



## **Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

# **Louisiana Aerospace Catalyst Experiences for Students (LaACES)**

Offered by the Louisiana Space Grant Consortium

Under the authority of the  
NASA Space Grant College and Fellowship Program

**LaSPACE Program Director: Colleen H. Fava**

**Louisiana Space Grant Consortium (LaSPACE)  
364 Nicholson Hall, Department of Physics and Astronomy  
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
225.578.8697 | <http://laspace.lsu.edu/> | [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu)**

# LaACES Program Summary Page

## About the LaACES Program

The Louisiana Aerospace Catalyst Experiences for Students (LaACES) Program runs for a full academic year. During the first semester a series of lectures and hands-on activities help build student skills in basic electronics, sensor interfacing, real-time programming, mechanical development, and project management. The second semester is then devoted to applying these skills to the design, development, fabrication, and flight of a small (~500 gram) balloon payload. Payloads from all student teams are then flown at the end of the academic year under the management of LaSPACE. Independent balloon flights by institutions are not supported under LaACES. Proposed efforts that do not conform to this general model will review poorly. New teams are expected to follow the base protocol payload design laid out in the course materials; advanced payload experiments are the exclusive purview of returning students/advisors.

## Program Summary

- Proposals must be signed off on by the Project PI and the Authorized Organizational Representative for Sponsored Programs at your institution.
- Award funds can be requested up to \$12,000; no strict cost-match amount is required, but some institutional investment will impact our evaluation.
- Multiple proposals per institution may be submitted, but only one proposal per campus may be funded.
- Only flights conducted under the supervision and direction of LaSPACE Management will be considered for funding. Required deliverables include technical reports, design documents (PDR, CDR, & FRR), and other requirements as determined by LaACES management.
- Please complete the Student Participant List if your student teams have already been identified. Identified students must submit an online LaSPACE Student Participation Form upon recruitment to the project, as well as a media release form and completion of a NASA gateway profile.
- The final invoice and a final project report must be submitted to the LaSPACE office within 30 days of the project end date. Final Report guidelines can be downloaded from the LaSPACE website's [document center](#). A link to our online reporting tool is also available.

## Proposal Submissions

- **Submit all properly executed proposals via email as fully searchable pdf documents to [laspacespace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspacespace@lsu.edu) ON OR BEFORE Monday, June 15, 2026**
- Important Dates:
  - Funding Opportunity Release Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2026
  - **Proposal Due Date: Monday, June 15, 2026**
  - Anticipated Award Announcements: July 2026
  - Award Period of Performance: 08/15/2026 - 05/31/2027

# LaSPACE General Guidelines

## Introduction to the Space Grant Program

The Louisiana Space Grant Consortium (LaSPACE) is a Designated Consortium in the NASA National Space Grant and Fellowship Program network, which was designed to network colleges, universities, and state education boards with partners in business, industry, and the non-profit sector to promote, develop, and strengthen aerospace science, research, technology, education, and awareness. LaSPACE promotes scientific research, workforce development, and public outreach to develop and strengthen long-term research capabilities within Louisiana that will make significant contributions to the research and technology goals at NASA while supporting the goals of the state.

## Basis of Authority

The Louisiana Space Grant Consortium (LaSPACE) currently comprises Louisiana public and private colleges and universities in addition to other government and science organizations. The consortium is funded jointly by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and by the Louisiana Board of Regents Support Fund (BORSF), as well as significant cost share and support from the lead institution Louisiana State University. The consortium is administered by the LaSPACE Management team at LSU with input from the LaSPACE Council (comprised of affiliate representatives), under the aegis of NASA and the Board of Regents. The basis of authority for this and other programs of LaSPACE rests in part on the above funding. It is important, therefore, to note that the implementation of LaSPACE-supported projects must conform to applicable Federal and State regulations, in general, and to the NASA stipulations, in particular. Reductions in federal funding will directly impact funding levels for our programs.

## NASA Agency Information

### NASA 2022 Strategic Plan

NASA's 2022 strategic plan aligns the Agency's future activities along three strategic themes of Discover, Explore, and Develop, as well as a fourth theme focused on the activities that will enable the Agency's mission.

- DISCOVER: Expand human knowledge through new scientific discoveries
- EXPLORE: Extend human presence to the Moon and on towards Mars for sustainable long-term exploration, development, and utilization
- INNOVATE: Catalyze economic growth and drive innovation to address national challenges
- ADVANCE: Enhance capabilities and operations to catalyze current and future mission success

The complete plan can be downloaded [here](#).

## NASA Vision

Exploring the secrets of the universe for the benefit of all.

## NASA Mission

NASA explores the unknown in air and space, innovates for the benefit of humanity, and inspires the world through discovery.

## NASA Office of STEM Engagement

NASA investments in [STEM engagement](#) are focused on building a future STEM workforce, through program elements designed to bolster capacity and to attract, engage and enable students to move toward STEM careers through NASA-unique opportunities. NASA's Office of STEM Engagement (OSTEM)'s four integrated projects create pathways for students to enter the aerospace industry.

The National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program, of which LaSPACE is a member, is a national network located in all 50 states plus DC and Puerto Rico that fosters science and engineering training, research, and industry partnerships with the goal of cultivating a skilled, innovative talent pool to advance space exploration and innovations at colleges and universities across the nation. All projects funded by NASA Space Grant dollars must align with existing research and development at the agency.

## NASA Mission Directorates (MD)

*Research, technology, and development priorities of your proposed project must align with one or more of NASA's Mission Directorates:*

**Aeronautics:** Results achieved by NASA's aeronautical innovators through the years directly benefit today's air transportation system, the aviation industry, and the passengers and businesses who rely on those advances in flight every day. As a result, every U.S. commercial aircraft and U.S. air traffic control tower uses NASA-developed technology to improve efficiency and maintain safety.

**Exploration Systems:** The Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate manages human exploration system development for lunar orbital, lunar surface, and Mars exploration. Artemis missions will open a new era of scientific discovery and economic opportunity on the Moon while validating operations and systems and preparing for human missions to Mars. Programs in the directorate include the Space Launch System rocket, Orion spacecraft, supporting ground systems, human landing systems, spacesuits, and Gateway.

