Army Educational Outreach Program
2022-2023 AEOP High School Apprenticeships Request for Proposal (RFP)

Rochester Institute of Technology
SEPTEMBER 2021

The Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) is soliciting responses to this partnerships and funding opportunity in an effort to provide summer **AEOP High School Apprenticeships**, in STEM, to students from **underserved populations**. These apprenticeships are hosted at partner academic institutions where apprentices contribute to research activities in a laboratory setting under the supervision and guidance of a qualified mentor.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to identify host institutions to participate in the FY2022-2023, two-year, program cycle. The AEOP High School Apprenticeships program is administered by the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) on behalf of the U.S. Army. RIT is a member of the AEOP Consortium formed by the AEOP Cooperative Agreement award, a group assembled to provide and/or oversee STEM programs designed to support the goals and mission of the AEOP. The lead organization for the Consortium is Battelle Memorial Institute, a non-profit research and development organization with a strong commitment to STEM education.

Point of Contact:

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INTRODUCTION

The United States has long recognized that a scientifically and technologically literate citizenry is our nation's best hope for a secure, rewarding, and successful future. For over 50 years, the Army has supported a wide range of educational opportunities in STEM for our youth, college and graduate students, as well as our valued teachers.

Our nation's economy has greatly benefited from the technological achievements of the last century and is destined for greater achievements throughout the 21st century. The demand for STEM literate citizens has become increasingly high, and STEM talent is increasingly valuable and necessary, as it will continue to play a dominant role in all aspects of everyday life. For this reason, the Army created the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP), which provides a portfolio of Army STEM educational opportunities for the future generations of America's workforce and their teachers.

STEM talent is essential to delivering innovative solutions for the nation, and AEOP is committed to engaging, inspiring, and attracting that next generation of STEM talent.

The AEOP is composed of competitions, unique experiences, internships, and teacher resources designed to spark inspiration, exploration, and achievement in STEM literacy and career development. From elementary school through college, students of all proficiency levels, interests, and social and economic backgrounds are encouraged to participate in real-world STEM experiences involving these important disciplines while also engaging with Army-sponsored mentors.

AEOP offers a suite of research apprenticeship opportunities to high school and undergraduate students at Army research facilities and partner academic institutions. The initiative detailed in this RFP focuses on providing AEOP High School Apprenticeship opportunities for students from underserved and underrepresented populations in STEM (see page 7 for qualifying criteria). Student apprentices conduct a minimum of 200 hours of research over a 5-8 week period during the summer months under the mentorship of a professional scientist or engineer. They receive a stipend in recognition of their work.

AEOP High School Apprenticeships are administered through the K-12 University Center at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Founded in 1829, RIT is a privately endowed, coeducational university with nine colleges emphasizing career education and experiential learning. RIT's K-12 University Center (RIT K-12) is a research center that creates strategic pre-college pathways to diversify the college-going population and develop the national workforce.

RIT K-12 is facilitating the Request for Proposal (RFP) process detailed herein to solicit entities to serve as 2022-2023 (a two-year cycle) AEOP High School Apprenticeships host sites.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Student apprentices contribute to research activities under the supervision and guidance of a qualified mentor. This hands-on research experience is intended to develop student understanding of the process of research; to spark their curiosity and understanding of work in the sciences, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM); to introduce them to DoD research and STEM careers; and to broadly contribute to the future pipeline of talent capable of contributing to the nation's future STEM workforce. At the end of each apprenticeship, students are required to submit an abstract of their summer research project and complete an evaluation.

In addition, students are encouraged, but not required, to create a research poster and accompanying presentation that captures their summer laboratory experience in preparation for the AEOP's Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS, https://www.usaeop.com/program/jshs/). This poster and/or presentation may also be highlighted in the forthcoming AEOP Online Research Journal and/or Virtual Research Symposium.

Further, in order to measure the success of the program and to ensure continued improvement, mentors at partner institutions must complete an AEOP evaluation, and may receive requests from evaluators to be onsite, or to conduct telephone interviews of participants (students, Mentors, and Directors). AEOP evaluations are critical to the sustainability of the AEOP's programming, including AEOP High School Apprenticeships (see https://www.usaeop.com/about/our-impact/).

