

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
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## **Homeland Security Initiative**

In 2004, a consortium of Kentucky's postsecondary educational institutions, facilitated by the Council on Postsecondary Education, prepared and submitted collaborative homeland security concepts to the national Department of Homeland Security to create a "virtual laboratory" to address homeland security priorities. Following a national review, awards totaling \$4.3 million were awarded to the postsecondary institutions to investigate a number of homeland security priority areas, initiating collaborative institutional projects to provide economic and workforce development. A second round of funding was made available in 2005, with 12 awards of over \$9.2 million to Kentucky's university consortium.

Currently, the Council is facilitating a consortium response to a third round of requests for proposals in the area of critical infrastructure protection, a program to be managed by the National Institute for Homeland Security. These proposals are to be focused on research, development, and transfer to practical utilization of technologies designed to protect the nation's community based critical infrastructures. As in past funding rounds, each project requires that a Kentucky based university serve as the lead institution for the research, development, and coordination activities. Each project must have participation by more than one Kentucky-based college or university and may also involve non-Kentucky universities and institutions. Private sector participation is also encouraged.

The Kentucky critical infrastructure program's success with the existing consortium projects has led the DHS to provide funding and support for a more advanced structure that is intended to allow for the production of more relevant and integrated technology solutions and to move the program toward national significance and long term stability. This experience and the national emphases on homeland security has also led Kentucky's postsecondary institutions to propose new degree programs in both applied and research sciences to respond to the nation's needs for an educated workforce in homeland security areas.

Currently the Council is working with the consortium to align the institutions developing degree programs with workforce needs as identified by the DHS consultants. These degrees are designed to instruct students in both applied and research science to adequately respond to the nation's homeland security workforce needs. Learning to secure borders, airports, waterways, and seaports; responding to natural disasters or terrorist assaults; analyzing intelligence; and providing research in the fields of the latest security technology are a few of the needs determined to be in high demand by the DHS. Professional science master's degree students with a knowledge base of business, science, and industry are also being developed to better respond to the growing needs of national security efforts.