**Science:** The Science Mission Directorate 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. From exoplanet research to better understanding Earth's climate to understanding the influence of the sun on our planet and the solar system, the directorate's work is interdisciplinary and collaborative.

**Space Operations:** 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 space exploration efforts, enabling Artemis, commercial space, science, and other agency missions through communication, launch services, research capabilities, and crew support.

**Space Technology:** Technology drives exploration and the space economy. NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate aims to transform future missions while ensuring American leadership in aerospace. The directorate develops, demonstrates, and transfers new space technologies that benefit NASA, commercial, and other government missions.

All NASA Space Grant subprograms must relate to and support one or more of these directorates. Likewise, all programs supported by LaSPACE must support the NASA organization, align with active NASA research and development, and support the goals of the Office of STEM Engagement. Any alignment with NASA Center programs should also be detailed.

## NASA MD Contacts for University Researchers

### Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD)

POC: Mina Cappuccio, Deputy Manager for the University Innovation Project, Phone: (650) 604-1313, [mina.cappuccio@nasa.gov](mailto:mina.cappuccio@nasa.gov)

### Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate (ESDMD)

POC: Greg Chavers, DAA for HEO System Engineering & Integration, Phone: (256) 544-0494, [greg.chavers@nasa.gov](mailto:greg.chavers@nasa.gov)

### Science Mission Directorate (SMD)

POC: Amy P. Kaminski, Engagement Branch Chief, [amy.p.kaminski@nasa.gov](mailto:amy.p.kaminski@nasa.gov)

### Space Operations Mission Directorate (SOMD)

POC: Marc Timm Phone: (202) 358-0373, [marc.g.timm@nasa.gov](mailto:marc.g.timm@nasa.gov)

### Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD)

POC: Damian Taylor, SBIR and STTR Mission, Directorate Liaison Phone: (202) 358-1432, [damian.taylor@nasa.gov](mailto:damian.taylor@nasa.gov)

## NASA Center Liaisons

<b>Armstrong Flight Research Center</b> Veronica Wilson <a href="mailto:veronica.l.wilson@nasa.gov">veronica.l.wilson@nasa.gov</a>	<b>Johnson Space Center</b> Gamaliel Cherry <a href="mailto:Gamaliel.r.cherry@nasa.gov">Gamaliel.r.cherry@nasa.gov</a> Deepika Sangam <a href="mailto:Deepika.sangam@nasa.gov">Deepika.sangam@nasa.gov</a>
<b>Ames Research Center</b> Veronica Wilson <a href="mailto:veronica.l.wilson@nasa.gov">veronica.l.wilson@nasa.gov</a>	<b>Kennedy Space Center</b> Patricia Gillis <a href="mailto:patricia.j.gillis@nasa.gov">patricia.j.gillis@nasa.gov</a>
<b>Goddard Space Flight Center</b> Cindy Hasselbring <a href="mailto:cindy.l.hasselbring@nasa.gov">cindy.l.hasselbring@nasa.gov</a>	<b>Langley Research Center</b> Bonnie Murray <a href="mailto:bonnie.murray@nasa.gov">bonnie.murray@nasa.gov</a>
<b>Glenn Research Center</b> Gerald Voltz <a href="mailto:gerald.w.voltz@nasa.gov">gerald.w.voltz@nasa.gov</a>	<b>Marshall Space Flight Center</b> Tracey Washington <a href="mailto:Tracey.washington@nasa.gov">Tracey.washington@nasa.gov</a>
<b>Jet Propulsion Lab</b> David Alexander <a href="mailto:David.e.alexander@nasa.gov">David.e.alexander@nasa.gov</a>	<b>Stennis Space Center</b> Tracey Washington <a href="mailto:Tracey.washington@nasa.gov">Tracey.washington@nasa.gov</a>

## LaSPACE Program

The Louisiana Space Grant Consortium, part of the National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program and in partnership with the Louisiana Board of Regents, supports programs at affiliated academic institutions and other Louisiana organizations that address the NASA mission, federal CoSTEM goals, and state education and economic priorities. LaSPACE programs for Research, Higher Education, Workforce Development, K-12 Teacher Development, and Public Outreach, strengthen the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education needed for a robust technical workforce, and develops the research and economic infrastructure to boost Louisiana's contribution to NASA research priorities.

## LaSPACE Program Office & Affiliate Representatives

General administration is the responsibility of the LaSPACE Team headquartered at LSU. Questions about applications to any LaSPACE programs should be directed to the program management team via the general [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu) email address. Unless otherwise directed, all proposals, invoices, reports, and queries should also be submitted via email to the program email address ([laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu)).

LaSPACE Program Office, [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu), 225-578-8697  
LSU Department of Physics & Astronomy |364 Nicholson Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Additionally, all member institutions have appointed an affiliate representative who sits on the LaSPACE Advisory Council and is available to discuss opportunities and processes related to LaSPACE programs. Contact information for all affiliates is provided below. For institutions with a vacancy, contact the LaSPACE program office at LSU. Please refer to [the LaSPACE FAQs](#) before contacting LaSPACE management and/or affiliate reps.

## LaSPACE Affiliate Representatives

The 1881 Institute	Bahiy Watson	<a href="mailto:bahiy@the1881school.org">bahiy@the1881school.org</a>	504-475-8070
Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC)	vacant	vacant	vacant
BREC / Highland Road Park Observatory (HRPO)	Christopher Kersey	<a href="mailto:o@brec.org">o@brec.org</a>	225-768-9948
Cain Center for STEM Literacy (Cain Center)	Frank Neubrandner	<a href="mailto:fneubr1@lsu.edu">fneubr1@lsu.edu</a>	225-578-4082
Delgado Community College (DCC)	Raymond Duplessis	<a href="mailto:rduple@dcc.edu">rduple@dcc.edu</a>	504-671-6419
Dillard University (Dillard)	Abdalla Darwish	<a href="mailto:adarwish@dillard.edu">adarwish@dillard.edu</a>	504-816-4840
East Baton Rouge Parish Library (EBRPL)	Mary Stein	<a href="mailto:mstein@ebrpl.com">mstein@ebrpl.com</a>	225-231-3710
GNO, Inc.	Daphine Barnes	<a href="mailto:dbarnes@gnoinc.org">dbarnes@gnoinc.org</a>	504-527-6920
Grambling State University (GSU)	vacant	vacant	vacant
LaSTEM at LA BOR (LaSTEM)	vacant	vacant	vacant
Louisiana Art and Science Museum (LASM)	Krystal Swain	<a href="mailto:KSwain@lasm.org">KSwain@lasm.org</a>	225-344-5272 ext 115
La Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE)	Ann Wilson	<a href="mailto:ann.wilson@la.gov">ann.wilson@la.gov</a>	225-342-0140

