

White House releases research and development budget priorities for FY 2019

August 17, 2017

Mick Mulvaney, Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Michael Kratsios, Deputy Assistant to the President at the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), issued a memo for the heads of executive departments and agencies regarding the budget priorities for research and development (R&D) in fiscal year (FY) 2019. The memo highlights R&D priority areas for formulating FY 2019 budget submissions, provides additional guidelines for balancing new priorities with existing demands, and encourages R&D investments that best serve the American people, according to OMB.

The main priority areas identified in the memo include American military superiority, homeland security, economic growth, energy independence, and public health. Following the lead of previous FY 2018 budget guidance, the memo emphasizes that federally-funded energy R&D should focus on private sector cooperation, particularly for commercialization and funding of later-stage R&D. The memo also encourages funding basic research that drives economic prosperity by empowering the private sector to take later-stage research to the marketplace.

The Priority Practices called out in the memo highlight increasing government accountability and efficiency, and direct agencies to ensure that R&D proposals do not duplicate existing projects, are based on sound science, and have the potential to contribute to the good of the American public. The memo also asks agencies to identify R&D projects that could be undertaken by the private industry sector, and to modify or eliminate projects for which federal involvement may no longer be necessary.

The Workforce and Education section of the memo presses for strong Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and apprenticeships to build a strong American workforce. In particular, it dictates that agencies should prioritize expansion of the STEM workforce to women and other underrepresented groups.

Source: Executive Office of the President
