

DOD Announces Newton Award Funding Opportunity for Transformative Ideas During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Basic Research Office in the U.S. Department of Defense announces the *Newton Award for Transformative Ideas during the COVID-19 Pandemic*. This award opportunity is available at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and proposals are due on May 15, 2020.

Newton Award winners will craft new conceptual frameworks and theories using analytical reasoning, calculations, simulations and thought experiments. Researchers from degree-issuing institutions of higher education accredited in, and having a campus located in, the U.S., its territories and possessions are eligible to compete for this award.

The Newton Award is named in honor of Sir Isaac Newton's accomplishments while confronting epidemic conditions not unlike those facing the modern academic community in response to COVID-19.

During the Great Plague of London in 1665, university closures led to the displacement of a young Newton, then a student at Trinity College in Cambridge. It was during the ensuing year of isolated study and reflection that Newton developed the basis for calculus as well as foundational theories in gravitation, motion, and optics.

Separated from the Great Plague by 350 years, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to similar health responses among the general public and scientific community, forcing the closure of laboratories and universities throughout the world and slowing scientific progress across theoretical and empirical domains.

During this unique and disruptive time, the DOD challenges America's scientists to follow the path of Newton and use their time away from the laboratory environment to transform our fundamental assumptions and open the door to new scientific paradigms in areas of immense potential to national defense and the nation-at-large.

Award winners will brief the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering leadership at the end of the award period of performance and may be asked to design and chair a Future Directions Workshop about their findings. In addition, OUSD(R&E) will support winners with successful projects in finding pathways to continue the funding, validation, and development of their transformative ideas.

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