Louisiana Board of Regents (BOR)	Jessica Patton	<a href="mailto:jessica.domingue@la.gov">jessica.domingue@la.gov</a>	225-342-4253
Louisiana Business and Technology Center (LBTC)	Roy Keller	<a href="mailto:rkeller@lsu.edu">rkeller@lsu.edu</a>	225-578-3985
Louisiana Civil Air Patrol (La CAP)	Jud Ergle	<a href="mailto:fergle@cap.gov">fergle@cap.gov</a>	504-756-9255
Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS)	vacant	vacant	vacant
Louisiana Economic Development (LED) FastStart	Justin Dedden	<a href="mailto:Justin.Dedden@la.gov">Justin.Dedden@la.gov</a>	225-342-5607
Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB)	vacant	vacant	vacant
Louisiana State University and A&M College (LSU)	John Flake	<a href="mailto:johnflake@lsu.edu">johnflake@lsu.edu</a>	225-578-5833
Louisiana State University at Alexandria	vacant	vacant	vacant
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (LSU-Ag)	Wade Baumgartner	<a href="mailto:wbaumgartner@agcenter.lsu.edu">wbaumgartner@agcenter.lsu.edu</a>	225-578-7742
Louisiana State University Health Sciences (LSUHSC)	Lynn Harrison	<a href="mailto:lynn.clary@lsuhs.edu">lynn.clary@lsuhs.edu</a>	318-675-4213
Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center - New Orleans (LSUHSC-NO)	Ian Hogdon	<a href="mailto:ihodgd@lsuhs.edu">ihodgd@lsuhs.edu</a>	504-508-4061
Louisiana State University of Shreveport (LSUS)	Urska Cvek	<a href="mailto:urska.cvek@lsus.edu">urska.cvek@lsus.edu</a>	318-675-5128
Louisiana Tech University (LaTech)	Mary Caldorera-Moore	<a href="mailto:mcmoore@latech.edu">mcmoore@latech.edu</a>	318-257-2207
Loyola University (Loyola)	Anat Burger	<a href="mailto:aburger@loyno.edu">aburger@loyno.edu</a>	504-865-2274
McNeese State University (McNeese)	Ning Zhang	<a href="mailto:nzhang@mcneese.edu">nzhang@mcneese.edu</a>	337-475-5873
National Center for Biomedical Research & Training (LSU-NCBRT)	Jason Krause	<a href="mailto:jkrause@ncbrt.lsu.edu">jkrause@ncbrt.lsu.edu</a>	225-578-0285
Nicholls State University (Nicholls)	Matt Marlow	<a href="mailto:matthew.marlow@nicholls.edu">matthew.marlow@nicholls.edu</a>	985-448-4576
NorthShore Robotics	David Shapiro	<a href="mailto:boardpresident@northshorerobotics.org">boardpresident@northshorerobotics.org</a>	985-777-1812
Northshore Technical Community College (NTTC)	Chuck Crabtree	<a href="mailto:charlescrabtree@northshorecollege.edu">charlescrabtree@northshorecollege.edu</a>	985-545-1231
Northwestern State University of Louisiana (NSULA)	Anna Dugas	<a href="mailto:dugasa@nsula.edu">dugasa@nsula.edu</a>	318-357-5519
Nunez Community College (NCC)	Reggie Poché	<a href="mailto:rpoche1@nunez.edu">rpoche1@nunez.edu</a>	504-248-6277
Pennington Biomedical Research Center (PBRC)	Stefan Pasiakos	<a href="mailto:stefan.pasiakos@pbrc.edu">stefan.pasiakos@pbrc.edu</a>	225-763-2597
River Parishes Community College (RPCC)	Esperanza Zenon	<a href="mailto:ezenon@rpcc.edu">ezenon@rpcc.edu</a>	225-743-8713
SciPort Louisiana's Science Center	Heather Kleiner	<a href="mailto:hkleiner@sciport.org">hkleiner@sciport.org</a>	318-424-3466
Southeastern Louisiana University (SELU)	Gerard Blanchard	<a href="mailto:gerard.blanchard@selu.edu">gerard.blanchard@selu.edu</a>	985-549-2159

Southern University and A & M College (SUBR)	Michael Stubblefield	<a href="mailto:michael_stubblefield@subr.edu">michael_stubblefield@subr.edu</a>	225-771-5231
Southern University of New Orleans (SUNO)	Nebiat Sisay	<a href="mailto:nsisay@suno.edu">nsisay@suno.edu</a>	504-286-5309
Tulane University (Tulane)	Denys Bondar	<a href="mailto:dbondar@tulane.edu">dbondar@tulane.edu</a>	504-862-8701
University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL)	Afef Fekih	<a href="mailto:afef.fekih@louisiana.edu">afef.fekih@louisiana.edu</a>	337-482-5333
University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM)	Ken Leppert	<a href="mailto:leppert@ulm.edu">leppert@ulm.edu</a>	318-342-1918
University of New Orleans (UNO)	Matthew Tarr	<a href="mailto:mtarr@uno.edu">mtarr@uno.edu</a>	504-280-6836
Xavier University of Louisiana (Xavier)	vacant	vacant	vacant

## LaSPACE Requirements and Restrictions

In this section, requirements and restrictions applied to all LaSPACE programs are summarized. Additional requirements and restrictions pertaining to individual programs offered by LaSPACE are detailed later in these guidelines.

