

**Financial Assistance
Notice of Funding Opportunity
Part 1**



**U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)
Idaho Operations Office
Fiscal Year 2025 University Nuclear Research Infrastructure
Revitalization
Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: DE-FOA-0003314
Application due: February 12, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time**

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| BEFORE YOU BEGIN | 4 |
| Navigating the Notice of Funding Opportunity | 4 |
| I. BASIC INFORMATION | 5 |
| A. Key Facts | 5 |
| 1. Funding Details | 6 |
| 2. Period of Performance | 6 |
| B. Executive Summary | 6 |
| C. Agency Contact Information | 7 |
| II. ELIGIBILITY | 8 |
| A. Eligible Applicants | 8 |
| 1. Restricted Eligibility | 8 |
| 2. Domestic Entities | 8 |
| 3. Foreign Entity Participation | 9 |
| B. Limitation on Number of Applications Eligible for Review | 10 |
| C. Cost Sharing | 10 |
| 1. Cost Share Requirements | 10 |
| 2. Unallowable Cost Share Sources | 10 |
| D. FFRDC Eligibility Criteria | 10 |
| 1. DOE and Non-DOE FFRDCs as a Subrecipient | 10 |
| E. Other Eligibility Requirements | 11 |
| III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | 13 |
| A. Program Purpose | 13 |
| B. Program Goals and Objectives | 13 |
| C. Expected Performance Goals | 14 |
| D. Applications Specifically Not of Interest | 15 |
| E. Statutory Authority | 15 |
| F. Energy, Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations | 15 |
| IV. APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORM | 18 |
| A. Summary | 18 |
| B. Application Content Requirements | 18 |
| 1. Covered Individual Definition, Designation, and Responsibility..... | 18 |
| 2. Summary of Application Requirements..... | 19 |
| 3. Technical Volume | 20 |
| C. Funding Restrictions | 23 |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| 1. | Build America Requirement for Infrastructure Projects..... | 24 |
| V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES..... | | 25 |
| A. | Required Registrations..... | 25 |
| 1. | Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) | 25 |
| 2. | NEUP.gov | 25 |
| B. | Application Package..... | 26 |
| C. | Submission Date and Times | 26 |
| D. | Intergovernmental Review..... | 26 |
| VI. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION..... | | 27 |
| A. | Standards for Application Evaluation | 27 |
| B. | Responsiveness Review | 27 |
| C. | Review Criteria | 27 |
| 1. | Compliance Criteria | 27 |
| 2. | Technical Review Criteria | 27 |
| D. | Other Selection Factors..... | 30 |
| VII. SELECTION AND AWARD NOTICES | | 32 |
| VIII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION | | 33 |
| A. | Post-Award Requirements and Administration..... | 33 |
| 1. | Real Property and Equipment | 34 |
| 2. | Rights in Technical Data..... | 34 |
| 3. | Cost Share Payment..... | 35 |
| B. | Questions and Support | 35 |
| 1. | Questions..... | 35 |
| 2. | Support..... | 35 |
| IX. OTHER INFORMATION..... | | 36 |

Before You Begin

Navigating the Notice of Funding Opportunity

The [OMB Memorandum M-24-11](#) directs federal agencies to reduce the burden on applicants in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process and limit the length of the NOFO information requests. With Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 NOFOs, DOE has separated the NOFO into two parts.

The NOFO Part 1 describes the specific DOE programmatic goals and evaluation criteria, eligibility, and other components that are specific to each funding opportunity. The NOFO Part 2 includes the fixed DOE requirements that generally do not change from NOFO to NOFO, including standard information for the application phase, expectations for award negotiations, and post-award requirements. Applicants must review both the NOFO Part 1 and the NOFO Part 2 prior to applying. To facilitate navigation, you will find links throughout this document to additional information found in Part 2.

There are several required one-time actions applicants must take before applying to this NOFO. Some of these actions may take several weeks, so it is vital applicants build in enough time to complete them. Failure to complete these actions could interfere with application or negotiation deadlines or the ability to receive an award if selected. If you have previously completed the necessary registrations, make sure your registration is active and up to date. All registrations are free. Please refer to [NOFO Part 2, Get Registered](#), for additional information.

This announcement is published in conjunction with NOFO Part 2 Version 1.0.

