Florida Space Research Program (FSRP)

2026–27 Program Announcement and Request for Proposals (RFP)

Supporting Statewide University Involvement in Space Research and Technology Development to Expand and Diversify Florida's Economy

Sponsored by
Florida Space Grant Consortium (FSGC) — www.floridaspacegrant.org
Space Florida — www.spaceflorida.gov

Key Dates (2026–27 Funding Cycle)

- **March 16, 2026** – Request for Proposals Issued
- **April 17, 2026** – Notice of Intent and Abstract Due (email to fsgc@ucf.edu)
- **May 29, 2026** – Full Proposals Due
- **July 31, 2026** – Awards Announced
- **On or after August 3, 2026** – Awards Made (subject to receipt of NASA funds)

Program Purpose

The Florida Space Grant Consortium Research Program (FSRP) supports the expansion and diversification of Florida's aerospace economy by fostering statewide university engagement in space-related research, technology development, engineering, education, and workforce training. The program emphasizes student research experiences and faculty-led projects that align with Florida's space industry priorities and NASA mission needs.

Funding is intended to support research activities that: - Align with the priorities of NASA's five Mission Directorates; - Position investigators to compete successfully for larger federal or industry-sponsored research awards; - Attract and leverage additional non-FSGC funding; - Generate technologies with strong commercial potential; - Promote Florida's leadership in emerging aerospace and space-enabling technologies; and/or - Address workforce development needs critical to Florida's space industry.

Program Focus Areas

The FSRP supports projects aligned with NASA's five Mission Directorates:

- **Science Mission Directorate (SMD)**
  Earth Science, Planetary Science, Heliophysics, Astrophysics, and Biological and Physical Sciences

- **Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate (ESDMD)**
  Moon to Mars Transportation Systems, Lunar Systems Development, and Human Exploration Requirements and Architecture

- **Space Operations Mission Directorate (SOMD)**
  International Space Station, Space Transportation, Space and Flight Support, and Commercial Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Development

- **Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD)**
  Early-Stage Innovation and Partnerships, Technology Maturation, and Technology Demonstration

- **Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD)**
  Airspace Operations and Safety, Advanced Air Vehicles, Integrated Aviation Systems, Transformative Aeronautics Concepts, and Aerosciences Evaluation and Test Capabilities

Projects may address space exploration, scientific discovery, spaceflight systems, enabling technologies, or dual-use technologies with terrestrial and non-aerospace applications. Appendix A provides links to NASA Mission Directorate program descriptions.

NASA Technology Transfer Opportunity

NASA has released formerly-patented agency technologies into the public domain, making its government-developed technologies freely available for unrestricted commercial use. In addition to the release of these technologies, a searchable database now is available that catalogs thousands of expired NASA patents already in the public domain. NASA's patent portfolio is managed by the agency's Technology Transfer Program (https://technology.nasa.gov/).

NASA Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations

The link contains interactive tables and charts with budget details for NASA in fiscal year 2026. It also links to key budget documents, FYI's analyses of appropriations proposals and outcomes, and major actions in this budget cycle.

https://www.aip.org/fyi/fy2026-national-aeronautics-and-space-administration

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Eligibility

Eligible applicants include faculty researchers from FSGC-affiliated universities and colleges (see Appendix B). Non-affiliated Florida institutions, community colleges, industry, and other organizations are eligible **only if** the project includes meaningful collaboration with an FSGC affiliate and the **proposal is submitted by the FSGC affiliate**.

Because FSGC is funded by NASA under a Cooperative Agreement/Training Grant, the following conditions apply:

- Principal Investigators (PIs) who are U.S. citizens may request direct support (e.g., salary, travel).
- PIs who are non–U.S. citizens may submit proposals and be selected for funding; however, **no direct support** (salary, stipend, travel, or similar costs) may be provided to non–U.S. citizen PIs from FSRP funds.

- Students supported under this program **must be U.S. citizens**. Permanent residents are not eligible.
- Each PI may submit **only one proposal per FSRP category**.