### Public Nature of Applications to LaSPACE

Once an application is received in the LaSPACE office, it becomes public record. Although the staff will not disseminate applications to individuals other than to reviewers, applicants should be aware that, if a formal request for information is made by the public, a copy of the application, by law, may be provided.

### Disclosure of Information

All LaSPACE programs must conform to applicable Federal, State and NASA regulations and stipulations. This includes annual reporting of award participant information to both the Louisiana Board of Regents and NASA. Part of this information will include both directory information such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth, and demographic information such as gender, ethnicity, and race for all award participants including faculty, staff, and students. Further, LaSPACE outreach includes public dissemination of its supported programs through newsletters, flyers, the LaSPACE website (<https://laspace.lsu.edu/>), as well as papers and/or presentations at Space Grant or related Education & Public Outreach conferences. The contents of award reports, including participant names, titles, institution, project summaries, results or conclusions and images, might be included in such public outreach articles. It is not intended that these public articles will disclose directory or demographic information except as aggregated statistical data.

### Animal Use

Any project proposing the use of an animal model for validation must include a local IACUC approval letter, fully signed, which specifies a validity period longer than the proposed project period. Failure to obtain the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee's approval in advance, is grounds for returning the proposal unreviewed. Attach the IACUC material as an additional appendix.

### Human Subjects

Projects that involve human subjects are not acceptable for this program.

## Eligibility

PI must be authorized by an affiliated institution to serve as Principal Investigator on behalf of said institution. Students directly funded under programs designated as NASA NIFs programs must be U.S. citizens. Current NASA NIFs programs offered by LaSPACE: GPS, GIRAF, GSRA, Internships, LURA, LaSSO, & STEMS. Additional, or altered, restrictions may apply to specific programs. The citizenship requirement is issued by NASA OSTEM and LaSPACE has no authority to supersede it.

## Concurrent, Overlapping, and Consecutive Awards

PIs may hold more than one LaSPACE Award concurrently with some restrictions. No student may be funded simultaneously via multiple awards in the scholarship/fellowship programs (GSRA, GIRAF, LaSSO, LURA, Internships, & STEMS programs). Consecutive awards in these program areas may be issued to exceptional students in the midst of extended research. Proposals for additional year(s) of funding may be submitted if 1) the previous period of performance has recently passed or is 60 days or less from completion, 2) must explicitly reference the completion of proposed tasks from the current/previous award within the new proposal, **3) must include a Final report, or preliminary Final Report if still in progress, in an appendix**, and 4) must clearly state the objectives and goals for the new proposal differentiating said goals from the prior work.

## Budgeting

Capital Equipment purchases and Foreign Travel are not allowable costs. The submitting PI is responsible for the writing of the budget. **Any requests to rebudget funds must be submitted in writing to [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu) for consideration.** A completed LaSPACE Budget Revision Request Form (available for download from the [LaSPACE Document Center](#)) must be included and minimum requirements for direct student funding commitments must be met.

## Disbursement of Funds

LaSPACE Award fund distribution will be managed by the applicant's college or university, either via a cost-reimbursable subcontract if the applicant is at an affiliate other than LSU, or by transfer of funds from LaSPACE to the applicant's department for projects at LSU. The institution/department will assume responsibility for administering, distributing, and documenting costs charged to this program, including any cost-share commitments.

## Period of Performance

Unless otherwise stated, LaSPACE programs have a default period of performance of no greater than 9.5 months. Shorter periods of performance may be proposed, or even required by the LaSPACE office, to meet any requirements or restrictions related to the parent grant. *A proposed period of performance is provided for each program cycle on the summary page; proposers may request a different period with **advance permission** from the LaSPACE Management team.*

## No-Cost Extensions

LaSPACE will no longer consider full-year No-Cost Extensions (NCEs). We may consider NCE requests for up to 6 months. We are getting more pressure from NASA to complete as much spending as possible within each program year. It is harder to justify NCEs for our subawarded projects. We need you to propose an NCE for **only exactly how much additional time you need**. If we deem that there are avoidable

reasons for you needing an NCE, it may be rejected. Do your best to spend according to your proposed timeline. Reach out earlier rather than later if you hit early snags.

**NCE's for ongoing projects must be submitted to the LaSPACE program office no later than 60 days before the initial project end-date.** All NCE requests must be submitted to [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu), signed off on by your Office of Sponsored Programs administrators, and must include a progress report which addresses all accomplishments made to-date on the project (including all publications, proposals, presentations, patents, etc), where the project is in relation to the originally proposed end date, reasons why the project has been delayed, and a proposed plan for completing the project. This progress report must also identify all participants on the project (students, post-docs, faculty, and staff). A link to the online platform for progress report submission, as well as a document with detailed guidance for writing the report, are posted in the [LaSPACE Document Center](#) on our website.

## Invoicing & Reporting Requirements

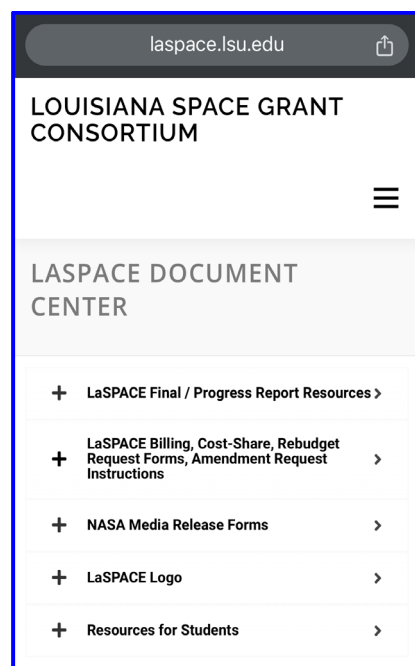
Invoices must be submitted monthly by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, beginning no later than the second full calendar month of the award period using the billing form available in our document center. Example: For awards with a period of performance of 08/15/2026—05/31/2027 the first invoice must be submitted in October by 10/15/2026 with additional invoices submitted on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each subsequent month. The final invoice must be submitted within 30 days of the last day of the period of performance. For the example period of performance, the final invoice would be due by 06/30/2027. **The LaSPACE team is now providing pre-populated invoice templates for each individual subaward to help our affiliate's sponsored programs staff submit compliant invoices.**

A final report must be submitted by the PI/Project Lead no later than 30 days after the project end date. Photographs and copies of all papers, presentations, and posters generated should be shared with LaSPACE as they occur and collected/referenced in the final report. Final Report guidelines can be downloaded from the LaSPACE website's [document center](#). Please review the reporting guidelines at the start of your project to identify in advance the kinds of information you must share at the end of your award. **For example, you must track participation hours & total funding per student and collect reflective statements from your students. Develop a plan to collect this info early!**

Failure to submit timely invoices and reports may result in new restrictions and requirements, including a potential suspension of eligibility to apply for LaSPACE funding.

