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**U.S. Department of Energy**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS NO. NEUP-001-12**

**for Nuclear Energy Program Supporting and Mission Supporting  
R&D Proposals**

**By Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) on behalf of the Department of Energy,  
Office of Nuclear Energy**

**ISSUE DATE:** December 20, 2011

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** January 24, 2012

**BEA POINT-OF-CONTACT:** Dr. Marsha Lambregts

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This solicitation is the fiscal year (FY) 2012 Call for Proposals (CFP) for nuclear energy-related program supporting (PS) and mission supporting (MS) research and development (R&D) for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) Nuclear Energy University Programs (NEUP). This solicitation is open only to those who responded to the Request for Pre-Applications No. NEUP-001-12 and who participated in that application process. This CFP supports the NE and NEUP missions and goals described below:

*The primary mission of the Office of Nuclear Energy is to advance nuclear power as a resource capable of meeting the Nation's energy, environmental, and national security needs by resolving technical, cost, safety, proliferation resistance, and security barriers through research, development, and demonstrations as appropriate.*

*The Nuclear Energy University Programs mission is to engage the U.S. university community to conduct program directed, program supporting, and mission supporting research and development, related infrastructure improvements, and student education support to build world class nuclear energy and workforce capability as an integral component of the Office of Nuclear Energy.*

The goal of NEUP is to support outstanding, cutting-edge, and innovative research at U.S. universities through the following:

- Administering NEUP R&D awards to support NE's goal of integrating R&D at universities, national laboratories, and industry to revitalize nuclear education and support NE's R&D program objective as defined in the NE R&D Roadmap
- Attracting the brightest students to the nuclear professions and supporting the Nation's intellectual capital in Nuclear Engineering and relevant Nuclear Science, such as Health Physics, Nuclear Materials Science, Radiochemistry, and Applied Nuclear Physics
- Improving relevant university and college infrastructures for conducting R&D and educating students
- Supporting NE's goal of facilitating the transfer of knowledge from an aging nuclear workforce to the next generation of workers.

This CFP includes mandatory requirements and evaluation criteria that will be used in the selection of successful proposals.

The primary point of contact for questions regarding this solicitation is [Dr. Marsha Lambregts](#) from the NEUP Integration Office (IO). However, all technical scope

questions must be submitted through the question and answer feature on the CFP section of the website accessible via the NEUP at [www.neup.gov](http://www.neup.gov).

A NEUP workshop was held on August 9-10, 2011, in Chicago, Illinois, to assist in the preparation of this NE PS and MS R&D CFP. This workshop product is an important source of background information on the R&D areas that are included in this solicitation. Applicants are encouraged to read and familiarize themselves with these documents, review the information posted at [www.neup.gov](http://www.neup.gov) under the “**Proposal Writing Tips for Success**” tab, and communicate with technical points of contact before responding to the solicitation or entering the proposal submittal system (online).

**NOTE:** *All information and instructions required to respond to this CFP are accessible via the NEUP website: [www.neup.gov](http://www.neup.gov). Applicants will use the login credentials created during the RPA to enter the secure R&D CFP website beginning at 8 a.m. Mountain Time (MT) on December 20, 2011, and ending at 5 p.m. MT on January 24, 2012. Offerors MUST submit their proposal(s) electronically. NO hard copy proposals will be accepted.*

## 2. ESTIMATED FUNDING

The NEUP planning estimate is that funding within the range of \$26 to \$40 million will be available in FY 2012 for new PS and MS R&D awards under this CFP pending final program determination. However, it must be emphasized that overall funding profiles have not been established and specific program targets remain highly uncertain.

Accordingly, funding of awards under this solicitation may be significantly impacted by relative priorities within NEUP, the NE R&D programs, and the overall NE funding allocation for FY 2012. NEUP may issue awards in multiple phases throughout the FY pending availability of funds. The actual level of funding in each research area depends on the final FY 2012 appropriation allocations to the DOE NE R&D programs and overall NE program priorities.

