



ASSOCIATION OF
PUBLIC &
LAND-GRANT
UNIVERSITIES

FY 2024 Appropriations Priorities

Defense

Final Request

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD)

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (S&T) (6.1 - 6.3)

APLU FY2024 Request: \$23.656 billion

FY2024 PBR = \$17.825 billion; FY2023 = \$22.317 billion; FY2022 = \$18.892 billion

To safeguard the national security of the United States and stay ahead of adversaries, it is critical our military lead in scientific and technological capabilities. The S&T program supports cutting-edge research that advances development of new defense and safety capabilities, warfare technologies, and weapon systems. Tomorrow's military capabilities depend on the R&D investments made today. Through partnerships with the research community, Department of Defense basic research can secure our nation's future military capabilities in areas such as quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and advanced autonomous systems.

BASIC RESEARCH (6.1)

APLU FY2024 Request: \$3.096 billion

FY2024 PBR = \$2.48 billion; FY2023 = \$2.920 billion; FY2022 = \$2.763 billion

Discoveries from defense basic research have led to paradigm shifts in military capabilities that are supporting the men and women in the military today. In addition to advocating for strong funding for all defense basic research efforts, APLU encourages a six percent increase from FY23 levels for each of the below basic research program elements. These requested funding levels are consistent with "Innovation: An American Imperative"¹ and the National Defense Strategy Commission's 2018 report², as well as the recent report from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS). The AAAS report recommends a sustained real growth rate above the rate of inflation of *at least* four percent for basic research across the federal government, with commensurate growth in applied research investment trajectories, in order to maintain U.S. research and development leadership internationally.³ This request level includes the recommended growth rate of four percent, plus an additional two percent to conservatively reflect inflation.

¹ Innovation Imperative, 2018. Available at <https://innovation-imperative.herokuapp.com/index.html>

² Providing for the Common Defense: The Assessments and Recommendations of the National Defense Strategy Commission, 2018. Available at <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/11/providing-common-defense>

³ American Academy of Arts and Sciences, "Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream" 2014. Updated 2018. Available at <https://innovation-imperative.herokuapp.com/index.html>

Agency/Account	Item	Program Element (PE)	APLU Request (in thousands)
Army RDT&E	Defense Research Sciences	601102A	\$415,338
Army RDT&E	University Research Initiatives	601103A	\$114,242
Army RDT&E	University and Industry Research Centers	601104A	\$128,906
Navy RDT&E	University Research Initiatives	601103N	\$156,219
Navy RDT&E	Defense Research Sciences	601153N	\$574,113
Air Force RDT&E	Defense Research Sciences	601102F	\$430,393
Air Force RDT&E	University Research Initiatives	601103F	\$218,564
Defense-Wide RDT&E	DTRA Basic Research Initiatives	601000BR	\$17,579
Defense-Wide RDT&E	Basic Research Initiatives	601110D8Z	\$99,307
Defense-Wide RDT&E	National Defense Education Program	601120D8Z	\$184,808

APLU urges Congress to provide robust funding for the Minerva Research Initiative (MRI), DoD's signature social-science basic-research program that funds university-led teams to address problems of strategic importance to U.S. national security. Through MRI grants, university researchers help DoD better understand complex issues such as statecraft, influence, and regional power balances; alliances and burden sharing; economic interdependence and security; and autonomy, artificial intelligence, machine ethics, and social interactions. Thanks to university research funded through the MRI, DoD personnel have the tools to better understand sociopolitical implications in various regions that impact national security and will be more adaptable to future technological capabilities such as artificial intelligence. In FY2021, Minerva only funded 17 projects but received approximately 220 applications⁴. By only funding seven percent of applications, DoD is missing out on new ideas that will enable the U.S. to maintain military superiority with competitor nations and better prepare our armed forces both at home and abroad. With increased appropriations in FY24, the Department will be able to fund more strong MRI proposals. APLU requests a six percent increase for the Minerva Research Initiative in FY2024 within the Basic Research Initiatives line.

APLU also requests support of the applied program elements delineated below. The Defense-Wide Manufacturing Science and Technology Program supports the Manufacturing USA network. Manufacturing USA is a network of 16 manufacturing institutes where universities, industry, and government partners collaborate to develop and accelerate the commercialization of innovative manufacturing technologies. Currently, DoD sponsors nine of the sixteen institutes. The goal of DoD investments in the Manufacturing USA network is to support regional hubs to accelerate technological innovation into commercial application and concurrently develop the educational competencies and production processes via shared public-private sectors. Manufacturing leadership is essential to sustaining the U.S. military's technical superiority and global dominance.

⁴ [Department of Defense Awards \\$28.7M in Grants for the FY2021 Minerva Research Initiative > U.S. Department of Defense > Release](#)

Healthy soldiers and families lead to a strong military. It is imperative for DoD to contribute to curing diseases that affect not only men and women in the military, but also the public since we have an all-volunteer force. The Undistributed Medical Research/Peer-Reviewed programs play a vital role in ensuring the U.S. has the medical technologies necessary to enable military readiness and serve those who have been wounded on the battlefield. CDMRP grants are awarded to universities to study illnesses and therapeutic remedies to areas such as Alzheimer’s Disease, kidney and lung cancer, and ALS.

Agency/Account	Item	Program Element (PE)	APLU Request (in thousands)
Defense Wide RDT&E	Defense-Wide Manufacturing S&T Technology Program	603680D8z	\$792,289
DHP RDT&E	Undistributed Medical Research/ Peer-Reviewed (CDMRPs)	N/A	\$TBD

DEFENSE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY (DARPA)

APLU FY2024 Request: \$4.307 billion

FY2024 PBR = \$4.388 billion; FY2023 = \$4.052 billion; FY2022= \$3.857 billion

DARPA has a singular and important mission: to make pivotal investments in breakthrough technologies for national security. DARPA funds high-risk, high-reward research at universities and with industry members which has led to many significant defense technologies, some of which have also evolved into remarkable civilian applications. For example, DARPA funded projects have led to military capabilities such as precision weapons and stealth technology, but also such icons of modern civilian society such as the Internet, automated voice recognition and language translation, and Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers small enough to embed in numerous consumer devices.

DARPA searches for and funds potentially transformational projects by working within an innovation ecosystem that includes academic, corporate, and governmental partners, with a constant focus on the nation’s military needs. As Congress seeks to optimally allocate limited resources, cutting-edge national security research should remain a top priority.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

APLU is a research, policy, and advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening and advancing the work of public universities in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. With a membership of 251 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations, APLU’s agenda is built on the three pillars of increasing degree completion and academic success, advancing scientific research, and expanding engagement. Annually, its 210 U.S. member campuses enroll 4.5 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.3 million degrees, employ 1.2 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$48.5 billion in university-based research.