## LaSPACE Annual Meeting Participation

Funded participants are expected to make every effort to attend the LaSPACE Annual Meeting held during the fall semester on a Friday and Saturday at a different affiliate institution each year. For the 2026 meeting we will meet at Tulane University in New Orleans, LA on November 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. Information will be sent out to our affiliate representatives and funded awardees and posted to our website [here](#). Recently/currently funded students are expected to present a poster at the student poster session on Saturday.



*Figure 1: Screen Shot of the LaSPACE website's Document Center showing available content linked there; including Reporting Resources, Billing/Budgeting forms, Media Releases, the LaSPACE Logo, and Resources for Students.*

# Louisiana Aerospace Catalyst Experiences for Students (LaACES)

## Application Guidelines

### About the LaACES Program

The Louisiana Aerospace Catalyst Experiences for Students (LaACES) Program runs for a full academic year. A Student Balloon Course (SBC) curriculum has been developed by the LaSPACE team to guide the participants throughout the course of the program. Funded teams **must** use the SBC materials while participating in this program. During the first semester a series of lectures and hands-on activities help build student skills in basic electronics, sensor interfacing, real-time programming, mechanical development, and project management. Students will also complete two technical reports (Temperature Calibration and Data Logger Reports). The second semester is then devoted to applying these skills to the design, development, fabrication, and flight of a small (~500 gram) balloon payload. The payload development process is monitored by requiring the students to document their progress during three (3) written reviews (PDR, CDR, FRR). Prior to receiving final flight certification teams will orally defend their payload as Flight Ready to LaACES management as well as students and faculty mentors from participating peer institutions. Payloads from all student teams are then flown at the end of the academic year under the management of LaSPACE. The payloads are flown to 100,000 feet using a helium-filled latex sounding balloon launched from Western Louisiana or Eastern Texas. After the flight & recovery, teams are required to orally present their results or failure analysis to the same audience. Independent balloon flights by institutions **are not** supported under LaACES and only flights under the supervision and direction of LaSPACE Management will be considered for funding. Proposed efforts that do not conform to this general program model will review poorly / be rejected. New teams are expected to follow the base payload design laid out in the course materials; advanced payload experiments are the exclusive purview of returning students/advisors.

### Background and Objectives

The State of Louisiana's prime goal is to develop a well-trained, technical workforce capable of moving the state forward in R & D, attracting high tech industries, and promoting economic development. This is precisely what NASA desires and what LaSPACE is working to achieve. The core focus of the LaSPACE program continues to be student involvement in genuine scientific research and engineering projects. The long-term goals of LaACES are to 1) attract new students to aerospace related science and engineering programs, 2) provide students with a background to develop and manage modern aerospace projects, 3) give students practical experience with sensors, electronics, and "spacecraft" systems, 4) assist in retaining these students by exciting their imagination and fostering their innate curiosity, and 5) disseminate this program to institutions across Louisiana.

LaSPACE institutions that wish to initiate, or continue, a LaACES program on their campus should use this document as a guide for preparing a proposal to LaSPACE. *Note that: LaACES materials (lectures,*

*electronics kits, etc) are provided to LaSPACE affiliates implementing this program at no additional cost and independent of any funding proposed here. However, even unfunded participating teams are required to participate in the PDR, CDR, & FRR reviews, as well as adhere to testing and structural requirements to be able to fly their payloads.*

## PI Eligibility

Proposals to the LaACES Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may be submitted only by an authorized individual at a LaSPACE affiliate academic institution. This person becomes the project's Principal Investigator (PI) and is responsible for administering the ballooning course lectures, monitoring the student teams as they develop their payloads, ensuring all project deliverables are completed correctly (Lab Reports, PDR, CDR, FRR, Science Report) and managing the team's participation in the May launch. Institutions may submit more than one proposal per campus, but it is likely that no more than one proposal per institution will be funded.

## Award Funds

LaACES awards are capped at \$12,000, typically with one award per campus per academic year. We anticipate selecting 4 to 6 proposals for award. The proposal may include wage support for personnel (including students), funds for travel to launch, and costs for materials, supplies, and support for constructing/testing student payloads and analyzing flight data. A strict cost-share is not required, but some institutional investment is required. Only one LaACES project per campus will be awarded, though a single award may support more than one student team.

## Deliverables

Throughout the course of the LaACES program, there will be several deliverables that are required for participation. In the fall semester, students will share their Temperature Calibration and Data Logger Reports for feedback. In the spring, flight groups will be required to submit three (3) professional documents related to their payloads to LaACES management for review (PDR, CDR, FRR) and will participate in a thermal/vac test and analysis presentation between the CDR & FRR submissions. During flight week, teams will give two ~15-minute oral presentations, an oral summary of their FRR before the flight and a presentation of their payload's performance after the flight. Feedback will be provided throughout the semester, and it is expected that these comments will be implemented into future versions of the design documents and presentations. Local instructors should provide an additional feedback loop to student participants before submitting final products to LaACES management. The iterative process is a key principle guiding LaSPACE programs overall and LaACES projects in particular.