## 3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

The lead applicant for each proposal submitted in response to this CFP must be a degree-granting U.S. university or college. Collaborations (i.e., teaming partners) between universities and collaborations between universities and industry or national laboratories are permitted. **Note that funding is for U.S. based researchers only. Foreign organizations are encouraged to collaborate if their role is focused on fundamental research and they are neither a denied party nor a party that requires an export license; such participants are not eligible for U.S. government funding.** Universities that partner with Underrepresented Groups, Minority-Serving Institutions (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Serving Institutions), International partners, or Industry may receive additional points during proposal evaluation (see Section 4.3.2). The following link provides the list of minority serving institutions: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html>.

Any scope performed by a non-university teaming partner or combination of non-university teaming partners cannot exceed more than 20 percent of the total award amount of any resulting contract. Any number of universities may team together on the proposal and share the funding at their discretion.

#### 4. CONTENT OF NE PS & MS R&D CFP AND BASIS FOR AWARD

##### 4.1 Submittal Content and Format

Each applicant’s proposal in response to this CFP shall include the items found in Table 1. Applicants may input these proposal elements on the NEUP R&D full proposal form provided on the [www.neup.gov](http://www.neup.gov) website.

**Table 1. Submittal Content and Format.**

Item	Description	Page Limit
Technical Narrative	Size 11 Times New Roman font minimum; 10 single spaced pages maximum-including references; One-inch margins all around minimum. Place proposal ID number on each page in header or footer; Name file: 2012 CFP Narrative “Insert ID#”	10
Vita(s)	Size 11 Times New Roman font minimum; Up to 5 two-page vitas may be submitted (1 PI, 4 collaborators) for up to a total of 10 single spaced pages maximum; 1-inch margins all around minimum. Place proposal ID number on each page in header or footer; Name file: 2012 CFP last name of collaborator “Insert ID#”	5 vitas allowed (2 pages each)
Capabilities	Size 11 Times New Roman font minimum; 2 single spaced pages maximum; One-inch margins all around minimum. Place proposal ID number on each page in header or footer; name file: 2012 CFP Capabilities “Insert ID#”	2
Budget	Follow format identified on website; name file: 2012 CFP Budget “Insert ID#”	N/A
Quality Assurance Requirements	Terms and conditions check box on the form. Please indicate that you agree to the quality assurance requirements in the project narrative.	N/A
Mandatory Requirements	Terms and conditions check box on the form. No other document needs to be provided.	N/A
Commitment of Partner(s)	Terms and conditions check box on the form. No other document needs to be provided.	N/A

Supplementary Information	Required conflict of interest form. Name file: 2012 CFP COI "Insert ID#" Short description of additional PIs/collaborators/advisors beyond the five participants above. Name file: 2012 CFP Supplemental "Insert ID#"	2
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#### 4.1.1 Technical Narrative (10 Pages)

Offeror shall provide a written narrative addressing its strategy to execute R&D that supports the specified Technical Workscope. The documentation provided shall include the items specified below:

- Proposal Title. (Do not use all CAPS for proposal title.)
- Final Technical Workscope Identification: refer to letter provided by NEUP describing the results of the RPA selection process.
- Proposed Scope Description.
- Logical path to accomplishing scope, including descriptions of tasks.
- Milestones and Deliverables.
- Type/description of facilities that will be used to execute the scope (N/A is acceptable).
- Schedule: Define timelines for executing the specified workscope.
- The roles and responsibilities of each partnering organization in the execution of the workscope.
- Unique challenges to accomplishing the work and innovations expected to mitigate such challenges.
- Information, data, plans, or drawings necessary to explain the details of Offeror's proposal.
- Quality Assurance (QA): Describe the applicable QA requirements and how they will be met. This can be a simple statement agreeing to comply with the QA requirements as described by NEUP on the website and any additional requirements deemed necessary during contracting.
- References are included in the 10 page limit. Name file: 2012 CFP Narrative "Insert ID#."

