ARMY RESEARCH OFFICE PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (HSAP) and

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (URAP)

FISCAL YEAR 2012

Broad Agency Announcement W911NF-12-R-0007

U.S. Army Contracting Command, Aberdeen Proving Ground
P. O. BOX 12211
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211

Proposals Due: No later than
29 February 2012

Issued by the Army Research Office (ARO)

- **Agency Name(s) -** U.S. Army Research Office, P.O. Box 12211, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211

- **Issuing Acquisition Office -** U.S. Army Contracting Command
  Aberdeen Proving Ground
  Research Triangle Park Division

- **Funding Opportunity Title –** U.S. Army Research Office Program Announcement for the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP)/University Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP)

- **Announcement Type -** This is the initial announcement. This BAA is issued pursuant to the authority of 10 USC 2358.

- **Funding Opportunity Number** – W911NF-12-R-0007

- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s) -** 12.431- Basic Scientific Research

- **Dates -**All proposals must be received via grants.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday, 29 February 2012

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION:

The Army Research Office (ARO) intends to conduct the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP) and Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP) for another year. HSAP/URAP will fund the science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) apprenticeship of promising high school juniors, seniors, and undergraduate college students to work in a university structured research environment under the direction of existing ARO-sponsored principal investigators (PI) serving as mentors. Awards will be made as add-ons to existing single-investigator grants, Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI) grants, and University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs) that have at least 12 months' period of performance remaining from the date of proposal submission. The overall objectives of HSAP/URAP include: ensuring a high quality and high quantity STEM workforce in the US; fostering student interest in STEM subject areas; facilitating follow-on student opportunities including university enrollment and DoD scholarships/internships; and ultimately exposing the apprentices to the attractive, meaningful, and challenging military and civilian career STEM opportunities.

The PI/mentor is principally responsible for identifying meaningful and significant duties and responsibilities under the auspices of the current grant and will provide the day-to-day guidance and oversight for the apprentice. The apprentice must be at least a junior in high school, i.e., started the fall semester of their junior year or be an undergraduate college student. Since no per diem is provided, the apprentice will typically be physically proximate to the hosting university; although there is no exclusive proximity requirement. The government bears no responsibility financially for travel.

The period of work should be full time during the summer months. However, part-time during the school year can be proposed if it can be demonstrated that the apprentice would be engaged in a continuous fashion to be meaningfully and substantially involved, and the hours are not less than 4 hours per week. Additionally, grantees are responsible for compliance with all applicable federal and state child labor laws. ARO will provide funding to support the student at a rate of $10/hour for a total of up to 300 hours per apprentice. Any material costs should be borne under the allowable scope of the basic grant or contract. The total period of performance cannot exceed 12 months. Each modification can have up to two apprentices, and the contracts for the UARCs can have up to six apprentices. The apprentice will be required to prepare and provide ARO a brief report on the research, work effort, and accomplishments achieved as a final deliverable. In addition, the students will be asked to submit an abstract of their work for inclusion in the annual Army Education Outreach Program (AEOP) abstract publication.

All HSAP/URAP opportunities will be announced through the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) website http://www.usaeop.com/. Apprentice applications must be submitted via the AEOP website. Mentors should actively recruit for apprentices in their communities and encourage them to apply online. Selection should include: previously demonstrated abilities and interests in STEM (i.e., extracurricular activities such as science clubs/science fairs); overall scholastic achievement, aptitude and interest areas; SAT, ACT, or AP exam scores; recommendations of high school teachers/university professors and administrative personnel; and interviews. The PI will have final selection authority for students; no student will be assigned to a lab without the PI's approval.

Add-on awards require the PI submit a short proposal. The proposals should clearly articulate the meaningful research that the apprentice will conduct along with the strategy for mentorship and facilitation of follow-on opportunities (e.g., university attendance, additional lab experiences, participation in research competitions/science fairs, etc). Proposals shall not exceed three pages. The following information is required on page 1 in order to process your proposal: 1) Solicitation Number W911NF-12-R-0007, 2) current grant or contract number, 3) current proposal number and 4) name of the current Grants Officer Representative (GOR) or Contracting Officer Representative (COR).

