

ARMY RESEARCH OFFICE PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (HSAP)

FISCAL YEAR 2010

Broad Agency Announcement W911NF-10-R-0001



U.S. Army RDECOM Contracting Center
Research Triangle Park
P. O. BOX 12211
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211

Proposals Due: No later than 31 December 2009



OVERVIEW INFORMATION

- **Agency Name(s)** - U.S. Army Research Office, P.O. Box 12211, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211
- **Issuing Acquisition Office** - U.S. Army RDECOM Contracting Center, RTP, P.O. Box 12211, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211
- **Funding Opportunity Title** – Army Research Office Program Announcement for the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP)
- **Announcement Type** - This is the initial announcement.
- **Funding Opportunity Number** - W911NF-10-R-0001
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s)** - 12.431- Basic Scientific Research
- **Dates** - All proposals must be received via grants.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Thursday, 31 December 2009

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Army Research Office (ARO) intends to conduct a pilot youth science program, the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP), that will fund the science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) apprenticeship of promising high school juniors and seniors to work in a university structured research environment under the direction of existing ARO-sponsored principal investigators (PI) serving as mentors. Awards will be made as add-ons to existing single-investigator grants originally awarded under an ARO Broad Agency Announcement that have at least 12 months' period of performance remaining from the date of HSAP proposal submission. The overall objectives of HSAP include: ensuring a high quality and high quantity STEM workforce in the US; fostering high school student interest in STEM subject areas; facilitating follow-on student opportunities including university enrollment and DoD scholarships/internships; and ultimately exposing the apprentices to the attractive, meaningful, and challenging military and civilian career STEM opportunities.

The mentor is principally responsible for identifying meaningful and significant duties and responsibilities under the auspices of the current grant, and will provide the day-to-day guidance and oversight for the apprentice. The apprentice must be at least a junior in high school, i.e., started the Fall semester of their junior year. Since no per diem is provided, the apprentice will typically be physically proximate to the hosting university; although there is no exclusive proximity requirement. The government bears no responsibility financially incident to travel. The period of work should be full time during the summer months. However, weekends during the school year can be proposed if it can be demonstrated that the apprentice would be engaged in a continuous fashion to be meaningfully and substantially involved, and the hours are not less than 4 hours per week.

Additionally, Grantees are responsible for compliance with all applicable federal and state child labor laws. ARO will provide funding to support the student at a gross rate of \$10/hour for a total of up to 300 hours per apprentice. Any material costs should be borne under the allowable scope of the basic grant. The total period of performance cannot exceed 12 months. Each basic grant can have up to two apprentices. The apprentice, through the grantee, will be required to prepare and provide ARO a brief report on the research, work effort, and accomplishments achieved as a final deliverable.

Mentors can actively recruit for apprentices. In addition, HSAP opportunities will be announced through the Army Educational Outreach Program website (www.usaeop.com). Apprentice applications must be submitted via the AEOP website. Selection criteria will include: previously demonstrated abilities and interests in STEM (i.e., extracurricular activities such as science clubs/science fairs); overall scholastic achievement, aptitude and interest areas; recommendations of high school teachers and administrative personnel; and interviews. The PI will have final selection authority for students; no student will be assigned to a lab without the PI's approval.

Add-on awards require the PI submit a short proposal. The proposals should clearly articulate the meaningful research that the apprentice will conduct along with the strategy for mentorship and facilitation of follow-on opportunities (e.g., university attendance). Proposals shall not exceed three pages. The following information is required on page 1 in order to process your proposal: 1) Solicitation Number W911NF-10-R-0001, 2) current grant number, 3) current proposal number and 4) name of the current Grants Officer Representative (GOR).

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Awards resulting from this solicitation will support the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP), that will fund the science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) apprenticeship of promising high school juniors and seniors to work in a university structured research environment. Approximately \$360,000.00 is expected to be available in support of the HSAP Program. All awards will be based on merit competition following evaluations by a panel of scientists at the ARO. Awards will be made by modifications to existing grants and will not exceed \$3,000.00 per apprentice. Each modification can have up to two apprentices with a not to exceed amount of \$6,000.00.

Please note: Recruitment and selection procedures for students affected by an award under this solicitation must comply with Section 2000d of Title 42, United States Code, which provides: *No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

This competition is open to existing single-investigator grant recipients. Such grants must have been awarded under an ARO Broad Agency Announcement and must have at least 12 months' period of performance remaining from the date of HSAP proposal submission.