**LaACES Training Session:** A Zoom-based webinar training session will be conducted by LaACES staff in August 2026 (tentatively planned for the week of August 10<sup>th</sup>; date to be solidified at least 30 days in advance) that will explain and illustrate the LaACES Student Ballooning Course (SBC), which includes lecture presentations, activities, and hardware materials that each institution will use to run a LaACES program. The SBC has been developed, field proven, and updated as necessary over the last two decades and has been shown to be effective in preparing a student team to successfully progress through the project reviews and develop an operational balloon payload. The latest version of the SBC is designed to allow new team to develop a basic balloon payload consisting of an Arduino Mega2560 microcontroller, the custom "MegaSat" sensor board, and the Adafruit Ultimate GPS Logger shield. Attendance at this Training Session is required for the Faculty Advisor and one other optional leader (additional faculty/staff

or advanced student) from each institution planning to participate in LaACES 2026-2027 regardless of LaSPACE funding status. Further details about this session will be distributed during the summer.

**Monthly Instructors’ Meeting:** The PIs and local instructors running LaACES projects on their campuses will be expected to participate in a virtual monthly meeting to report on progress, discuss challenges and opportunities, and build community. A day and time will be selected via survey with all participants.

**Provided Materials.** LaSPACE will provide all the necessary components to complete all SBC course activities in the form of PCBs and parts kits for each individual student. A team applying to the LaACES program for the first time will receive an Arduino Mega, AdafruitGPS shield, and SD card for each student. Returning teams are expected to reuse the material provided in previous years. Each team will also receive a MegaSAT kit to be built as the core of the team’s payload. Applicants must provide a working lab space with access to a general set of tools and electronic supplies. A recommended minimum list of tools and supplies is show below in table 1:

*Table 1: Minimum recommended set of tools and supplies for LaACES teams.*

Needle Nose Pliers	Flush Cutting Wire Cutters
Lockring pliers (Liste 44900 or similar recommended, used to separate Arduino stacks without damaging the pins)	Hand-operated Vacuum pump (for pressure sensor calibration)
Small size screwdriver set	Wire Strippers (AWG 22 and 24)
Solder Sucker/Desoldering Pump	Solder Wick
Hand Magnifier	Digital Multimeter with Voltage, Current, and Amperage capability
Temperature Controlled Solder Station	Safety Glasses
Solder	22 AWG stranded core wire
22 AWG stranded wire in multiple colors	Liquid Electrical Tape

**Weekly Lectures & Activities.** All student teams, managed by their local instructor(s)/PI, are expected to complete all materials provided for the student ballooning course; lectures and activity sessions are typically covered in twice weekly sessions throughout the fall semester and early in the spring semester. All lecture slides and activity sheets are posted to the LaACES website and videos of most lectures completed by LaSPACE LaACES Management are also available. Alternatively, local instructors may choose to present the materials live on their own campuses. Local support is always expected for the activities. Regardless of the overall method chosen, the LaACES SBC curriculum must be implemented.

**Temperature Calibration Report.** Early in the semester students will be required to construct a simple temperature sensor circuit. Students will then calibrate this sensing circuit and generate a short report based on this project. LaSPACE management provides the guidelines for this report and each student must write an individual report. The final version of the report, after completing a review by local instructors shall be turned into LaSPACE. This document is tentatively due October 16, 2026; however, a final due date will be announced during the LaACES Training Session in August.

**Data Logger Report.** At the end of fall semester students will combine the basic programming and electronics skills learned to build and calibrate a simple temperature data logger consisting of breadboarded temperature sensor and amplifier circuit, Arduino, and GPS/SD card. Students will then

write up a report on this process. LaSPACE management provides the guidelines for this report and each student must write an individual report. This document is tentatively due December 18, 2026; however, a final due date will be announced during the LaACES Training Session in August.

**Preliminary Design Review (PDR) Document:** The PDR includes all the results of the preliminary design phase of the project. The PDR should present a basic understanding of the scientific and technical goals and objectives of the payload, the background and requirements, a Preliminary System design, conceptual hardware and software designs, preliminary task list and work schedule including information on resources and long-lead items, and a preliminary risk assessment and management plan. LaSPACE management provides a template for this review document and requires the submitted document to adhere to the format presented in the template. This document is tentatively due February 19, 2027; however, a final due date will be announced during the LaACES Training Session in August.

**Security Clearance Form.** Project PIs must complete and submit a security clearance document for their flight teams. This document must include all individuals planning to attend the May flight. A form will be distributed to PIs with a due date of March 5, 2027. Depending on launch location and changing NASA requirements additional documentation may be required from some attendees.

**Critical Design Review (CDR) Document:** The CDR represents the end of the critical design phase of the project. The CDR is a continuation of the documentation provided in the PDR. As such, all comments provided in the PDR reviews must be addressed. In addition, the CDR should present the final designs of the project through analysis, breadboarding, prototyping, and testing. The CDR should also include finalized task lists, schedule, testing and calibration procedures, budgets, pre- and post- flight operations, and updated risk assessment and management plans. LaSPACE management provides a template for this plan and requires the submitted document to adhere to the format presented in the template. This document is tentatively due April 9, 2027; however, a final due date will be announced during the LaACES Training Session in August.

**Thermal Vac Test / Analysis.** In April teams will travel to LSU and test their payloads in simulated near-space conditions. Teams are expected to bring a flight ready payload to LSU where it will be tested at the temperature and pressure extremes that will be experienced during the flight. Teams will spend the entire day at LSU and present a brief analysis at the end of the day detailing their payload's functionality, documenting their findings, and sharing any corrective actions required in advance of the May flight. Teams are expected to participate in this test and if they are unable to travel to LSU they must participate remotely and present the results of similar testing performed at their home institution. The tentative date for this test is April 16, 2027.

**Flight Readiness Review (FRR) Document and Presentation:** The FRR is the culmination of the project work and documents the team's flight ready payload. The FRR is a continuation of the documentation provided in the PDR and CDR. As such, all comments provided in the CDR reviews must be addressed. The FRR should present the payload as built and include any corrective actions from the Thermal Vac and the team's system testing, ready to be connected to the flight string. This document must include documentation and results of all testing and calibrations, provide evidence that the payload is safe and will perform properly, describe procedures for checkout, integration with flight vehicle, and mission operations. All sections of the template should now be completed. LaSPACE management provides a template for this plan and requires the submitted document to adhere to the format presented in the template. This document is tentatively due May 14, 2027; however, a final due date will be announced

during the LaACES Training Session in August. In addition, this document should be used to create the ~15-minute FRR presentation that all teams must present on the first day of flight operations during the annual launch trip, tentatively scheduled for May 17-21, 2027.