I. Basic Information

A. Key Facts

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Issuing Agency | Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office | KEY DATES Notice of Funding Opportunity Issue Date: November 20, 2024 Informational Webinar: Week of December 2, 2024 Application Deadline: February 12, 2025 Anticipated Selection Notification Date: May 2025 Anticipated Award Date: August 1, 2025 Estimated Period of Performance: August 1, 2025 – July 31, 2029 |
| Funding Opportunity Title | Fiscal Year 2025 University Nuclear Research Infrastructure Revitalization | |
| Announcement Type | Initial | |
| Funding Opportunity Number | DOE-FOA-0003314 | |
| Funding Instrument | Grant | |
| Assistance Listing Number | 81.121 | |
| Funding Opportunity Description | This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is for University Nuclear Research Infrastructure Revitalization. It is referred to in this document as the “Infrastructure Revitalization NOFO.” | |
| Program Goals & Objective(s) | This NOFO will award a university-led consortium which shall establish and/or enhance nuclear research capabilities at U.S. universities, especially in support of nuclear cyber-physical protection, new digital technologies in advanced nuclear reactors, and the development and safety assessments of small modular reactors. | |
| Eligible Applicants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In accordance with 2 CFR 910.126(b), prime applicant award eligibility is restricted to: U.S. Universities and Colleges. Other domestic entities including U.S. Universities and Colleges; for-profit entities; non-profit entities; state and local government entities and Indian Tribes; DOE federally funded research and development centers (FFRDC’s) and non-DOE FFRDCs and Federal Research Agencies are eligible as subrecipients. | |
| Application Site and Helpdesk | Application Site: https://proposals.inl.gov Helpdesk: NEUP@inl.gov | |

1. Funding Details

Single Topic Area

- Approximate total available funding: \$6,000,000 in FY 2025
- Approximate number of awards: 0-1
- Approximate dollar amount of individual awards: \$0 - \$6,000,000
- Minimum cost share required: Cost Sharing is not required, but is encouraged
- Approximate award project period: 48 months
- Anticipated length of budget periods: 48 months

DOE reserves the right to make more or fewer (or even no awards) depending on funding availability and/or the quality of the applications.

2. Period of Performance

DOE anticipates making a single award comprised of one budget period.

B. Executive Summary

The intent of this NOFO is to award approximately one (1) grant, for up to four (4) years, to a consortium consisting of universities, national laboratories, industry partners and/or other stakeholders. The consortia must be university led.

The consortia project shall establish and/or enhance nuclear research capabilities at U.S. universities and colleges, especially in support of:

- (1) nuclear cyber-physical protection,
- (2) new digital technologies in advanced nuclear reactors, and
- (3) the development and safety assessments of small modular reactors.

The proposed effort must strengthen and revitalize the academic community's nuclear energy infrastructure, which could include enhancements of existing infrastructure or creation of new capabilities. In addition, the proposed effort must enhance regional or national impacts of the investment and must foster the inclusion of underrepresented communities.

This NOFO does not provide any funds for the planning and/or construction of new university nuclear reactors.

Projects proposed under the Infrastructure Revitalization NOFO are intended to:

- Revitalize the U.S. capacity for university-led nuclear R&D by establishing and/or improving infrastructure to align with the advanced reactor technologies being deployed by the U.S. nuclear industry;
- Support innovative combinations of facilities, equipment, and related capabilities to maximize the value of investments toward R&D;
- Emphasize support for rapid, lower-cost approaches that can enable advanced-reactor-relevant R&D, education and workforce development prior to any universities establishing advanced research reactors; and

- Involve consortia among diverse types of institutions to maximize participation and realization of benefits by underrepresented communities that have historically faced challenges to such access.

Requests should focus on a goal or capability that significantly adds to the current U.S. capacity to support advanced reactor R&D, education, and workforce development. Applicants must clearly demonstrate the connection among requested pieces of equipment or other project elements toward a key objective or outcome.

C. Agency Contact Information

U.S. Department of Energy
Idaho Operations Office
1955 Fremont Avenue
Idaho Falls, ID 83415

For questions relating to this specific NOFO, please send emails to NEUP@inl.gov.

DISCLAIMER: Applicants are discouraged from submitting information considered proprietary unless it is deemed essential for proper evaluation of the application. If the application contains information that the applicant organization considers to be trade secrets, information that is commercial or financial, or information that is privileged or confidential, the pages containing that information must be identified as specified in the application instructions. When such information is included in the application, it will be withheld from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law, including the Freedom of Information Act, with the understanding that the information will be used or disclosed only for evaluation of the application. The information contained in the application will be protected by DOE from unauthorized disclosure, consistent with the need for merit review of applications of financial assistance awards to assure the integrity of the competitive process and the accuracy and completeness of the information. If a federal financial assistance award is made as a result of or in connection with an application, the federal government has the right to use or disclose the information to the extent authorized by law. This restriction does not limit the federal government's right to use the information if it is obtained without restriction from another source.

