
Total:			

Budget Justification: (Please include a brief explanation for each of the proposed expenses.)

Timeline: (Please include the timeline for using the budgeted expenses, along with the timeline for the expected deliverables measured by the proposed metrics and the target for securing additional funding.)

Report Format

Report for
[NAME OF PROPOSAL]
Date Submitted: XXXXXXX
(Due Date: December 15, 2025)

Major accomplishments: (Summarize the major accomplishments achieved as a result of the project.)

Personnel Involved: (List the individuals who contributed to the project and/or were supported by the project. Please include first and last name, full title and affiliation, and role in the project)

External funding: (Share what external funds are being pursued and the amount of the funding.)