



Dr. Blake Bextine joined ARPA-H as a Senior Advisor to the Director in 2023. Prior to joining ARPA-H, Bextine served as a DARPA as a program manager starting in March 2016, and served twice as acting deputy director of the Biological Technologies office. He is interested in novel approaches to addressing issues facing agricultural biotechnology and food security, including nucleic acid-based anti-pathogen/anti-pest strategies and insect and plant transformation strategies for rapid trait selection. Additionally, Bextine has focused on the climate conscious approaches to infrastructure development and waste elimination utilizing cutting-edge synthetic biology platforms.

Bextine came to DARPA from the University of Texas at Tyler where he was a Professor of biology and Assistant Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer. Prior to his arrival at UT Tyler, Bextine was a post-doctoral fellow at the University of California, Riverside. He received his Doctor of Philosophy degree from Oklahoma State University, Master of Science from Texas Tech University, and undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Northern Iowa.

Bextine is a recipient of the University of Texas System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award and has also won the UT Tyler President's Scholarly Achievement Award, White Fellowship for Teaching Excellence Award, and multiple UT Tyler Researcher of the Year Awards. He received the 2014 USDA Partnership Award. In 2014, he appeared on the Discovery Channel Television Show "Tethered."