II. Eligibility

To be considered for substantive evaluation, an applicant's submission must meet the criteria set forth below. If the application does not meet these eligibility requirements, it will be considered ineligible and removed from further evaluation and ineligible for any award. DOE will not make eligibility determinations for potential applicants prior to the date on which applications to this NOFO must be submitted. The decision whether to apply in response to this NOFO lies solely with the applicant. The information included here is specific to eligibility requirements for this NOFO. For eligibility requirements applicable to all NOFOs, please consult the [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility](#).

A. Eligible Applicants

To be considered for substantive evaluation, an applicant's submission must meet the criteria set forth below. If the application does not meet these eligibility requirements, it will be considered ineligible and removed from further evaluation.

1. Restricted Eligibility

In accordance with 2 CFR § 910.126(b), Competition, DOE is restricting prime applicant eligibility for this NOFO to U.S. Universities and Colleges to ensure the Nuclear Energy University Program supports university research, collaborations with industry and national laboratories, and training and educating the next generation nuclear workforce.

2. Domestic Entities

The proposed prime recipient and subrecipient(s) must be domestic entities. To qualify as a domestic entity, the entity must be organized, chartered, or incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a particular state or territory of the U.S. or under the laws of the U.S.; have majority domestic ownership and control; and have a physical place of business in the U.S.

The following types of domestic entities are eligible to participate as a **prime recipient** of this NOFO:

- U.S. Universities and Colleges¹

The following types of domestic entities are eligible to participate as a **subrecipient** of this NOFO:

- U.S. Universities and Colleges;
- For-profit organizations;
- Nonprofit organizations;
- State and local governmental entities; and
- Indian Tribes, as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, 25 U.S.C. § 5304²

¹ "U.S. Universities and Colleges," is defined consistent with the meaning of "institution of higher education" as set forth in 20 U.S.C. 1001(a).

² "Indian Tribe," for the purposes of this NOFO and as defined in in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act ([25 U.S.C. § 5304](#)), means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any

3. Foreign Entity Participation

While international partners are encouraged to participate, foreign entities are not eligible to apply as either a recipient or subrecipient. No U.S. Government funding will be provided to entities incorporated outside of the U.S. or to a foreign government or any entity owned or controlled by a foreign government. Foreign government ownership means direct ownership of the applicant entity, its parent organization (e.g., trust, holding company, corporation, etc.), and any and all other entities in the corporate structure regardless of the applicant entity's place of incorporation and operation. NE will evaluate the benefit and contribution of any such proposed partnerships as part of its evaluation of the relevancy to the NE mission.

Participant Limitations

Participation of the following entities are limited as follows.

- DOE FFRDCs³ are eligible to apply for funding as a subrecipient but are not eligible to apply as a recipient.
- Non-DOE FFRDCs are eligible to participate as a subrecipient but are not eligible to apply as a recipient.
- Federal agencies and instrumentalities (other than DOE) are eligible to participate as a subrecipient but are not eligible to apply as a recipient.

Performance of Work in the U.S.

All work for awards under this NOFO must be performed in the U.S.

Ineligible Participants

The following entities are ineligible for participation in this NOFO as a recipient, subrecipient, or subcontractor.

- In accordance with 2 CFR 200.214, entities banned from doing business with the U.S. government such as entities debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participating in federal programs.
- Entities identified on Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control Treasury's Sanctions Program Specially Designated Nationals list are prohibited from doing business with the U.S. government and are not eligible. See [OFAC - Sanctions List Service \(treas.gov\)](https://www.treas.gov/sanctions).
- Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engaged in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995, are not eligible to apply for funding.

Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688) [43 U.S.C. § 1601, et seq.], which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the U.S. to Indians because of their status as Indians. Federally Recognized Indian Tribes are also considered disadvantaged communities for the purposes of Justice40 requirements in this NOFO per https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/M-23-09_Signed_CEQ_CPO.pdf.³ FFRDCs are public-private partnerships that conduct research for the U.S. government. A listing of FFRDCs can be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/ffrdclist/>.

³ FFRDCs are public-private partnerships that conduct research for the U.S. government. A listing of FFRDCs can be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/ffrdclist/>.

Entity of Concern Prohibition

Entities of Concern are prohibited from participating in projects selected under this NOFO (see [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility, Other Eligibility Information, Entity of Concern Prohibition](#) section for details and definitions).

B. Limitation on Number of Applications Eligible for Review

A prime applicant entity may submit only one application to this NOFO. If an entity submits more than one full application, the DOE will only review the last submission. This limitation does not prohibit an applicant from collaborating on other applications (e.g., as a potential subrecipient or partner) so long as the entity is listed as the prime applicant on only one application submitted under this NOFO.