Cost sharing or matching is not required for this program.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

This announcement may be accessed from the ARO website <http://www.aro.army.mil/baa> under Funding Opportunities, Open Broad Agency Announcements (BAA). Paper copies may be obtained by writing to US Army RDECOM Contracting Center, RTP Division, CCRD-RT, PO Box 12211, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Grants.gov Registration must be accomplished prior to application submission. (see Section VI. E for registration instructions)

Proposals must be submitted in the following format through grants.gov:

A. Apply through the Grants.gov APPLY portal, <http://www.Grants.gov/Apply>. A Grant Application Package is available for download through the Grants.gov Apply portal under CFDA Number 12.431/Funding Opportunity Number W911NF-10-R-0001. The following documents are mandatory: (1) Application for Federal Assistance (Research and Related) (SF 424 (R&R)), and (2) the Attachments Form.

- 1) The Application for Federal Assistance form, SF 424 (R&R), must be fully completed. Block 11, "Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project," must reference the research topic area being addressed in the effort by identifying the specific paragraph from Part I. Block #16 (Estimated Project Funding) must agree with the budget summary submitted in the proposal; The form SF 424 (R&R) cover page must be typed using upper and lower case letters.
- 2) Research and Related Budget form, Sections A-K (as needed). The Research & Related Budget-Cumulative Budget form will reflect the total costs; **This program will not require Senior/Key Persons only students at the rate of \$10/hour for a total of up to 300 hours. However, because this is a mandatory fill under First and Last name type Not Applicable. Under Requested Salary, Fringe Benefits, and Funds Requested fill in with \$0.00. Place the costs for the student under Section B, Other Personnel. Please Note: Maximum amount proposed can not exceed \$3,000.00 per student. (2 per award)**

- 3) Once the E-Business POC has authorized privileges to the AOR, the AOR will receive an email notification that they have been given authorization. The AOR may then proceed to submit applications to Grants.gov. To find the application on Grants.gov, follow the link <http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do> and enter the BAA number in the "Search by Funding Opportunity Number:" block. For application instructions, go to <http://www.grants.gov/Apply>. The training demonstration at <http://www.grants.gov/CompleteApplication> will assist AORs in the application process.
- 4) You **MUST** open and complete the form entitled Application for Federal Assistance, SF 424 (R&R) after registration, as this form will automatically populate data fields in other forms. If you encounter any problems, contact customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or at support@grants.gov. If you forget your user name or password, follow the instructions provided in the Credential Provider tutorial. Tutorials may be printed by right-clicking on the tutorial and selecting "Print".
- 5) Each proposal must be typed using Times New Roman, 12-point font with 1-inch margins on 8½ x 11-inch white paper, one-sided, and single-spaced. The form SF 424 (R&R) cover page must be typed using upper and lower case letters. **Proposals are limited to 3 pages.** This includes the technical proposal. These pages must be numbered consecutively. Pages exceeding these limits will not be considered in the proposal evaluation. The Grants.Gov forms, SF 424 (R&R) and the Research and Related Budget forms are not included in the page count.
- 6) Proposals transmitted online via the Grants.gov APPLY portal must be date/time stamped by the server as submitted by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Friday, 31 December 2009. Be advised that Grants.gov applicants have been experiencing system slowness and validation issues which may impact the time required submitting proposals. After proposals are uploaded to grants.gov, the submitter receives an email indicating the proposal has been submitted and that grants.gov will take up to two days to validate the proposal. As it is possible for grants.gov to reject the proposal during this process, it is **STRONGLY** recommended that any electronic-copy proposals be uploaded at least two days before the deadline established in the solicitation so that it will not be received late and be ineligible for award consideration.
- 7) Should the site of Grants.gov not be operational on the date proposals are due, the deadline is extended to the same time of the first day when the site is in operation.
- 8) Only proposals submitted in grants.gov will be accepted. Hard copy submission will not be accepted.

NOTE: Prospective grantees must complete several steps in order to participate in the Grants.gov application process. Starting early is extremely important as it may take several weeks to complete the processes necessary to submit an application through the Grants.gov Apply portal.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION :

A. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria. Primary evaluation criteria (of equal importance to each other) are:

1. Quality of the overall research experience proposed for the student to include: level of involvement in research, significance of student's work to the PI's research;
2. PI's proposed plan to assure student understands Army's interest in the research and how the student's contributions will benefit the Army;
3. Proposed follow-on STEM experiences for the student (i.e. PI provides other STEM enrichment opportunities for students beyond HSAP)

B. Review and Selection Process: Scientists and engineers of the ARO will evaluate proposals according to the above criteria. The most meritorious proposals will be recommended for award.

C. Selection Announcement and Award Dates: The modifications to existing grants are expected to be in place on or around January 2010. This date should be cited as the start date for the proposal performance period (see Proposal Cover – SF 424 R&R) and for budgetary purposes.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

A. Award Notices: When the awards are approved, ARO will send written notification to all principal investigators. The Army procurement office will contact the college/university business office to initiate award processes. Initial contact will be made with the individual whose name and number is provided in section 19 of the Proposal Cover (SF 424 R&R).