2022-2023 PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

Funding is provided under a cooperative agreement between the US Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM) and Battelle Memorial Institute. RIT administers the AEOP Apprenticeships as a member of the AEOP Consortium and under the sub-award agreement with Battelle. Program implementation is contingent upon the availability of Army funding. Award funding must be used in support of AEOP High School Apprenticeships and not to supplement a partners' existing STEM summer programs.

RIT requests proposals from qualified educational institutions to host AEOP High School Apprenticeships and provide a mentorship experience for high school students from underserved populations. Once awarded funding, partner institutions will be established as a vendor to RIT. Partner institutions are required to designate a Site Director who will be responsible for the overall management and administration of the local program effort. This individual will be responsible for all required reporting associated with the award.

This RFP and all information covered in this document are considered **certifications** and are binding on the part of the institution submitting a proposal. Therefore, the document submitted must be signed by both the designated Director and an immediate supervisor at the submitting institution.

1. The AEOP High School Apprenticeships program at each site will operate on a two-year cycle. Selected sites will receive funding for one year, with the expectation for a second year of the same funding amount. The second year of funding is dependent on a satisfactory review of site performance in year one, approval of a site's planned program for year two, and the availability of of program funding from the Army.

2. Sites may submit proposals for up to two (2) student apprentices and receive a university stipend of up to $1,000 to support the cost of materials and other supplies in support of the student apprentice. *If a prospective host institution has the capacity to serve more than two students, a special request may be submitted and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis pending available funding. Sites may host a maxium of four (4) apprentices and receive no more than $2,000 in university stipend support. Please note, since the awards are stipends, universities cannot charge overhead.*

3. Apprentices will receive stipends of $2,000-$3,000 based on the number of apprenticeship hours (200-300 hours) and a minimum stipend allowance equivalent to $10/hr. (Sites with mandated higher minimum stipend rates must submit appropriate documentation at the time of application to support an increase). The purpose of the stipend is to offset income likely earned by a student had the student been employed elsewhere during the time of the apprenticeship. A timeframe for disbursing the student stipend will be established in accordance with site program guidelines and in agreement with the RIT AEOP Apprenticeship team. Funding for the required stipend can be

disbursed by the host site, provided sufficient capabilities exist and agreement to AEOP reporting guidelines or stipends may be administered directly to the student through RIT.

4. AEOP apprenticeships must last 5-8 weeks and, dependent on supplemental resources available at partner institutions, can be residential or non-residential.

5. All students who participate in this inititiative must be U.S. citizens or permanent legal residents, and students must be from populations historically underserved and underrepresented in STEM areas. (Refer to **Participant Recruitment and Selection Guidelines** [page 7] for clarification and additional details about this designation.)

6. The program must be free to all participants. No application, registration, or other fees can be charged.

7. Each site must ensure that its apprentices complete the AEOP application available on the AEOP website and, at the culmination of the apprenticeship, the AEOP student evaluation survey accessed via a link provided by RIT. Mentors must complete program registration, a pre- and post-apprenticeship 21st Century Skills Assessment for each apprentice, and mentor evaluation survey. Additionally, each program will promote/support apprentice and mentor participation in phone interviews and/or focus groups, as requested by AEOP Consortium members responsible for evaluation and RIT.

8. Site Directors will participate in scheduled group conference calls or webinars, as designated by RIT for the purposes of onboarding or providing updates concerning program administration. This participation will be in addition to individual Site Director/RIT administrator communications that may be arranged.

9. During a site's summer program, each Site Director must submit to RIT photos/videos and news stories that feature the program or participants; submissions will occur at the end of the second week of the program and then additional items with a site's final report, required for consideration of year two funding.

10. A representative from RIT or the AEOP consortium may make pre-arranged visits to each site during the summer program timeframe to conduct interviews and/or focus groups with Apprentices and Mentors. These site visits may also take place virtually.

11. The university insurance policy will provide liability insurance for its apprentice(s). Note that coverage is not provided by RIT, Battelle Memorial Institute, or the AEOP.

12. Pending competitive selection of the site's proposal and submission of all signed documentation, RIT will send a formal notification of award to the site.