Prior Awards and Reporting Requirements

- PIs with outstanding final reports from previous FSRP awards are ineligible until all required reports are received.
- PIs with active or recently funded FSRP awards must include a brief progress update in their proposal.
- PIs who received FSRP funding prior to 2025 are eligible to apply, provided all reporting and eligibility requirements are met.

Award Categories and Funding

Awards will be made across the five NASA Mission Directorates. FSGC and Space Florida anticipate funding **at least ten (10) projects** during the 2026–27 cycle.

- **Maximum Award Amount:** $25,000 per project
- **Performance Period:** Up to 12 months

The following table describes the five Mission Directorates.

FSRP Category	Mission Directorate Program
Science Mission Directorate (SMD)	Earth Science Planetary Sciences Heliophysics Astrophysics Biological and Physical Sciences (BPS)
Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate (ESDMD)	Moon to Mars Transportation System Moon To Mars Lunar Systems Development Human Exp Requirements & Architecture
Space Operations Mission Directorate (SOMD)	International Space Station Space Transportation Space and Flight Support Commercial LEO Development
Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD)	Early Stage Innovation and Partnerships Technology Maturation Technology Demonstration
Aeronautics Mission Directorate (ARMD)	Airspace Operations and Safety Program Advanced Air Vehicles Program Integrated Aviation Systems Program Transformative Aero Concepts Program Aerosciences Eval. & Test Capab. Program

Indirect Costs

Based on the indirect cost rate requested by FSGC from our prime sponsor, NASA, all proposals under this RFP will carry the flow down indirect cost rate of 10% (to be calculated on total direct cost). Master agreements(s) have been executed between UCF, acting on behalf of FSGC, and each affiliate member institution. The executed Master Agreement will be the base document for all awards received by your institution from FSGC via the respective project specific Task Orders to be executed for each awarded project.

Flow-down clauses in the Master Agreement, amongst others, include restriction on indirect cost to 10% of total direct cost, no other administrative costs, except for indirect cost, will be supported by UCF funds and foregone overhead may be used by your institution to meet mandatory cost share requirements. Support for these projects is solely from the NASA Florida Space Grant Consortium and Space Florida.

Cost Sharing

The Consortium is required to match its prime award from NASA. Therefore, applicants will be required to match **50%** of the requested funds with non-federal funds from their institution. *Foregone overhead may be used to meet mandatory cost share requirements.* Match can be in the form of either cash or in-kind, including waived indirect costs, academic release for faculty members, student stipends, instrument, and computer time. *Equipment purchase and/or cost of pro-rated use cannot be considered as match.*

Equipment Policy

Equipment purchases are not permitted. Equipment is defined as any non-expendable item with an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more, or a lower threshold if defined by the applicant's institution.

Proposal Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted as a **single PDF file** via the FSGC online portal at www.floridaspacegrant.org. Applicants must register using a valid university email address or an email address associated with the proposing organization.

Failure to follow submission instructions will result in disqualification.

A **Notice of Intent** (NOI) is required and must include: - Project title - PI name and institution – Mission Directorate - A project abstract (≤500 words)

The NOI must be emailed to **fsgc@ucf.edu** by the stated deadline.

Proposal Format and Content

Proposals are limited to **10 pages**, exclusive of items 1, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 below.

Required sections include:

1. Signed Cover Page
2. Project Summary (≤300 words)

3. Project Significance
4. Work Plan
5. Prior State of Knowledge and Advancement of the Field
6. Relevance to NASA Mission Directorates and/or Florida Space Industry Goals
7. Potential for Continued or Follow-on Support
8. Key Personnel and Student Involvement
9. References
10. Budget and Budget Justification
11. Previous Funding Status (if applicable)
12. Letters of Support (if any)
13. CVs of PI and Co-PIs

Formatting requirements: 12-point font, 1-inch margins, numbered pages. No supplementary materials will be accepted.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be peer-reviewed by academic and industry experts using the following criteria:

1. Scientific and technical merit
2. Advancement beyond the current state of knowledge
3. Alignment with NASA and Florida space priorities
4. Potential for sustained development or commercialization
5. Qualifications of the project team
6. Soundness of the work plan, budget, and schedule
7. Quality and extent of student involvement

Additional considerations may include cost-share strength, geographic diversity, early-career investigators, and industry–academic collaboration.

