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## Stimulus grants top \$31 million

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Courtesy Ilhan Aksay  
Chemical engineering professor Ilhan Aksay

The University and the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab have received more than \$31 million in federal research grants under the economic stimulus package that became law in February.

As of mid-September the University had received 39 grants totaling more than \$17.3 million to support research in energy, mathematics, engineering, meteorology, computer science, politics, and neuroscience. PPPL received \$13.8 million to support fusion-energy research and to update the lab's aging electrical system.

Research dean A.J. Stewart Smith \*66 said the University had done well in the competition for federal dollars. Princeton's grants "recognize the potential for extraordinary economic and societal impact in the work being done by our world-class research community," he said.

In general, the funds are to be spent within two years. As of mid-September the University had submitted 121 proposals totaling almost \$150 million, including construction funding for the proposed neuroscience and psychology buildings and a data center planned for the Forrestal campus. More funding announcements are expected.

The largest University grant to date — \$3 million — is for a team led by chemical engineering professor Ilhan Aksay to study a way to produce cleaner-burning jet fuels. Funded by the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, the project focuses on the addition of tiny particles called nanocatalysts to hydrocarbon fuels. Princeton collaborators include chemistry professors Annabella Selloni and Roberto Car and aerospace engineering professor Fred Dryer. Scholars from other universities are involved as well.

Among a number of awards related to the Internet and information processing is \$750,000 to computer science professor Jennifer Rexford and assistant professor Michael Freedman to enhance the Internet's ability to host networked services, including virtual worlds and online gaming. Computer science associate professor Vivek Pai will lead a \$500,000 project to improve Web access in disadvantaged regions.

Research scientist Olga Sergienko was awarded \$376,000 to study the behavior of ice streams, rivers of ice within glaciers that may affect sea-level rise. Chemistry professor Andrew Bocarsly was awarded \$411,000 to continue his research into how light — using a special catalyst — can convert carbon dioxide into alcohols that can be used as fuel.



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PPPL director Stewart Prager said the stimulus funding included \$1 million to run the lab's flagship experiment, the National Spherical Torus Experiment, for five additional weeks this year and had already produced "a wealth of information" that continues to be analyzed. Another \$7 million will be used to better measure and control NSTX plasmas that are heated to 100 million degrees, he said.



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