**The R&D technical narrative shall NOT include the following information:**

- Cost and pricing information.

- Identification, by individual name or name of institution, of any teaming partner. Examples of acceptable ways of referring to partners will be posted on the NEUP website.
- Official name or title of facilities used to execute scope. Describe the facility by function and/or technical attributes such as an accelerator, a test reactor, etc.

#### 4.1.2 Technical Expertise and Qualifications Vitas (2 Pages Each)

Offeror shall name all teaming partners by name and organization, as well as their proposed roles and responsibilities. For the Principal Investigator and collaborators, the Offeror shall provide a brief vita that lists the following:

- Contact information.
- Academic and professional credentials.
- Relevant professional history.
- Five recent relevant publications or commensurate professional experiences.
- See the electronic proposal submission form for document guidance.
- (Name file: 2012 CFP Last Name of Collaborator “Insert ID#”)

**Technical expertise and qualifications are to be provided for a maximum of four individuals. Submitted individuals (and/or their recipient institutions) must receive at least \$50,000 over the life of the subcontract to be considered a collaborator.**

Minor contributors—anyone not expected to materially participate in the proposal, such as consultants or national laboratory personnel who are not to be paid more than \$49,999 to participate in the project—should not be listed.

#### 4.1.3 Capabilities (2 Pages)

Infrastructure Requirements: In a separate document, Offeror shall identify the infrastructure (e.g., facilities, equipment, and instrumentation) required to execute the proposed scope of work. Describe the non-labor (e.g., facilities, equipment, and instrumentation) resources that are available and accessible to the Offeror and are required to execute the scope of work. Describe any unique equipment and facilities that are needed, are accessible, and will be used to execute the scope of work. Discuss the adequacy of these resources and identify any gaps. See the electronic proposal submission form for document guidance.

This call allows the Offeror to propose the purchase of any needed equipment to conduct the proposed work. Any property acquired under subcontracts resulting from this CFP will be subject to the terms and conditions of the BEA standard research subcontract. This document is available via the NEUP website: [www.neup.gov](http://www.neup.gov). (Name file: 2012 CFP Capabilities “Insert ID#.”)

#### 4.1.4 Budget

The Offeror shall use the spreadsheet, “CFP Budget Form example.xls,” to provide all pricing information for execution of the proposed scope of work. Note that the required information is for the lead university as well as for each partner. Additional pricing information beyond that requested may be provided, but will be used at the discretion of NEUP. The budget form is available on the CFP section of the NEUP website. (Name file: 2012 CFP Budget “Insert ID#.”)

**Proposals shall not propose costs of more than \$300,000/year and/or \$900,000/contract for submission under the PS R&D area and costs of more than \$150,000/year and/or \$450,000/contract in the MS R&D area. In either case, projects are to be up to 3 years (“no cost” extensions up to 4 years must be approved by sponsoring R&D program office in consultation with NEUP).**

A maximum of 20 percent of an award can go to industry and national laboratories combined.

Budget worksheets shall contain one worksheet for each institution, including national laboratories, and a roll up worksheet.

It is not necessary to include the supporting documentation as noted on the budget worksheet (in red) at this time. It will be required during contract negotiation, if proposal is selected.

Provide name, phone number, and email address for a single point of contact from the university grants and contracting department or equivalent entity.

#### 4.2 Mandatory Requirements

**Within the submission form, Offeror shall identify all Federal funding sources by agency source, project name, monetary amount, and length of term that are pending or currently in place for the Principal Investigator or collaborators within the past three years.**

Within the written proposal, Offeror shall address the mandatory (Go/No-Go) requirements. Only proposals deemed fully compliant with the mandatory requirements shall be eligible for continued evaluation. **All mandatory requirements committed to within the Request for Pre-Applications (RPA) continue to apply throughout the CFP process.**

If an Offeror cannot meet, or does not address compliance with the following mandatory (Go/No-Go) requirements, the proposal will be considered nonresponsive and will not be evaluated further. Each Offeror (i.e., U.S. university submitting a proposal) is responsible for obtaining the commitment of each of their teaming partners to the mandatory requirements; their submittal of a response to this CFP is indicative of each teaming partner’s acceptance of the mandatory requirements. The Offeror is not required to submit formal letters of commitment of their partners as part of their proposal.