**Science Results or Failure Analysis Presentation:** After the flight, all teams will be required to present their science results or a failure analysis. This is a ~15-minute presentation with time for questions. Presentations occur on the last day of the flight campaign.

# LaACES Proposal Requirements & Format

LaACES proposals should be submitted as fully searchable pdf documents via email to [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu). Proposals **must** include the following completed sections in the order presented:

- LaSPACE Cover Page
  - Proposals must be signed off on by the Project PI and the Authorized Organizational Representative for Sponsored Programs at your institution.
- Proposed Project Summary Form
  - A. Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 6 pages)
    1. Description of proposed science/engineering project and payload instrument concept.
    2. Plan to recruit and retain student participants in the program. How will you find students to join your team and what practices will you employ to retain them.
    3. Key Personnel: Faculty and Staff implementing and managing the project, including the PI.
    4. Plan for implementing the student ballooning course (part of a course, extracurricular activity, etc). This should include anticipated student time commitment and anticipated structure of student faculty interaction (e.g. twice weekly classes, weekly lab meetings, etc.). You should also discuss the resources, facilities, and personnel available to support the project, and a timeline table of major milestones (including the required deliverables) for completion of the project (*a schedule of exact dates will be provided at the August training session*). If this is an ongoing project, include a summary of prior experience and explain how this year's team will build upon the experience of previous years. Include some discussion about what sort of payload you plan on having your teams develop. A technical description of the payload is not required, a short conceptual description acceptable. Payloads should fall within one of three categories: base LaACES MegaSAT payload only (recommended for new PIs), MegaSAT with additional sensors, self-designed payload (Advanced/Returning teams only).
    5. Anticipated outcomes for student learning and development and benefits to your department and institution.
  - B. Budget
    1. LaSPACE Budget Form
    2. Budget Justification: narrative explanation of all costs. Note: It is hoped that for a student team award of this type, your institution will be willing to forego some or all of the indirect charges. Waived indirect should be used as institutional matching funds. Some cost-share is required.
  - C. Student Participant List & Form Submission Confirmations page
  - D. Principal Investigator Short CV (1-2 pages)

## **NOTE to Proposers:**

- Do NOT include anything that is not explicitly listed above. If you believe additional content/sections are needed, contact our office at [laspace@lsu.edu](mailto:laspace@lsu.edu) to request permission.
- Do NOT include the guidelines in your proposal submission.

## **LaACES Evaluation Criteria**

*Each proposal will be evaluated using the following evaluation form.*

### **LaACES Evaluation Form**

<b>Institution</b>	
<b>PI Name</b>	
<b>Proposal Title</b>	
<b>Funding Recommendation</b>	

<b>Proposal Formatting and Required Contents</b>
All sections are present and in the right order

<b>Relevance to &amp; Alignment with NASA</b>
Clearly aligned to a NASA Mission Directorate and priorities

<b>Overall Quality of Proposal</b>
Clarity & quality of the proposed work and key personnel

<b>Evidence of Likely Completion of the Project</b>
Management and task plan is detailed and specific and is in line with required deliverables; evidence of past success.

<b>Budget Appropriateness</b>
Appropriate to the work and to the goals of this program. Sufficient narrative details on costs.

<b>Additional Comments</b>
Additional Comments

# Attachments

## Required Proposal Forms

### Required Forms for Proposal

All proposals submitted to LaSPACE must use the forms included following this page. Proposals not using these forms may be rejected without review.

- LaSPACE LaACES Program Proposal Cover Sheet (*Note: Proposals must be signed off on by the Project PI and the Authorized Organizational Representative for Sponsored Programs at your institution.*)
- Proposed Project Summary
- LaSPACE Proposed Budget Form
- Student Participant List & Form Submission Confirmations

# LaSPACE LaACES Program Proposal Cover Sheet

1. Title of Proposed Project: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Highest Degree Earned) (Citizenship)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Department)

3. Institution of Higher Education: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address/P.O. Box Number)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State) (Zip Code)

5. Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Date of Submission: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Total Funds Requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Institutional Match: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Certification of Compliance with Applicable Executive Orders and U.S. Code:** By signing and submitting this proposal, the signatories certify that the statements made in this proposal are true and complete to the best of their knowledge; they agree to comply with LaSPACE award terms and conditions if an award is made as a result of this proposal; and the institution and proposed project are in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations including, but not limited to, Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 34 CFR Part 85, Section 85.510, Participant's responsibilities; Non-Discrimination; Certification against Lobbying imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code; Compliance with China Funding Restriction as detailed in Public Laws 112-10 Section 1340(a) and 112-55, Section 539; ACORN Compliance in accordance with 534 of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2012 (Pub. L.112-55); and does not have a federal tax liability or federal felony conviction (sections 544 and 543 of Public Law 112-55).

8. Signature of Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Name of Authorized Organizational Rep: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Signature of Authorized Organizational Rep: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Proposed Project Summary

NAME OF INSTITUTION (INCLUDE BRANCH/CAMPUS AND SCHOOL OR DIVISION)
ADDRESS (INCLUDE DEPARTMENT, BUILDING & ROOM #, CITY, STATE, ZIP)
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR NAME, TITLE, & EMAIL
PROJECT TITLE
NASA MISSION DIRECTORATE ALIGNMENT (Check all that apply to your project. Narrative proof for selected alignment(s) must be included in your proposal narrative.) <input type="checkbox"/> SMD <input type="checkbox"/> STMD <input type="checkbox"/> ARM <input type="checkbox"/> ESDMD <input type="checkbox"/> SMOD
ABSTRACT (DO NOT EXCEED 250 WORDS)

## LaSPACE Proposed Budget Form

*Include this form in your proposal. Be sure to only ascribe funds to categories explicitly open to the program area to which you are applying. Use the proposed justification template on the following page to explain your proposed costs.*