Intellectual Property and Publications

Due to the use of NASA funding for this grant program, grant recipients shall follow all applicable NASA rules and regulations for the ownership and use of intellectual property developed under any grant project. As sponsors of the grant program, FSGC and UCF have no ownership or control of such intellectual property, unless a sponsor is also a direct participant, or intended beneficiary, of any grant project. In such cases, intellectual property rights shall be covered under a separate agreement with the grant recipient.

Publications resulting from this work must acknowledge support as follows:

> "This project was supported by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration through the University of Central Florida's NASA Florida Space Grant Consortium and Space Florida."

FSGC will require a copy of any publication within 60 days of the publication date.

International Compliance

Projects involving international recipients must comply with all applicable export control laws and federal regulations. Proposals that feature international participation should include a brief section on their plans to comply with federal requirements, or describe why such requirements do not apply to their project

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Reporting

A final technical report is due 13 months after commencement of project. This final report may contribute to follow on proposals that can be submitted to other agencies for continued support of the project. The grant program sponsors may coordinate with Principal Investigators to submit their final reports or abstracts for presentation and publication at upcoming Space Congress events and other space-related conferences. FSGC may establish a special seminar or conference where all funded research will be reported.

FSGC may contact PIs and students of approved projects from time to time for additional reporting information.

Any financial or programmatic changes, including student involvement, will require prior approval of FSGC before such changes can be implemented. Failure to meet the proposal goals in relation to student recruitment for the project may result in reduced funding.

Since FSGC is a cooperative agreement with NASA, student demographics and other information are required for onward submission to NASA HQ as part of our annual report. We do not send individual information. All the information is aggregated and then compiled into our annual report to NASA. NASA in turn uses this information to present Space Grant program highlights to Congressional delegates to secure future years funding for the National Space Grant program through the NASA Education Office. A link to the demographic questionnaire will be emailed to all awardees.

Leveraged Funding

Proposers must indicate in their proposals whether their project is receiving funds from other sources, or whether they are involved in similar projects that are funded by state or federal grants. These other funding sources should be listed.

Confidential Information in Proposals

Patentable ideas, trade secrets, privileged or confidential commercial or financial information, disclosure of which may harm the proposer, should be included in proposals only when such information is necessary to convey an understanding of the proposed project. Such information must be clearly marked in the proposal and be appropriately labeled with a legend such as, "The following is (proprietary or confidential) information that (name of proposing organization) requests are not released to people outside UCF, except for purposes of review and evaluation."

New Technology Reporting

All NASA contractors, grantees, and NASA partners, have an obligation to report new technologies to NASA as required by their agreement. NASA CTSG requires all applicants to comply with this New Technology Report. The detailed guidelines are available online (https://invention.nasa.gov/.

Awardee Responsibility

- Recipients of the FSGC award must ensure that students being supported through this project are US citizens only (permanent residents are not allowed) and that the students submit their completed evaluation survey to FSGC (see section below on student evaluation survey).
- If a student, supported by these award funds, graduates before the end of the project, the final report must be collected in a timely manner from the student so that it can be incorporated into the researcher's final report when it is due.
- NASA STEM Gateway. This is the Office of STEM Engagement official system of record. The required information includes an abstract of the work and details of the students participating in the project along with a list of publications and presentations. Instructions will be sent before the end of the award.

Student Evaluation Survey

The Florida Space Grant Consortium (FSGC), in partnership with NASA, is committed to understanding the educational experiences, professional development, and career trajectories of students supported through Space Grant programs. As part of our annual reporting requirements to NASA, FSGC must submit a comprehensive program evaluation assessing the outcomes and impacts of its research and fellowship awards.

Completion of student evaluation surveys is a condition of all FSGC awards. Student participants will be required to complete a brief online survey at both the beginning and conclusion of their Space Grant-supported activity. These surveys are a critical component of FSGC's evaluation process and provide essential data for assessing program effectiveness, student outcomes, and alignment with NASA's STEM workforce development goals.