However, prior to award of any resultant contract, the Offeror must demonstrate that the proposed team has been formed and all teaming partner agreements are finalized. All Go/No-go criteria from the RPA are also included as mandatory requirements within this CFP (Table 2).

**Table 2. DOE NEUP PS and MS R&D CFP Mandatory Requirements.**

No.	Requirement	Description	Evaluation
1	Commitment to reporting and budget requirements	<p>Commitment to <u>quarterly billing and reporting</u>. Commitment to quarterly billing to national campaign director and quarterly reports approved by campaign director. The quarterly report will provide status and progress information on R&amp;D deliverables, milestones, schedule, and budget.</p> <p><u>Annual Report</u>. The fourth quarter report is accepted as an annual report, but is required to include a more rigorous level of detail and a section describing the future outlook of the R&amp;D.</p>	Go/No-Go
2	10 CFR 851, "Worker Safety and Health Program"	If Offeror proposes work scope to be conducted at a DOE facility, the work performed at DOE facilities shall be conducted in accordance with 10 CFR 851, "Worker Safety and Health Program," requirements.	Go/No-Go



No.	Requirement	Description	Evaluation
3	Export Control	<p>Each Offeror to this CFP and their partners(s) are responsible for their own compliance with all U.S. Export Control regulations in the performance of any work that is funded through the NEUP program. Offerors and partners who are selected to perform work in accordance with this CFP agree to have in place a documented export control process by the time a contract is awarded. Offerors and partners can contact the U.S. Departments of Commerce, State, Energy and Treasury for guidance as to applicable licensing requirements and other restrictions. By participating in this CFP, Offerors and partners acknowledge that the work proposed will be subject to all export control regulations that may prohibit or restrict: (i) transactions with certain persons, and (ii) the type and level of technologies and services that may be exported. These regulations include, without limitation, the Arms Export Control Act, the Export Administration Act, the International Economic Emergency Powers Act, the Atomic Energy Act, and regulations issued pursuant to these including the Export Administration Regulations</p>	
3	Export Control (continued)	<p>(EAR) (15 CFR Parts 730-774), the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) (22 CFR Parts 120-130), and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Department of Energy export regulations (10CFR Parts 110 and 810). Offerors and partners acknowledge that export control requirements may change and that the export of goods, technical data or services from the U.S. without an export license or other governmental authorization may result in both civil and criminal liability.</p>	Go/No-Go

No.	Requirement	Description	Evaluation
4	Standard Research Subcontract	Offeror must agree to the terms and conditions of a standard research subcontract (available on the CFP website), without exceptions. If the lead institution has a current blanket agreement in place with BEA and is awarded a R&D contract in response to this CFP, then the NEUP R&D award will be added to the existing blanket (i.e., release or task order). If no current blanket exists, the action will be awarded under a stand-alone standard research subcontract.	Go/No-Go
5	Quality Assurance	Each offeror to this CFP and their partners need to implement QA requirements based on a specific scope of work and associated deliverables. Work scope has been reviewed by the TIOs to insure the integrity of R&D products and their usability by NE. In accordance with this review, QA requirements were identified on the QA Requirements Form. Offerors and partners who are selected to perform work in accordance with this CFP agree to adhere to the specified QA requirements through use of university procedures or procedures/templates/guidance provided by NEUP. Offerors shall document acceptance to the QA requirements in the CFP.	Go/No-Go
6	Commitment to prepare additional contract elements	Depending on the nature and terms of agreements already in place with BEA, offerors should be prepared to provide the following: University Contract Office Approval, Current Negotiated Rate Agreement, University Travel Policy, Resumes for other degreed individuals, faculty members, and administrators, forecast of monthly accrual based on best estimate of costs incurred.	Go/No-Go