II. **AWARD INFORMATION:**

Awards resulting from this solicitation will support the HSAP/URAP that will fund the STEM apprenticeship of promising high school juniors, seniors and undergraduates to work in a university structured research environment. Approximately $300,000.00 is expected to be available in support of the HSAP/URAP Programs. All awards will be based on merit competition following evaluations by a panel of scientists at the ARO. Awards will be made by modifications to existing grants and UARCs and will not exceed $3,000.00 per apprentice. Offerors can propose overhead costs in support of this program. Each modification can have no more than two apprentices for grants and no more than six apprentices for UARCs.

Please note: Recruitment and selection procedures for students affected by an award under this solicitation must comply with Section 2000d of Title 42, United States Code, which provides: *No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

Awards will be made as add-ons to existing single-investigator grants, Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative grants, and University Affiliated Research Centers that have at least 12 months' period of performance remaining from the date of proposal submission. Cost sharing or matching is not required for this program.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

1. Address to Request Application Package

This announcement may be accessed from the ARL website http://www.arl.army.mil/www/default.cfm?page=8 under Broad Agency Announcements (BAA).

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Grants.gov Registration must be accomplished prior to application submission. Proposals must be submitted in the following format through grants.gov.   Proposals sent by fax or email will not be considered. Apply through the Grants.gov APPLY portal, http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.   A Grant Application Package is available for download through the Grants.gov Apply portal under CFDA Number 12.431, Funding Opportunity Number W911NF-12-R-0007.

The following documents are mandatory: Application for Federal Assistance Form SF 424, and Research and Related Budget Form.

1)   The Application for Federal Assistance form, SF 424 (R&R), must be fully completed. Block 11, "Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project," must reference the research topic area being addressed in the effort by identifying the specific paragraph from Part I. Block #16 (Estimated Project Funding) must agree with the budget summary submitted in the proposal; The form SF 424 (R&R) cover page must be typed using upper and lower case letters.

2)   Research and Related Budget form, Sections A-K (as needed). The Research & Related Budget-Cumulative Budget form will reflect the total costs;
This program will not require Senior/Key Persons only students at the rate of $10/hour for a total of up to 300 hours. However, because this is a mandatory fill under First and Last name type Not Applicable. Under Requested Salary, Fringe Benefits, and Funds Requested fill in with $0.00. Place the costs for the student under Section B, Other Personnel.

3)   Once the E-Business POC has authorized privileges to the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR), the AOR will receive an email notification that they have been given authorization. The AOR may then proceed to submit applications to Grants.gov. To find the application on Grants.gov, follow the link http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do and enter the Program Announcement number in the "Search by Funding Opportunity Number:" block. For application instructions, go to http://www.grants.gov/Apply. The training demonstration at http://www.grants.gov/CompleteApplication will assist AORs in the application process.

4) You MUST open and complete the form entitled Application for Federal Assistance, SF 424 (R&R) after registration, as this form will automatically populate data fields in other forms. If you encounter any problems, contact customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or at support@grants.gov. If you forget your user name or password, follow the instructions provided in the Credential Provider tutorial. Tutorials may be printed by right-clicking on the tutorial and selecting "Print".

5) Each proposal must be typed using Times New Roman, 12-point font with 1-inch margins on 8½ x 11-inch white paper, one-sided, and single-spaced. The form SF 424 (R&R) cover page must be typed using upper and lower case letters. **Proposals are limited to 3 pages.** This includes the technical proposal. These pages must be numbered consecutively. Pages exceeding these limits will not be considered in the proposal evaluation. The Grants.Gov forms, SF 424 (R&R) and the Research and Related Budget forms are not included in the page count.

6) Proposals transmitted online via the Grants.gov APPLY portal must be date/time stamped by the server as submitted by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday, 29 February 2012. After proposals are uploaded to grants.gov, the submitter receives an email indicating the proposal has been submitted and that grants.gov will take up to two days to validate the proposal.

7) Should the site of Grants.gov not be operational on the date proposals are due, the deadline is extended to the same time of the first day when the site is in operation.
NOTE: Prospective grantees must complete several steps in order to participate in the Grants.gov application process. Starting early is extremely important as it may take several weeks to complete the processes necessary to submit an application through the Grants.gov Apply portal.

V. <u>APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION:</u>

A. Evaluation Criteria: Proposals for the HSAP/URAP will be evaluated on the following criteria. Evaluation criteria (of equal importance to each other) are as follows:

1. Quality of the proposed research/educational experience (e.g., relevance of subject matter to the field of science, organization of the proposed hands on training/educational experience, creative enhancement of the lab training experience, amount of exposure to laboratory techniques and equipment, etc.).