Given the heightened accountability requirements for federally funded programs, full participation is mandatory. NASA requires evaluation of all supported activities, and student feedback is the primary mechanism for demonstrating measurable outcomes. The surveys require only a few minutes to complete but are vital to maintaining compliance and ensuring the continuation of Space Grant funding that directly benefits students across Florida's colleges and universities.

The surveys will be administered directly to student awardees by the FSGC program evaluator, Dr. Bonnie Swan. The FSGC office will notify each student of the evaluation requirement via email, with the faculty advisor or Principal Investigator copied on the communication. Faculty are asked to reinforce the importance of timely and complete survey participation and to ensure that students are informed of the specific FSGC award type they have received (e.g., Fellowship, Scholarship, or Research Award).

Contact Information

Dr. Jaydeep Mukherjee
Director, NASA Florida Space Grant Consortium
12354 Research Parkway, Room 218
Orlando, FL 32826-0650
Phone: 407-823-6177
Email: jaydeep.mukherjee@ucf.edu (preferred)

2026 Florida Space Research Program
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PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Project Name: _____

Faculty or Industry PI: _____

Department/Institution: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Budget Request: Note: A detailed budget justification is required.
Grant $_____
Matching Contribution $_____
Total Project Cost $_____

Please identify which FSRP Category is applicable to your project (check only one that is most appropriate):
___ Science Mission Directorate (SMD)
___ Space Operations Mission Directorate (SOMD)
___ Space Exploration Development Mission Directorate (SEMD)
___ Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD)
___ Aeronautics Mission Directorate (ARMD)

Does your project have any student participation? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, how many? _____

Start Date: _____ Ending Date: _____

_____ _____
(Signature) Faculty PI / Date (Signature) Department Head / Date

_____ _____
Name Name

_____ _____
Title Title

_____
(Signature) Institute Official / Date

_____
Name

_____
Title

Appendix A. Strategic Framework for NASA

I. NASA Mission Directorates

NASA's Mission to pioneer the future in space exploration, scientific discovery, and aeronautics research, draws support from four Mission Directorates, each with a specific responsibility.

- Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD): Research conducted by ARMD directly benefits today's air transportation system, the aviation industry, and the passengers and businesses who rely on aviation every day. ARMD scientists, engineers, programmers, test pilots, facilities managers and strategic planners are focused on aviation's future. They design, develop and test advanced technologies that will make aviation much more environmentally friendly, maintain safety in more crowded skies, and ultimately transform the way we fly. NASA's aeronautics research is primarily conducted at four NASA centers: Ames Research Center and Armstrong Flight Research Center in California, Glenn Research Center in Ohio, and Langley Research Center in Virginia (https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/armd/)

- The Science Mission Directorate (SMD) The Science Mission Directorate (SMD) is an organization where discoveries in one scientific discipline have a direct route to other areas of study. This flow is something extremely valuable and is rare in the scientific world. NASA Science missions circle the Earth, the Sun, the Moon, Mars, and many other destinations within our Solar System, including spacecraft that look out even further into our universe. (https://science.nasa.gov/)

- The Human Exploration and Operations (HEO)
  Please note that NASA has organized its Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate into two areas: Exploration Systems Development (https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/exploration-systems-development) and Space Operations (https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/space-operations-mission-directorate).

  The Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate defines and manages systems development for programs critical to NASA's Artemis program and planning for NASA's Moon to Mars exploration approach. ESDMD manages the human exploration system development for lunar orbital, lunar surface, and Mars exploration.

  The Space Operations Mission Directorate maintains a continuous human presence in space for the benefit of people on Earth. The programs within the directorate are the heart of NASA's humans space exploration efforts, enabling Artemis, commercial space, science, and other agency missions through communication, launch services, research capabilities, and crew support.

- Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD). Technology drives exploration and the space economy. NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD) aims to transform future missions while ensuring American leadership in aerospace. STMD develops, demonstrates, and transfers new space technologies that benefit NASA, commercial, and other government missions. https://www.nasa.gov/space-technology-mission-directorate/

Please visit each NASA organization website to find detailed information about current projects and current areas of interest.

