

## Tennessee EPSCoR history

Tennessee became eligible as an EPSCoR state early in 2002. The state had long hovered at the brink of eligibility, based on the fraction received entities in Tennessee of the total NSF research funding to all states over the prior three years. At that time the limit was 0.70% and Tennessee was only slightly below the limit. The first required step was the submission of a planning grant proposal. Tennessee received the award in November, 2003. At that point, Tennessee researchers were eligible for the co-funding and outreach programs at NSF. Tennessee became eligible automatically for Department of Energy and Department of Defense EPSCoR programs.

The planning grant allowed for a number of meetings to solicit input from faculty at a variety of institutions in Tennessee. Following the first series of five meetings, a report was issued which identified four thematic topics of interest across the state:

- Biomedical/Health Sciences
- Environmental Science and Engineering
- Materials Science
- Computational Science and Applications

Meetings were held on each of the four topics to facilitate faculty interactions and encourage collaborative research. These were all held in middle Tennessee locations to maximize accessibility and all were well attended.

Early in 2005 NSF funding had increased to the point where Tennessee no longer met EPSCoR eligibility criteria. In April, 2006, Tennessee was “graduated” from EPSCoR. Under policies of the program, Tennessee retained connection to the NSF program for three years, until April 2009. This connectivity included access to co-funding and participation in the national EPSCoR meetings. DOE continued the current awards for the full award period, while not accepting new proposals from Tennessee post graduation. DOD eligibility has been continuous since 2003.

In 2006, Tennessee hosted a cyberinfrastructure workshop for the EPSCoR states. The meeting we held in May in Nashville, Tennessee. The final report is available on the Tennessee EPSCoR web site, <http://ciworkshop.utsi.edu/> .

NSF reviews the EPSCoR status annually and the limit for eligibility changed over time to the current value of 0.75%. Tennessee, once again, met the NSF criteria to be an EPSCoR state in September 2007. DOE, DOD and NASA currently include Tennessee to their eligibility lists.

As part of the planning process, a Tennessee State EPSCoR Committee was established to provide oversight to the program. It consisted of representatives from the state government, state legislature, the University of Tennessee system, Tennessee Board of Regents, colleges and universities, and private industry.

During the periods that Tennessee has been involved with EPSCoR, over \$27 million in awards are attributable to EPSCoR participation. In the case of co-funded awards and state funded matching grants, the entire amount of the research funding is included in this total. Updated award lists and totals are provided at each State EPSCoR Committee meeting.