2. Proposed plan for meaningful mentoring of selected students (e.g., in the science/research, career opportunities, other STEM, university and/or AEOP opportunities, preparation and submission of papers to journals and other competitive forums such as science fairs, etc.)

B. Review and Selection Process: Scientists and engineers of the ARO will evaluate proposals according to the above criteria. The most meritorious proposals will be recommended for award/funding.

C. Selection Announcement and Award Dates: The modifications to existing grants and UARCs are expected to be in place on or around 15 April 2012. This date should be cited as the start date for the proposal performance period (see Proposal Cover – SF 424 R&R) and for budgetary purposes.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

A. <u>Award Notices</u>: When the awards are approved, ARO will send written notification to all principal investigators. The Army procurement office will contact the college/university business office to initiate award processes. Initial contact will be made with the individual whose name and number is provided in section 19 of the Proposal Cover (SF 424 R&R).

B. <u>National Policy Requirements</u>: All awards require Appendix A to 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying. Full text of this certification is available at http://www.aro.army.mil/forms/forms2.html Proposers are certifying compliance with these regulations by signing the Proposal Cover Page SF 424 (R&R).

C. <u>Reporting</u>: Detailed instructions for reporting the additional requirements in your grant for the HSAP/URAP efforts will be provided at time of award.

D. <u>Grants.gov Registration</u>: Proposals must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov. There are several one-time actions your institution must complete in order to submit applications through Grants.gov (e.g., obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number; register with the Central Contract Registry (CCR); register with the credential provider; register with Grants.gov; and obtain approval for an Authorized Organization Representative to submit applications on behalf of the organization). Go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for further information. Use the Grants.Gov Organization Registration Checklist, which may be accessed at http://www.grants.gov/assets/OrganizationRegCheck.pdf to guide you through the process.

Questions: Questions relating to the registration process, system requirements, how an application form works, or the submittal process must be directed to Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. **VERY IMPORTANT – Download PureEdge Viewer:** In order to view, complete, and submit an application package, you will need to download the appropriate software packages. Go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp for further information.

E. <u>Full Proposal Receipt Notices</u>: After a full proposal is submitted through Grants.gov, the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive a series of three e-mails. It is extremely important that the AOR <u>watch</u> for and <u>save</u> each of the e-mails. Offerors will know that the proposal has been properly received when the AOR receives e-mail Number 3. Retain the Submission Receipt Number (e-mail Number 1) to track a submission. The three e-mails are:

Number 1 – The applicant will receive a confirmation page upon completing the submission to Grants.gov. This confirmation page is a record of the time and date stamp for the submission.

Number 2 – The applicant will receive an e-mail indicating that the proposal has been validated by Grants.gov within a few hours of submission. (This means that all of the required fields have been completed.) This initial email will also include a grants.gov tracking number.

Number 3 – The third notice is an acknowledgment of receipt in e-mail form from grants.gov.   The e-mail is sent to the authorized representative for the institution. The e-mail for proposals notes that the proposal has been received and provides the assigned tracking number. The document, Tracking Your Application Package, located at http://www.grants.gov/assets/TrackingYourApplicationPackage.pdf explains this process. **The proposal is not considered properly received until the AOR receives email #3.**

F. Late Submission of Full Proposals: Any full proposal submitted through Grants.gov where the time and date for submission (e-mail Number #3) is after the deadline for proposal submission in Section IV, paragraph 4 below will be late and will not be evaluated unless the Grants.gov website was not operational on the due date and was unable to receive the proposal submission. If this occurs, the time specified for the receipt of proposals through Grants.gov will be extended to the same time of the day specified in this BAA on the first workday on which the Grants.gov website is operational.

Be advised that Grants.gov applicants have been experiencing system slowness and validation issues which may impact the time required submitting proposals. After proposals are uploaded to grants.gov, the submitter receives an email indicating the proposal has been submitted and that grants.gov will take up to two days to validate the proposal. As it is possible for grants.gov to reject the proposal during this process, it is STRONGLY recommended that proposals be uploaded at least two days before the deadline established in the BAA so that it will not be received late and be ineligible for award consideration.   It is also recommended to start uploading proposals at least two days before the deadline to plan ahead for any potential technical and/or input problems involving the proposer's own equipment.

VII. **AGENCY CONTACTS**

Questions regarding program policy, guidance, and administration should be directed to: ARO Youth Science Program Manager: Ms. Ashley Wade, 919-549-4205, ashley.e.wade.civ@mail.mil