B. National Policy Requirements: All awards require certifications of compliance with national policy requirements. Statutes and government-wide regulations require some certifications to be submitted at the time of proposal submission. These include Appendix A to 32 CFR Part 25 regarding debarment, suspension, and other matters; Appendix C to 32 CFR Part 25 regarding drug-free workplace; and Appendix A to 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying. Full text of these certifications is available at <http://www.aro.army.mil/forms/forms2.html>. Proposers are certifying compliance with these regulations by signing the Proposal Cover Page SF 424 (R&R).

C. Reporting: Detailed instructions for reporting the additional requirements in your grant for the HSAP efforts will be provided at time of award.

D. Other: In compliance with the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6306 and with the intent of this program to increase university capabilities in science, mathematics, and engineering

education and/or research capabilities, title to equipment will be vested with the university without further obligation to the government.

E. Grants.gov Registration

1. Registration - Each organization that desires to submit applications via Grants.gov must complete a one-time registration. See <http://www.Grants.gov/GetStarted>. The following steps are required:

a. Request a DUNS Number – Follow the instructions at:

<http://www.Grants.gov/RequestaDUNS> to obtain a DUNS number. It is highly recommended that you request the number by telephone at 1-866-705-5711. This will take about 10 minutes to complete and there is no charge. **NOTE: Once the telephone registration is completed, you must wait 24 hours before attempting to use that DUNS for registration in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR).**

b. Register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) – Go to

<http://www.Grants.gov/CCRRegister> and click on the “Help” button to locate the tutorial. It is recommended that you print the tutorial for reference and follow the instructions in the link above. You are required to designate an Electronic Business Point of Contact (E-Business POC) and a Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN) in CCR. It is important to provide the MPIN to the E-Business POC. For assistance with the CCR, contact the Assistance Center at 1-888-227-2423 or at CCR@dlis.dla.mil. You may also access the CCR Handbook at <http://www.ccr.gov/handbook.asp>. **VERY IMPORTANT: Knowing the MPIN and who is designated as your organization’s E-Business POC in the CCR is a significant step in the process. This person will function as the organizational agent to approve personnel who can submit binding proposals on behalf of your organization.**

c. Install the appropriate software package – Authorized Organizational

Representatives (AORs) approved by the E-Business POC are the individuals that will be given the authority to submit proposals on behalf of your organization. All AORs must download and install the appropriate software package on their computer workstation by following the instructions at <http://www.Grants.gov/DownloadViewer>. This small, free program will allow AORs to access, complete, and submit applications electronically and securely. If you encounter any problems, contact customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov.

d. Register with the Credential Provider – AORs must register with the Credential Provider. AORs must **wait a minimum of 3 business days** for the CCR to activate the organization’s account before attempting to register with the Credential Provider at <https://apply.Grants.gov/OrcRegister> and click on the “Help” button to locate the tutorial. Print the tutorial for reference and follow the instructions in the link above. Record the user ID and the password that you enter because you will need this information to register with Grants.gov as an AOR. AORs must wait approximately 20 minutes after completing the Credential Provider registration before proceeding to the next step of registering with Grants.gov. If you encounter any problems, the

Credential Provider may be reached at 1-800-386-6820 or via email at pkihelp@orc.com.

e. Register with Grants.gov – AORs must register with Grants.gov, utilizing their User ID and Password obtained from registering with the Credential Provider. Go to <https://apply.Grants.gov/Grantsgovregister> and click on the “Help” button to locate the tutorial for reference and follow the instructions in the link above. After you have completed the Grants.gov registration process, you will receive a confirmation that indicates whether your registration was successful. After an AOR successfully registers with Grants.gov, an email will be generated to your organization’s E-Business POC to notify them that an individual has registered in Grants.gov to be an AOR capable of submitting applications in Grants.gov on behalf of your organization. AORs will not be able to submit electronic applications until they receive authorization from the E-Business POC. Normally, the E-Business POC should process these requests within one (1) business day. If you encounter any problems, please contact customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov.

f. Designation of Privileges to the AOR – The E-Business POC is the sole authority of the organization with the capability of designating or revoking an individual’s ability to submit grant applications on behalf of their organization through Grants.gov. Once the E-Business POC receives the email notification from the individual wishing to be recognized as an AOR, the E-Business POC should go to: <https://apply.Grants.gov/agency/AorMgrGetID> and click on the “Help” button to locate the tutorial, then log into the system using the DUNS number and Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN) designated for their organization when CCR registration was performed. Once in the system, the E-Business POC should follow the instructions for designating privileges to the AOR. If the E-Business POC cannot locate the CCR MPIN, contact the CCR Assistance Center at 1-888-227-2423 or at CCR@dliis.dla.mil. The User Guide is found at: http://www.Grants.gov/GrantsGov_UST_Grantee/!SSL!/WebHelp/userguide.doc

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Questions regarding program policy, guidance, and administration should be directed to:

ARO Youth Science Program Manager:

Ms. Ashley Wade, 919-549-4205, ashley.wade@us.army.mil