Proposal Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

	LaSPACE Funds Requested	Proposed Cost Share*
<b>A. Direct Labor</b>		
1. Faculty/Staff Researchers	\$	\$
2. Graduate Student(s)	\$	\$
3. Undergraduate Student(s)	\$	\$
4. Fringe Benefits	\$	\$
<b>5. Total A</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>B. Supportive Expenses</b>		
1. Travel	\$	\$
2. Supplies & Materials	\$	\$
3. Other Direct Costs (Identify)	\$	\$
<b>4. Total B</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>C. Facilities &amp; Administration</b>		
<b>1. F&amp;A (Indirect Costs)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>D. Total Budget</b>		
<b>Total Budget (A5+B4+C1)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

*\*Must be certified on all financial billings/reports.*

# LaSPACE Proposed Budget Justification

## LaSPACE Requested Funds

### A. Direct Labor

1. Describe any faculty/staff support costs with explicit calculations.
2. Describe any graduate student support costs with explicit calculations.
3. Describe any undergraduate student support costs with explicit calculations.
4. Describe any fringe benefit costs with explicit calculations.

### B. Supportive Expenses

1. Describe any proposed travel costs with explicit details regarding proposed travelers, destination, and estimated costs.
2. Describe any proposed supplies & materials costs with explicit details regarding proposed purchases, estimated costs, and justification of need.
3. Other Direct Costs must be explicitly named and defined and may include things like facility usage fees and printing services.

### C. Facilities & Administration

1. Provide a letter or link to the official F&A rate for your campus. Describe all applicable costs for which you will apply your F&A rate OR a modified F&A rate. Be explicit and show calculations.

## Institution Proposed Cost Share

### A. Direct Labor

1. Describe any faculty/staff support costs with explicit calculations.
2. Describe any graduate student support costs with explicit calculations.
3. Describe any undergraduate student support costs with explicit calculations.
4. Describe any fringe benefit costs with explicit calculations.

### B. Supportive Expenses

1. Describe any proposed travel costs with explicit details regarding proposed travelers, destination, and estimated costs.
2. Describe any proposed supplies & materials costs with explicit details regarding proposed purchases, estimated costs, and justification of need.
3. Other Direct Costs must be explicitly named and defined and may include things like facility usage fees and printing services.

### C. Facilities & Administration

1. Provide a letter or link to the official F&A rate for your campus. Describe all applicable costs for which you will apply your F&A rate. Show calculations. Describe any unrecovered F&A costs you are claiming for cost share and show calculations.

# LaSPACE Student Participant List & Form Submission Confirmations

The Student Participant List must be completed, and online participant forms filled out in advance of submitting a proposal.

**Copy and complete the participant list and confirmation checkboxes below into your proposal.**

Name	Classification	Major	Project Role
<i>e.g. Jane Smith</i>	<i>Undergraduate, Junior</i>	<i>Electrical Engineering</i>	<i>Electrical Design Lead; Technical Writing Co-Lead</i>

- Check this box to confirm that all students listed above have completed a LaSPACE student participant form. Include this page in your proposal.
- Check this box to confirm that all students listed above have completed a NASA STEM Gateway profile. Include this page in your proposal.
- Check this box to confirm that all students listed above have completed a Media Release Form. Include this page in your proposal.

***For Projects which have not yet recruited student participants only:***

- Check this box to confirm that all students recruited after you've been awarded will complete the required online forms and you will submit this table immediately upon recruitment. Include this page in your proposal.

## LaSPACE Student Participant Form Instructions

[Link to LaSPACE Student Participant Form](#)

Please provide the following guidance to students completing the online participant form.

- The LaSPACE Student Participant Information Form must be completed in advance of submitting this application. If any section is left blank in the online form, you will be disqualified from consideration.
- Upon completion of the form, a message will appear on the screen to confirm the form was successfully submitted. Additionally, a confirmation email will be sent to the school email provided in the form. Once the email is received, it is safe to close your browser. Save the confirmation email and forward to your Principal Investigator / Project Lead. Do NOT include NOR share screenshots or copies of your demographic information. This is to protect your Personally Identifiable Information.
- The **Project PI / Lead** should be the PI who is submitting this proposal. Please provide the students with your office phone number and email address to input.
- The **LaSPACE Program** should be the program for which students are currently applying for/participating in. If working under multiple LaSPACE projects, students will submit a participant form for each separate project. For this proposal students will select GSRA.
- The **Project Start Date** is the first day of the project's Period of Performance (PoP). This is not your personal start date on the project. Confirm PoP start date in the program guidelines or ask your Project PI / Lead. Project Start date should be 8/15/2026 for students under this current proposal submission.
- The **Participating Semester(s)** is where students select their semesters of participation on the project.

## NASA STEM Gateway Profile Instructions

All students funded under any National Space Grant Program must register in the NASA STEM Gateway system here: <https://stemgateway.nasa.gov/s/>.

Guidance on setting up a NASA STEM Gateway profile is posted to the [LaSPACE Document Center](#) on our website in the student resources section.

## LaSPACE NASA Media Release Form Instructions

The LaSPACE NASA Media Release Form provides permission to LaSPACE and NASA to share your photographs in our reports, newsletters, and online channels. It must be completed in advance of submitting this application. If any section is left blank in the online form, you will be disqualified from consideration. After submitting the form, check the relevant confirmation checkbox on the Proposed Project Summary Form.

### [LaSPACE NASA Media Release Form](#)

- The online form should be completed and submitted by the PI and any other named, known participants (i.e. undergraduate student researcher for a LURA / graduate student for a GSRA, etc) at the time of proposal submission. Facilitators/participants recruited later and/or featured in photos associated with the funded activities should complete their own forms before, or at the time, of Final Report submission.
- For projects that involve recruiting student participants during the active award period (i.e. Senior Design, LaACES, etc), we suggest requiring completion of this form and the student participant form on the first day of official participation by the student.
- Upon completion of the form, a message will appear on the screen to confirm the form was successfully submitted. Additionally, a confirmation email will be sent to the school email provided in the form. Save this email and have students/external participants forward to the Principal Investigator / Project Lead.
- For large-scale public events, we suggest bringing a device for folks to complete on-site releases.
- For registration-based activities, we suggest including a link to our online form in your registration materials.