### 4.3 Selection Method

NEUP will utilize a **best-value** selection process whereby all relevant evaluation factors will be assessed, including cost considerations, to select the successful candidates. The evaluation process will be based solely upon the written information, references and independent pre-award assessment actions as outlined within this solicitation. The best-value selection process will be conducted as follows:

**Written Proposals** – Offeror shall provide a written proposal, fully compliant with the electronic submittal requirements specified on the NEUP website. NEUP will make a determination as to the responsiveness of each proposal to the solicitation requirements.

**Cost Considerations** – To assess the cost component of the proposal, NEUP will perform a review of the detailed cost proposal to determine reasonableness of the labor and non-labor costs for performing the proposed work.

NEUP may solicit from available sources, including references and past clients identified by the Offeror, experience and past performance information on an Offeror or key personnel, and consider such information in its evaluation. Offerors are reminded to submit their best initial proposal as NEUP may award without further discussions.

If NEUP determines that revised proposals or best and final offers are necessary, NEUP may solicit them from only those Offerors deemed by NEUP (based upon evaluation of the current proposals) to have a reasonable chance to be selected for award (i.e., the competitive range).

#### **4.3.1 Balance Opportunities**

**Partnership Balance - Underrepresented Groups, Minority-Serving Institutions, International, and Industry partners:** Proposals will be evaluated as part of the relevance review criteria to determine the degree to which such partnerships, if any, contribute to the proposal's ability to support the relevant program element or overall NE mission (**new for FY 2012**).

**Geographical Balance:** When scoring based on evaluation criteria does not clearly distinguish a set of proposals, a geographical balance criterion may be applied during the final selection process.

#### **4.3.2 Scoring**

NEUP will evaluate and score each Offeror's proposal based on the information submitted in response to this CFP. Points for the technical score will be calculated as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Weighting of Scores.**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Description</b>	
	<b>Technical Proposal – Peer Review</b>	<b>Percentage of Peer Review Points</b>
Scientific and Technical Merit	Advances the state of the knowledge in the relevant program element(s); practicality of scope with respect to specified funding range for work scope and period of performance.	25%
Research Plan	Logical path to work accomplishment.	45%
R&D Resources and Capabilities	Demonstrate that labor and non-labor resources are adequate to accomplish the proposed work scope. Costs delineated on the budget worksheet will be considered within this section.	15%
Team Qualifications	Relevant credentials, publications, experience, and past accomplishments of Principal Investigator and collaborators.	15%
	<b>Peer Review Score</b>	Sum of ratings x weights
	<b>Relevance<sup>1</sup> (Separate Review Process)</b>	<b>Percentage of Relevancy Review Points</b>
Mission/Program Relevance	Alignment with the mission-specific program relevant technical objectives or in the case of the mission-supporting, the judgment will be based upon the overall Office of Nuclear Energy mission relevance, not the specific program element.	Up to 100% (if no partnerships)
Partnership Relevance	The degree to which underrepresented groups, minority-serving institutions, international and/or industry partners, if any, contribute to the proposal’s ability to support the relevant program element or overall NE mission. <b>(note: partnerships are not required for projects to be evaluated as unquestionably relevant, but partnerships will increase relevance score, not to exceed maximum available points, if evaluated to contribute as described above)</b>	Up to 25% (5 points max.)
	<b>Relevancy Score</b>	Sum of ratings <sup>2</sup> x weights

Criterion	Description	
Weighting	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weighted Score Ratio</b>  <b>(Peer : Relevancy)</b>  <b>Program Supporting: 65:35</b>  <b>Mission Supporting: 80:20</b></p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relevance: This element will be scored by the Federal Program Offices and TIO/TDO offices, not by peer review.</li> <li>2. Not to exceed 100%</li> </ol>		

