Lewis-Burke Associates LLC

Funding Opportunity: AFOSR Releases FY 2012 BAA

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The Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR), which administers the basic science programs of the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), recently released its fiscal year (FY) 2012 broad agency announcement (BAA) detailing funding interests across a range of scientific disciplines. As with most Department of Defense (DOD) research entities, AFOSR releases an annual BAA broadly describing its priorities rather than issuing solicitations in targeted areas. Investigators are invited to submit white papers or full proposals to AFOSR program managers in response to the BAA.

While last summer's *Budget Control Act* (debt ceiling agreement) mandated a $487 billion reduction in planned defense spending over the next decade, Air Force basic research was largely protected in a nod to the importance of research to ensuring that the Air Force retains its technological advantage despite budgetary constraints. Further, the defense Strategic Guidance released in January by President Obama and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta identifies air power as a key component of the future U.S. military enterprise in anticipation of potential conflicts in the Middle East and Asia Pacific despite recommending a reduction in ground forces. With this in mind, AFOSR should remain an emphasis for researchers as it is likely to fare better than other defense research accounts.

The BAA outlines AFOSR research interests across its Aerospace, Chemical and Material Sciences; Physics and Electronics; and Mathematics, Information and Life Sciences directorates. While each directorate includes a broad range of subcategories of interest to the Air Force, numerous DOD priorities are evident as cross-cutting themes throughout the BAA. These include advanced materials, alternative energy and energy conservation, advanced sensing, communications, cybersecurity, modeling and simulation, data for decision making, and information systems and networks. Many of these themes align with the seven defense science and technology priorities previously announced by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering Zach Lemnios and the AFOSR technology horizons of Inherently Intrusion-Resistant Cyber Networks; Trusted Highly-Autonomous Decision-Making Systems; Hyper-Precision Air Delivery in Difficult Environments; and Fractionated, Composable, Survivable Remote-Piloted Systems, recently discussed by AFOSR Director Thomas Russell.

Topic Areas: Areas of interest to each of the AFOSR directorates follow – detailed descriptions of specific programs are included in the complete BAA.

<u>Aerospace, Chemical and Material Sciences</u>:

- Aero-Structure Interaction and Control
- Complex Materials and Structures
- Energy, Power and Propulsion

<u>Physics and Electronics</u>:

- Complex Electronics and Fundamental Quantum Processes
- Plasma Physics and High Energy Density Nonequilibrium Processes
- Optics, Electromagnetics, Communication, and Signal Processing

Mathematics, Information, and Life Sciences (RSL)

- Information and Complex Networks Research
- Decision-Making Research
- Dynamical Systems, Optimization, and Control Research
- Natural Materials and Systems Research

The BAA also contains information about non-core programs funded through the DOD University Research Initiatives (URI) account. Information about these programs, including the Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI) and Defense University Research Instrumentation Program (DURIP), is for background, as proposals are solicited through separate BAAs released later in the year. Other "special programs" mentioned in the BAA but for which proposals are requested separately include the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI) Program, and the Young Investigator Research Program (YIP). Lewis-Burke will provide updates on relevant programs as BAAs are released.

Letters of Intent: Not applicable. However, researchers can begin the application process by submitting a white paper to the appropriate AFOSR program manager. Researchers may also choose to submit a full proposal, but providing a white paper for program manager comment is encouraged.

Due Dates: The BAA will remain open until another is released, likely in the spring of 2013.

Total Funding and Award Size: AFOSR indicates that a total of $350 million is available for awards through the BAA. The BAA encourages proposals for $200,000-$400,000 per year for up to five years. Although AFOSR does not precisely state the number of awards it intends to make in FY 2012, the BAA notes that AFOSR managed about 2,500 awards during FY 2011.

Eligibility and Limitations: The BAA is open to "all responsible applicants from industry and academia."

Sources and Additional Background:

- The complete BAA is available by clicking on the "AFOSR BAA's" button at http://www.wpafb.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=8127.

- Additional information about AFOSR and its research priorities is at http://www.wpafb.af.mil/afrl/afosr/.

- Information about the AFOSR 2012 Spring Review, including slide presentations from AFOSR program managers, is at https://community.apan.org/afosr/spring_review_2012/p/agenda.aspx.