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION GUIDELINES

The basic criteria for the selection of an AEOP High School Apprentice is the desire and potential for pursuing careers in the sciences, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM). Additional factors to be considered include:

- Previous demonstrated abilities or interest in STEM
- Potential for a successful career in the field as indicated from overall scholastic achievement and/or high school teacher recommendations
- Student statement on the application form
- Interview conducted by the Site Director or Mentors
- Student must meet AEOP's underserved eligibility criteria as defined below.
- Student must be a US Citizen or permanent legal resident.

Applicants qualifying as underserved must meet two or more of the criteria listed below:
- Student qualifies for free or reduced lunch/ is low income
- Student is a minority historically underrepresented in STEM (Alaskan Native, Native American, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander)
- Student who identifies as female pursuing research in physical science, computer science, mathematics, or engineering.
- Student attends a rural, frontier, or Title I school (per NCES data)
- English is a second language for the student
- Student has a disability (including learning disability)
- Student is a potential first-generation college student (parents did not attend college)
- A dependent of a military service member or veteran.
  - Military child – dependents of members of the Active Duty Armed Forces
  - Military-connected – military child plus the dependents of members of the National Guard and Reserves
  - Military-affiliated – military-connected plus the dependents of Veterans
  - Military-connected schools – schools where a minimum of 15% of the student population is military-connected

Host sites must conduct local outreach and encourage all interested students to apply to the program through the website (www.usaeop.com). RIT will review all applications and then forward those that meet the minimum program criteria to the appropriate university for the final interview and selection process. Students cannot be placed in an apprenticeship unless they have applied through the AEOP website, meet minimum qualifications, and been competitively selected. Any institution that does not follow this process will forfeit funding and participation in the program. **It is strongly encouraged that apprenticeships be awarded competitively to students that do not have a prior affiliation with the Site Director, Mentor, or laboratory outside of other AEOP funded initiatives (i.e.; Unite, GEMS, etc.). This initiative is designed to provide opportunities for students that otherwise might not have a chance to work in that laboratory and should not be used as a way to pay a stipend to a student already engaged with that laboratory or related to someone within the laboratory.**

2022-2023 DELIVERABLES

Partner Institutions:

Prior to the start of the apprenticeships program, Site Directors must submit:

- o Terms and Conditions
- o Acknowledgement of Mentor Guidelines
- o Site Profile Form
- o Apprentice Selection Form
- o Mentor(s) must complete registration (link will be provided)

- At the beginning of the apprenticeship, the Mentor(s) must complete the 21st Century Skills pre-assessment for each apprentice.
- Each month of the apprenticeship, the Site Director will submit the Stipend Payment form to the Program Coordinator at RIT, as necessary, by the stated due date.
- Support apprenticeship participation in weekly AEOP webinars.
- At the end of the apprenticeship, the Mentor(s) must complete the evaluation survey and the 21st Century Skills post-assessment for each apprentice.
- End of Program report

AEOP Apprentice:

- The Apprentice is required to complete an abstract of their research.
- Apprentices are also required to complete an on-line evaluation of their experience during the last week of the apprenticeship.
- Apprentices are encouraged to prepare and present a poster of work completed over the summer to their peers, in preparation for the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS).
- Apprentices are required to view weekly AEOP skill development and STEM career awareness webinars.

2022-2023 PROPOSALS GUIDELINES

To be reviewed, proposals **MUST** adequately address each of the following areas, as needed:

A. **Priority Alignment** - Please describe your how your institution aligns with the priorities of the DoD/Army and the mission and goals of the AEOP (reference these sites for more information https://www.army.mil/standto/archive/2021/05/06/ and https://www.usaeop.com/about/). Please list current and past participation in other DoD/Army apprenticeship programs and state success and challenges experienced. Also, include links to any other current high school apprenticeship and/or STEM outreach programs you administer.

B. **Program Marketing and Outreach** - Describe how your institution will market and promote AEOP and the Army-funded AEOP High School Apprenticeships to eligible students, specifically in underserved communities, and the types of media and materials you plan to use. Program sites are encouraged to widely publicize AEOP High School Apprenticeships to local high schools and work with high school staff to identify underserved students interested in STEM. Please include a list of schools and organizations you work with directly. Sites are to reference "**AEOP High School Apprenticeships**" in all marketing and program literature.