#### 4.3.2.1 Scoring Balance Opportunity

Three peers will independently employ a semi-blind process to evaluate and score the proposals in accordance with the peer review scoring criteria described in Table 3. This peer evaluation process will produce a ranked list of proposals for each work scope. Also, a relevancy review process to be completed by TIO Directors and NE Program Managers in accordance with the scoring criteria described in Table 3. Then, the NEUP IO will facilitate a process by which TIO Directors, NE Program Managers, and NE senior leadership will evaluate the overall evaluation results and subjective programmatic factors to select a final set of proposals to fund from amongst the ranked proposals. The selection process will be guided by the balanced opportunity criteria within the total available funds.

The selections made will be governed by proposal rankings within a specified scope of work, and the following attribute will generally be applied: when no balanced opportunity criteria are identified, the highest ranked proposal generally will be funded.

#### 4.3.3 Competitive Range

If NEUP determines that revised proposals or best and final offers are necessary, NEUP may solicit them from only those Offerors deemed by NEUP (based upon evaluation of the current proposals) to have a reasonable chance to be selected for award (i.e., the competitive range).

### 5. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

#### 5.1 Proposal Due Date

Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. MT January 24, 2012. Applicants MUST submit their responses through the NEUP website on the electronic proposal submission form.

## 5.2 CFP Schedule

Issue CFP	December 20, 2011
PS and MS R&D Proposals Due	January 24, 2012
Review Completed and Awards Announced	April 30, 2012
Subcontracts Completed	August 31, 2012

## 5.3 Late Proposals

Proposals received after the designated date and time (late) may be retained without opening, with the Offeror notified of this decision. Extension of the proposal due date shall be at the sole discretion of NEUP on behalf of its sponsor, DOE.

## 5.4 Proposal Packaging

Responses must be submitted as specified on the NEUP website to allow technical, pricing, and capabilities to be evaluated separately. The files shall be named as specified on the NEUP website.

## 5.5 Format and Content Requirements

The items below must be completed and submitted to NEUP using the NEUP website.

(NOTE: Specified forms are provided at the website.)

### 5.5.1 Technical Proposal

See the electronic proposal submission form for document guidance.

## 5.6 Fully Executed Organizational Conflicts of Interest Certification

The Offeror must provide, for itself and all partners **except National Laboratories**, full disclosure of all previous, current, and planned contract activities where the Offeror is providing assistance on the same or similar matters to any other organization. The conflict of interest form can be found under the supplemental information section of the application.

## 5.7 Pricing

Submit core information using the budget spreadsheet and associated guidance provided on the NEUP website. The budget spreadsheet shall be submitted with the file name 2012 CFP Budget "InsertID#." A copy of the spreadsheet is provided on the NEUP website as CFP Budget Form example.xls.

Provide the following types of supporting documents with the budget spreadsheet: published fee schedules for laboratory equipment use, vendor quotes for equipment purchases, catalog prices for materials and supplies, details of the basis of estimate for the proposals budget, and indirect rate agreement.

(Applies only to academic partners.) Offeror shall submit a cost proposal on the basis of fully burdened hourly labor rates for each of the labor categories proposed. **Offeror's rates shall include only those labor costs required by law and may not unfairly burden NEUP or the government with overhead, profit, and other factors already accounted for in standard labor rates.** Offeror's fully burdened rates shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Offeror's overhead, e.g., the cost of maintaining places of business, fringe benefits, statutory benefits, other direct and indirect costs (indirect rate agreement).
- Costs of owning, renting, leasing, operating, and maintaining equipment and services typically required in the staffing support business, e.g., telephones (fixed and mobile), pagers, faxes, office machines (computers, copiers, fax machines, filming equipment, plotters, printers, servers, networks, data ports for customer electronic access, data storage and retrieval systems), filing systems, furniture, and developing and maintaining Offeror's standards/guides and procedures.
- Costs of normal and customary human resource and department manager functions, (e.g., staff oversight, employee performance assessments, awards, promotions, transfers, disciplinary actions, and terminations).
- Costs for routine business mail and express delivery (for delivery within three business days).
- Costs for routine printing jobs.
- Capabilities: Submit all capabilities information in accordance with the guidance provided on the NEUP website. The required capabilities information and associated guidance is provided on the electronic proposal submission form.

