

FYI: The AIP Bulletin of Science Policy News

FY 2011 Department of Energy Office of Science Request

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The Department of Energy has requested a 6.8 percent increase in its total budget for FY 2011. Within this request, funding would increase by 4.4 percent for the Office of Science.

Set against a backdrop of a budget freeze in almost all categories of discretionary spending, most research programs within the Office of Science would see growth, with increases ranging from 2.3 percent to 12.1 percent. The one exception is funding for the Fusion Energy Sciences Program, which would decline by 10.8 percent.

The largest component of DOE’s \$28.4 billion budget request is for nuclear security at \$11.2 billion, followed by environmental management which totals \$6.0 billion. \$5.1 billion has been requested for science, followed by \$4.2 billion for energy programs. The Administration has requested \$300 million for the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy, its first non economic stimulus funding request. “Other” funding of \$1.9 billion rounds out DOE’s request.

“On a Path to Double Funding for Science” declared one exhibit at a budget briefing at DOE’s Headquarters on Monday. The Administration is requesting \$34 million for a proposed new Energy Innovation Hub for Batteries and Energy Storage within the Basic Energy Sciences program, part of a total request of \$107 million to support three existing Hubs. The Office of Science request provides full funding for facility construction, as well as for several new projects and major equipment purchases.

The 86-page [DOE FY 2011 Congressional Budget Request: Budget Highlights \(http://www.mbe.doe.gov/budget/11budget/Content/FY2011Highlights.pdf\)](#) provides a good overview of the department’s request. Regarding the doubling of the Office of Science budget, this document states:

“The FY 2011 request supports the President’s Plan for Science and Innovation, which encompasses the entire SC [Office of Science] budget, as part of a strategy to double overall basic research funding at select agencies. As part of this plan, the budget request supports the training of students and researchers in fields critical to our national competitiveness and innovation economy, and supports investments in areas of research critical to our clean energy future and to making the U.S. a leader on climate change.”

The Highlights document summarizes significant funding changes in each of the following programs on pages 17 - 19. Requested percentage changes are based on the FY 2010 current appropriation, which does not include economic stimulus funding. Selected line items for the Office of Science follow:

Total Office of Science:

Up 4.4 percent or \$217.7 million from \$4,903.7 million to \$5,121.4 million.

The FY 2010 appropriations bill contained \$76.9 million in congressionally-directed projects, for which no funding is requested in FY 2011. After adjusting for these projects, the requested increase for the Office of Science is 6.1 percent.

Advanced Scientific Computing:

Up 8.1 percent or \$32.0 million from \$394.0 million to \$426.0 million.

Basic Energy Sciences:

Up 12.1 percent or \$198.5 million from \$1,636.5 million to \$1,835.0 million.

Biological and Environmental Research:

Up 3.8 percent or \$22.7 million from \$604.2 million to \$626.9 million.

Fusion Energy Sciences:

Down 10.8 percent or \$46.0 million from \$426.0 million to \$380.0 million.

The Highlights document explains on page 5 that: *“The FY 2011 request for the U.S. ITER Project (\$80 million, a decrease of \$55 million from FY 2010) is a reflection of the pace of ITER construction as of the end of 2009. The Administration is engaged in a range of efforts to implement management reforms at the ITER Organization and accelerate ITER construction while minimizing the overall cost of the Construction Phase for the U.S. and the other ITER members.”*

Office of Science Director W.F. Brinkman said on Monday that DOE was not willing to provide money for ITER until it had solved some underlying problems, saying the funding reduction was intended to “send a message.” For more, see this [posting \(http://blogs.physicstoday.org/politics/2009/11/iter-council-delays-project.html\)](http://blogs.physicstoday.org/politics/2009/11/iter-council-delays-project.html).

High Energy Physics:

Up 2.3 percent or \$18.5 million from \$810.5 million to \$829.0 million.

Nuclear Physics:

Up 5.0 percent or \$27.0 million from \$535.0 million to \$562.0 million.

The requests for five other line items in the Office of Science budget can be found in the Highlights document.

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman(D-NM) released the following statement on the FY 2011 DOE request:

“This Budget Request is a powerful statement of the priority that President Obama is giving to energy, technological competitiveness and nuclear weapons security imperatives, despite the tough fiscal environment we find ourselves in. On most major programs in the department, the President’s budget request basically gets it right. I hope that this request attracts vigorous support from everyone who cares deeply about securing our nation’s energy future, boosting our economic growth and combating nuclear nonproliferation.”

A future FYI will review the request for the National Nuclear Security Administration.

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