C. **Mentor Identification** - Identify potential Mentor(s) and describe their role in supervising and guiding the mentoring of the Apprentice and work assignment. The Site Director (PI) CV/resume should be included in the proposal. Please also include how the Mentor will work with the apprentice if a virtual apprenticeship is necessary. Mentors will be required to register via an AEOP registration link, which will be provided.

D. **Student Selection** - Describe the selection process to recruit and select student(s). Identify the skills necessary and required to participate in the apprenticeship site. Student selection, in part, should be based on the criteria outlined on page 7. Please indicate if you anticipate the selection process being different if a virtual apprenticeship is necessary.

E. **Protection of Minors** - Please describe all policies and processes to safeguard and protect minors from harm while participating in an apprenticeship at your site. Please provide the following: copy of any youth protection policies and procedures for your institution or program, information on background screening (criminal background check, sex offender registry check, interviews, reference checks, etc.) and training (youth safety, mandatory reporter training, etc.) required of personnel interacting with the minor apprentice. Institutions hosting a minor apprentice are expected to have youth safety protocols in place for the apprenticeship that meet or exceed the requirements of RIT's Protection of Minors Policy, which is available here: https://www.rit.edu/k12/protection-minors-policy.

F. **Apprentice Project Description -** *As an addendum to the technical proposal*, please describe the research project in which the Apprentice will be working, desired deliverables, and anticipated research outcomes. Include proposed start and end dates as well as tentative daily hours. Identify the science disciplines so the apprentice will be able to choose an apprenticeship that falls within their area of

interest. Also, include any required pre-requisite courses or prior experience the student must have. Please describe how the apprenticeship will be conducted, in-person or virtually (if necessary).

G. **Apprentice Onboarding -** Describe the apprentice and laboratory orientation process at your site. Please include information for both in-person and virtually (if necessary).

H. **Apprentice Development and Outcomes -** Identify the gains for the apprentice and the laboratory (i.e. technical skills, engineering skills, publication opportunities etc.). Please discuss plans, specifically, to help the apprentices prepare research for the AEOP's Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) https://www.usaeop.com/program/jshs/. Identify how the mentor will support the apprentice's future development in STEM (future coursework, competitions, publications etc.) Follow-up opportunities and relationships for the apprentice within the lab are encouraged. If you are able to provide research opportunities for AEOP High School Apprentices at your site, once the summer apprenticeship ends (during the academic year), please explain which programs or processes are in place to support this work. We, at AEOP Apprenticeships, would be interested in knowing how we might support extended research opportunities.

I. **Education about College Readiness, AEOP Opportunities and STEM Careers -** Apprentices will have the opportunity to participate in weekly webinars offered by AEOP in which STEM careers, college and career readiness will be discussed. Please describe how you will accommodate the apprentice and ensure they take advantage of this opportunity? Additionally, please indicate whether anyone from your site (Director, mentor, etc.) would be interested in being a guest speaker at one of our webinars.

J. **Program End Event -** Describe how the Site Director will coordinate or support participation in an end of program event to bring apprentices (and other AEOP participants, if applicable) together to share experiences, research accomplishments and celebrate AEOP STEM opportunities. This can be for an individual site event or participation in a larger conference-type virtual gathering of multiple sites.

Proposals for AEOP Appretniceship funding for FY2022-2023 are required by **5PM EST, October 29, 2021**. Directors are encouraged to contact RIT (aeopapprenticeships@rit.edu) for further information.

Program Timeline and Important Dates

Proposal Announcement	September 21, 2021
Proposal Submission due to RIT	October 29, 2021
Award Notification	November 19, 2021
Sites formally accept award; begin program promotions	December 6, 2021
Application Opens: Students apply through www.usaeop.com/program/high-school-apprenticeships	December 17, 2021
Application Closes	March 1, 2022
Sites review applications and conduct interviews	March 2022
Accepted students notified	April 2022
Mentor and accepted student onboarding	May 2022
Apprentices participate in research at partner sites	June-August 2022

PROReposalS – FORMAT and INSTRUCTIONS

General Information about the Host Institution

Instructions: Input answers directly into the fillable PROPOSAL document, expanding the number of pages of the proposal to no more than 8 pages. Addendums may be included and are not considered part of the 8 page limit.