Commitment that the Offeror will comply with the mandatory (Go/No-Go) requirements identified in Paragraph 4.2 "Basis for Award," and evidence that Offeror has the capabilities to meet the requirements set forth in the CFP. The commitment is made by checking the Terms and Conditions box located on the electronic proposal submission form available on the NEUP website.

Foreign Ownership Control or Influence over Contractor Representation, Form PROC 2113 (Questionnaire, Certification, Consultant Certification, List of Owners, or Change of Company Name forms), as applicable. Form available on the NEUP website.

Failure to submit any of the foregoing may result in the Offeror being determined non-responsive, at the sole discretion of NEUP.

## **6. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **6.1 Ombudsman Program**

Offeror is hereby notified that protests relative to this solicitation shall be resolved through BEA's Ombudsman Program (Phone: [208] 526-4513).

## **7. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

### **7.1 Interpretations and Exceptions**

Offerors shall submit proposals on the basis of compliance with the CFP requirements. Any interpretation of the requirements by the Offeror may be considered an exception and treated accordingly (i.e., establish the proposal as non-responsive). Offeror must obtain from NEUP concurrence/clarification regarding its interpretation to classify its proposal as compliant with, or exception to, the CFP requirements. Any exception must be documented as part of the proposal and priced as an alternative.

If Offeror takes exception to any CFP requirement, either technical or administrative, it shall be so stated in the proposal and formatted as follows: technical exceptions shall be numbered and attached to the technical proposal in a single document; administrative exceptions shall be numbered and attached to the price proposal; and each exception shall be clearly and completely defined.

### **7.2 Rights Reserved by NEUP**

NEUP reserves the following rights:

- To accept or reject any proposal with or without prior discussion with the Offeror and to disregard minor irregularities in proposals received
- To conduct any necessary pre-award survey and analysis to evaluate an Offeror's capabilities to comply with the requirements of this CFP
- To conduct a pricing audit to facilitate a determination of the reasonableness of proposed pricing.

Offerors are advised that although negotiations and a request for best and final may follow receipt of proposals, award may be made without further discussions on proposals received. Thus, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms of price, technical compliance, and completeness.



### 7.3 Proposal Validity Period

A proposal shall remain firm for 180 days after the proposal due date, unless otherwise specified by the Offeror.

### 7.4 Proprietary Information

If Offeror can provide a proposal without proprietary information, NEUP prefers this approach. If proprietary data/information is essential to an effective presentation of Offeror's proposal, please adhere to the following:

- If it is possible to do so without destroying the presentation's effectiveness, place all proprietary data in a separate document as an attachment or appendix to the appropriate proposal volume.
- Each page containing proprietary data must be marked with the following legend, an alternative legend that NEUP specifically agrees to accept, or a statement that the documents are submitted pursuant to a specifically identified written agreement between you and NEUP defining the duties and "obligations of the parties relative to the proprietary data: ***"This contains 'proprietary data', furnished under BEA's Call for Proposal No. NEUP-001-12, which may be duplicated and used by BEA with the express limitations that the 'proprietary data' may not be disclosed outside BEA and the U. S. Government."*** Contact the Procurement Agent if the legend furnished by BEA is not considered appropriate, must be revised, or should be replaced by a written agreement controlling submittal of proprietary data.

### 7.5 Discrepancies in the Call for Proposal

Should an Offeror find discrepancies in, or omissions from, this CFP, its attachments or related documents, or should Offeror be in doubt as to the meaning of any requirements, Offeror shall notify NEUP and obtain correction or clarification prior to submitting its proposal.