II. NASA Research Areas of Interest

NASA research priorities are defined by the Mission Directorates—Aeronautics Research, Science, Human Exploration and Operations, and Space Technology. Each Mission Directorate covers a major area of the Agency's research and technology development efforts. Research priorities for each of the Mission Directorates can be found at the following locations:

Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD)
Researchers responding to the ARMD should propose research that is aligned with one or more

of the ARMD programs. Proposers are directed to the following:

- ARMD Programs: https://www.nasa.gov/aeronautics/armd-solicitations/

Science Mission Directorate (SMD)

Detailed information on SMD research priorities is available at the following URLs:

- NASA Science Strategy: https://science.nasa.gov/about-us/science-strategy/
- Web pages for scientists and engineers who plan to propose or have submitted a proposal to a research solicitation from the Science Mission Directorate. https://science.nasa.gov/researchers
- Funding Opportunities: Grant Solicitations https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/sara/grant-solicitations

Human Exploration and Operations (HEO) Mission Directorate

Please note that NASA has organized its Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate into two areas: Exploration Systems Development (https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/exploration-systems-development) and Space Operations (https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/space-operations-mission-directorate).

For exploration Systems Development programs, please go to https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/exploration-systems-development and scroll down to ESDMD Programs.

For Space Operations programs, please go to https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/space-operations-mission-directorate and scroll down to Areas of Focus.

Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD)

For the Space Technology programs, please go to https://www.nasa.gov/space-technology-mission-directorate/ and click on “Program and Initiatives”.

III. NASA’s Technology Transfer Program

NASA's Technology Transfer Program ensures that innovations developed for exploration and discovery are broadly available to the public, maximizing the benefit to the Nation.
https://technology.nasa.gov/

APPENDIX B

FSGC Affiliates

Universities and Colleges

Bethune-Cookman University (Dr. Masood Poorandi) (poorandm@cookman.edu)

Broward College (Dr. Rolando Branly) (rbranly@broward.edu)

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Dr. Aroh Barjatya) (barjatya@erau.edu)

Eckerd College (Dr. Nazarré Merchant) (merchann@eckerd.edu)

Florida Atlantic University (Dr. Frederick Bloetscher) (fbloetsc@fau.edu)

Eastern Florida State College (Dr. Mevlut Guvendik) (guvendikm@easternflorida.edu)

Florida Gulf Coast University (Dr. Michael Fauerbach) (mfauerba@fgcu.edu)

Florida Institute of Technology (Ms. Carolyn Lockyer) (clockyer@fit.edu)

Florida International University (Dr. Berrin Tansel) (tanselb@fiu.edu)

Florida Polytechnic University (Dr. Kais Jribi) (KJribi@floridapoly.edu)

Florida State University (Dr. Alan Hanstein) (alan.hanstein@challengertlh.com)

Florida A&M University (Dr. Charles Weatherford) (charles.weatherford@famu.edu)

Miami Dade College (Dr. Carlos Genatios) (cgenatio@mdc.edu)

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University of Central Florida (Dr. Yunjun Xu) (Yunjun.Xu@ucf.edu)

University of Florida (Dr. Jamie Foster) (jfoster@ufl.edu)

University of Miami (Dr. Qingda Yang) (qdyang@miami.edu)

University of North Florida (Dr. Nirmal Patel) (npatel@unf.edu)

University of South Florida (Dr. Stephanie Carey) (scarey3@usf.edu)

University of West Florida (Dr. Amrita Gautam) (amishra1@uwf.edu)

Other Organizations

Astronauts Memorial Foundation (Mr. Thad Altman) (taltman@amfcse.org)

Kennedy Space Center (Ms. Patricia Gillis) (patricia.j.gillis@nasa.gov)

Orlando Science Center (Ms. Jill Goddard) (JGoddard@OSC.ORG)

Space Florida (Mr. Trevor Jones) (tjones@spaceflorida.gov)

SpaceTEC Partners, Inc (Mr. Steve Kane) (stevekane@spacetec.us)