All proposals should include:

1. **The RFP Cover Sheet**

2. **A technical proposal responding to the criteria reviewed in this RFP. Included with the technical proposal, as an addendum, should be a detailed project description as described on page 9 of this document. Proposals without addendums should be a maximum of 8 pages, and include a resume/CV for the Site Director, names of possible Mentors and their resumes/CVs. (resumes/CVs are not included in the 8 page limit).**

3. **A financial proposal, which states 1) the amount requested for lab stipend and briefly explains how it will be used and 2) the amount requested for student stipend(s). Please detail how student stipend is calculated (i.e.; hourly or in accordance with standards established by your institution; not included in the 8 page limit).**

Please submit your proposals via email, in PDF format, by 5PM EST on October 29, 2021 to:

Tori A. Matthews, Ph.D.
Director, AEOP Apprenticeships and Career Development
Rochester Institute of Technology
aeopapprenticeships@rit.edu

Be sure to include the following information in the email subject line:

"**AEOP HS APPRENTICESHIPS PROPOSAL - INSTITUTION NAME - DIRECTOR NAME**"

AEOP High School Apprenticeships Site Proposal – FY2022 - 2023

Instructions: In application of becoming a FY2022-2023 funded **AEOP High School Apprenticeships** site, please complete this fillable form. Proposals MUST adequately address <u>each</u> of the areas outlined in the **accompanying program specification** document. To be considered for site selection, completed and signed proposals must be submitted via email, in PDF format, no later than **5PM EST, October 29, 2021** to:

Tori A. Matthews, Ph.D.
Director, AEOP Apprenticeships and Career Development
Rochester Institute of Technology
aeopapprenticeships@rit.edu

Be sure to include the following information in the email subject line:

"**AEOP HS APPRENTICESHIPS PROPOSAL - INSTITUTION NAME - DIRECTOR NAME**"

Please be sure that your proposal includes the following:
- ☐ Technical Proposal, including this cover sheet and financial proposal (pgs. 2-8)
- ☐ Proposal Signatures
- ☐ Site Director/PI Resume or CV
- ☐ Potential Mentors Resume or CV
- ☐ Addendums (if necessary)

Site Information

Institution Name:

Institution Mailing Address:

Site Director Name & Title:
(include resume/CV in Addendum)

Site Director Phone:
Site Director Email:

Supervisor Contact Name & Title:

Supervisor Phone:
Supervisor Email:

Technical Proposal

(Proposal are expected to address each area below, referring to the accompanying 'Program Specification' document for detailed guidelines.)

A. **Priority Alignment:** How does your site meet DoD/Army priority alignments as outlined by the AEOP? Has your site previously participated in any other DoD/Army Apprenticeship programs? Does your site currently administer any other high school apprenticeship/STEM outreach programs? (1-3 paragraphs)

B. **Program Marketing and Outreach:** Does your institution have a marketing and/or outreach plan in place to target eligible populations?

Yes (If yes, provide description below)
No

C. **Mentor Identification:** Have you identified individuals to serve as mentors for this program?

> Yes (If yes, provide requested information below and attach resumes/CVs as addendums)
> No

Mentor Name: Mentor Name:
Title: Title:
Email Address: Email Address:

*If there are additional mentors, please include their information in the addendum. Site Directors should also include a copy of their resume/CV in the addendum, even if not participating as a mentor.

D. **Student Selection:** Will you adhere to student selection guidelines listed in the accompanying program specification document?   Yes   No

Are there any additional requirements that apprentices would need to participate in **AEOP High School Apprenticeships** at your site (i.e.; minimum GPA, completed course requirements, grade level specifications, etc.)? Please explain:

E. **Protection of Minors:** Does your site have a 'Protection of Minors Policy' in place?   Yes   No

If yes, briefly describe and/or reference where your site's protection policy can be found.
If no, your site will be required to sign and submit a *'Protection of Minors Compliance Agreement'.*

F. **Apprentice Project Description:** Describe potential apprentice research projects including, general research areas, any research models used, techniques that will be learned and overall goals of the project. This description will be posted and viewed by apprentices when making their site selections. Please be concise in your explanation. If more than one project is available and space is insufficient to describe both, please include as an addendum.

