

NEWS

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Announcements

Endeavor Grants and Agreements Training

January 15, 2025 (1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.)

Zoom code: 89128765455

Training in Auburn University's new electronic research administration system, Endeavor, will be offered with the ERAD team and the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP). These sessions are designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully use the new Endeavor system. We encourage you to attend the Zoom meeting, using the information above, to learn how to certify your research proposals.

Best Practices for Research Excellence Workshop

January 27, 2025 (8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) at the Brown-Kopel Engineering Student Achievement Center

All engineering faculty, staff, and graduate students involved in research who have not already completed in-person training are invited to attend the upcoming Best Practices for Research Excellence workshop.

Register [here](#).

Hanover Research Webinar

January 30, 2025 (11:00 a.m.)

NIH will be implementing multiple changes to the review process. This webinar session will cover the key considerations for faculty planning to submit to NIH after January 2025, including the information on the simplified review process for most research project grants, changes to the fellowship application, and more.

Register [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

Leading Engineering for America's Prosperity, Health, and Infrastructure (LEAP HI)

National Science Foundation, Directorate for Engineering (ENG), Division of Civil, Mechanical, and Manufacturing Innovation (CMMI)

Proposal due: July 15, 2026 (5:00 p.m. CT)

Areas of Interest: Infrastructure, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering

Total Award Amount: \$6,000,000-12,000,000

The goal of the LEAP HI program is to support the engineering research community in fulfilling its unique leadership role in advancing America's prosperity, health, and infrastructure by providing substantial funding and project duration to multi-investigator projects.

- LEAP HI supports ambitious projects that clearly articulate research plans for achieving impactful results that can be plausibly achieved in the requested funding period.
- LEAP HI proposals must demonstrate the need for a sustained research effort by a team and must include a Research Integration Plan that provides a timeline for research activities, explicit mechanisms for coordinating the component thrusts of the project, and ensuring effective communication among team members.
- LEAP HI proposals should clearly explain the expected contributions of the proposed engineering research to addressing critical societal needs.

Read more about this funding opportunity [here](#).

Small Research Grant Program

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Proposals due: February 16, 2025 (5:00 p.m. CT)

Areas of Interest: Environmental Contaminants, Data Collection

The NIH Small Research Grant Program supports small research projects that can be carried out in a short period of time with limited resources. This program supports different types of projects including pilot and feasibility studies, secondary analysis of existing data, self-contained research projects, development of research methodology, and development of new research technology.

NIH is aiming to improve the health of the Nation by conducting and supporting research about:

- the causes, diagnosis, prevention, and cure of human diseases
- the processes of human growth and development
- the biological effects of environmental contaminants
- the understanding of mental, addictive, and physical disorders
- directing programs for the collection, dissemination, and exchange of information in medicine and health, including the development and support of medical libraries and the training of medical librarians and other health information specialists

Read more about this funding opportunity [here](#).

Research Focus

Future Funding for Artificial Intelligence

The new National Academies Report [Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work](#) was released earlier this

month. This report gives both an overview and an in-depth explanation of AI and describes university planning and AI funding strategies over the coming year:

- **NSF invests \$20M to advance artificial intelligence technologies for the geosciences.** Visit the NSF [Collaborations in Artificial Intelligence and Geosciences \(CAIG\)](#) for more information.
- **NSF announces funding opportunity to train and expand the U.S. workforce across a range of key technologies.** For more information visit: [Experiential Learning for Emerging and Novel Technologies \(ExLENT\)](#).
- **NIH funds artificial intelligence research through its \$130 million program** which aims to generate data sets and best practices to facilitate the widespread adoption of AI in biomedical and behavioral research applications. Visit the [Bridge to Artificial Intelligence \(Bridge2AI\)](#) program for more information.
- **The Department of Energy Announces \$68 Million in Funding for Artificial Intelligence for Scientific Research.** Visit the [Advancements in Artificial Intelligence for Science](#) for more information.

This report evaluates recent advances in AI technology and their implications for economic productivity, job stability, and income inequality, identifying research opportunities and data needs to equip workers and policymakers to flexibly respond to AI developments.

The report also addresses the following key topics:

- **Advances in AI Technology:** Advances in neural networks and unannotated data sets have increased technical progress in AI, this can be seen through the development of generative AI such as ChatGPT. Steady progress has continued in other areas resulting in AI in robotics, self-driving cars, and the application of machine learning to large data sets. Despite these innovations there is much uncertainty about the future for AI and how to fix issues such as the "hallucinations" it experiences.
- **AI and Productivity:** While AI has increased productivity in certain professions (contact centers, software development, writing, and scientific discovery) it is uncertain if these benefits will be distributed equally. Without policy protections AI could lead to job losses, wage disparities, increased inequality, and poor worker satisfaction.
- **Workforce Implications:** Ultimately, AI does not pose a concern for large net job loss but instead could impact the labor market by shifting the demands for specific expertise. There is uncertainty on how demand will shift over time. Research estimates that more than 60 percent of current employment is in occupational specialties that did not exist in 1940.
- **Effects of Education and Training:** AI has the potential to transform education by allowing students to make is more personalized, engaging, and cost effective thus improving learning outcomes. Further private and public resources will be needed to improve online education, safeguard AI-enhanced education, test the effectiveness of AI in education, and train teachers to properly use AI tools.

As AI shifts demands for skilled workers, access to continuing education and retraining programs will be key to enabling the workforce to adapt to the changing jobs environment.

Adapted from the December edition of the Research Development and Grant Writing Newsletter

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