Will this apprenticeship be offered virtual or in-person?

G. **Apprentice Onboarding:** Describe any apprentice orientation and/or lab safety training that will be provided by your site in completion of the onboarding process for apprentices.

H. **Apprentice Development and Outcomes:** Describe any technical skills and/or knowledge that will be gained by the apprentice over the course of the program. How might you provide continued support for the apprentice beyond the summer experience.

I. **Education concerning College Readiness, AEOP Opportunities and STEM Careers:** AEOP will provide weekly workshops and webinars designed to enrich the summer research experience for apprentices. Describe any onsite programming that your institution provides and how you will facilitate apprentice participation in these programs and AEOP sponsored events.

Would anyone (Director, mentor, etc.) from your site be interested in highlighting their lab as a guest speaker during our webinar series?   Yes   No

J. **Program End Event:** What opportunities might students have to present or publish any research they have conducted while participating in your program (i.e.; will there be an end of program poster session or symposium).

Financial Proposal

How many apprentices are being requested by your site?　　　　　　　_____

(Standard proposals allow for a maximum of two apprentices. Your site may host up to four apprentices, by 'special request' and depending on funding availability. Please include 'special requests' in the addendum. In your request, explain your sites capacity to host additional apprentices and address what you believe would be the impact of offering additional apprenticeships.)

How many hours will the apprentice be participating in research (between 200-300 hrs.)?　_____

What is the proposed stipend rate for your site?　　　　　　　　　　　_____

What is the total stipend amount requested?　　　　　　　　　　　　_____

*Students may earn up to $3000 in an educational stipend in support of their 200-300 hour **AEOP High School Apprenticeship**. Students will receive a minimum of $10/hour in support of their apprenticeship. Therefore, the minimum stipend will be $2,000 for a 200 hour apprenticeship and the maximum will be $3,000 for a 300 hour apprenticeship.*

Include the proposed apprentice stipend rate for your site above. The stipend amount may be calculated using site guidelines that establish minimum allowances. For example, if the minimum allowance is $12.50/hr., the site may set the student stipend amount in the range of $2,500 for a 200 hour apprenticeship to $3,000 for a 240 hour apprenticeship.

What is the total needed amount of the University Stipend (minimum is $1,000, maximum is $2,000)**?**

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How will the funds be used to support apprentice research?

Contact information for your site's Departmental Grant/Accounts Manager

Name:
Title:
Email Address:
Mailing Address:

The answer to this question does not impact a sites ability to be funded.

Pending AEOP funding, specific efforts are being made to establish an **AEOP High School Apprenticeships** presence at locations also selected as **Unite** sites (https://www.usaeop.com/program/unite/).

Does your institution already have or will you attempt to establish a Unite presence on site?   Yes   No

If so, please provide a brief statement (1 paragraph) about how you will collaborate with **AEOP High School Apprenticeships** to help place qualified **Unite** alumni into the apprenticeship program.

Required Signatures:

By signing below, the undersigned agree to the following statements:

1. We believe that all information contained in this proposal and attendant materials is accurate.

2. We will adhere to specified conditions and requirements, including deadlines for program data and reports.

3. We will ensure apprentice registration and completion of AEOP surveys; the same will be expected of mentors and Site Directors.

4. We will participate in evaluation visits by RIT/AEOP Consortium representatives during our program timeline.

5. If selected as a 2022-2023 **AEOP High School Apprenticeships** site, your institution will supply documentation to RIT, as requested, concerning liability insurance as it pertains to coverage of apprentices for the duration of the program.

6. We fully understand that a consequence of failure to comply with conditions and requirements stated in this proposal may result in a loss of funding.

Proposing Institution: _____ _____

Signature   **Date**   **Print name**
Site Director

Signature: **Date**   **Print name**
Supervisor
(of the Site Director)