C. Cost Sharing

Applicants are expected to follow through on estimated cost share commitments proposed in their applications if selected for award negotiations. Please refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility](#) for more information on Cost Sharing.

1. Cost Share Requirements

Cost sharing is encouraged but not required under this NOFO. Any cost sharing proposal must be included in the application. Applicants are bound by the cost share proposed in their application if selected for award negotiations.

If cost share is proposed, the cost share must come from non-federal sources unless otherwise allowed by law. The cost share percentage is calculated by dividing the cost share by the total allowable project costs for the award where the total allowable project costs include government share (including FFRDC costs if applicable) and cost share. To help applicants calculate proper cost share amounts, DOE has included a cost share information sheet and sample cost share calculation in the [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility—Cost Sharing, Cost Share Calculation Examples](#).

2. Unallowable Cost Share Sources

The unallowable cost share sources identified here are specific to this announcement. Refer to [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility--Cost Sharing, Unallowable Cost Share Sources](#) for unallowable cost share sources applicable to all NOFOs.

D. FFRDC Eligibility Criteria

1. DOE and Non-DOE FFRDCs as a Subrecipient

As long as they have no conflict, DOE and non-DOE FFRDCs may be proposed as a subrecipient on another entity's application subject to the following guidelines:

Authorization for non-DOE FFRDCs

The federal agency sponsoring the FFRDC must authorize in writing the use of the FFRDC on the proposed project and this authorization must be submitted with the application. The use of a FFRDC must be consistent with its authority under its award.

Authorization for DOE FFRDCs

The cognizant Contracting Officer for the FFRDC must authorize in writing the use of the FFRDC on the proposed project and this authorization must be submitted with the application. The following wording is acceptable for this authorization:

Authorization is granted for the Laboratory to participate in the proposed project. The work proposed for the Laboratory is consistent with or complementary to the missions of the Laboratory and will not adversely impact execution of the DOE assigned programs at the Laboratory.

Funding, Cost Share, and Subaward with FFRDCs

The value of and funding for the FFRDC portion of the work will not normally be included in the award. DOE FFRDCs participating as a subrecipient on a project will be funded directly through the DOE Work Authorization process in accordance with DOE O 412.1A. Non-DOE FFRDCs participating as a subrecipient will be funded through an interagency agreement with the sponsoring agency.

Although the FFRDC portion of the work is excluded from the award, the applicant's cost share requirement will be based on the total cost of the project, including the applicant's, the subrecipient's, and the FFRDC's portions of the project.

All DOE FFRDCs are required to enter into a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement⁴ (CRADA) or, if the role of the DOE FFRDC is limited to technical assistance and intellectual property is not anticipated to be generated from the DOE FFRDC's work, a Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA), with at least the recipient. A fully executed CRADA or TAA must be in place or be compliant with a Master Scope of Work process prior to the FFRDC starting work directly allocable to the FA award.

A CRADA is used to ensure accountability for project work and provide the appropriate management of IP, e.g., data protection and background IP. A Data Management Plan is not suited for this purpose.

The recipient will be the responsible authority regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues, including but not limited to disputes and claims arising out of any agreement between the recipient and the FFRDC.

Limit on FFRDC Effort

The effort by non-Universities and Colleges, in aggregate, shall not exceed 20% of the total project cost.⁵

E. Other Eligibility Requirements

The following requirements must also be met:

- Must be a multi-institutional consortium project.

⁴ A cooperative research and development agreement is a contractual agreement between a national laboratory contractor and a private company or university to work together on research and development. For more information, see <https://www.energy.gov/gc/downloads/doe-cooperative-research-and-development-agreement>⁵ Total project cost is the sum of the government share, including FFRDC costs if applicable, and the recipient share of project costs.

⁵ Total project cost is the sum of the government share, including FFRDC costs if applicable, and the recipient share of project costs.

- A minimum of 50% of the budget must go to equipment and upgrades (e.g., physical infrastructure/equipment). The remaining portion of the budget may be used for research costs including faculty, students, and staff support.
- Non-University and College collaborators and personnel, in composite, can have no more than 20% of the total funds provided by the Government.

Note: It is anticipated that consortium funds will be used to support physical infrastructure and related research activities.

III. Program Description

A. Program Purpose

The Office of Nuclear Energy's (NE) mission is to advance nuclear energy science and technology to meet U.S. energy, environmental, and economic needs. NE has identified the following goals to address challenges in the nuclear energy sector, help realize the potential of advanced technology, and leverage the unique role of the government in spurring innovation:

- Keep existing U.S. nuclear reactors operating;
- Deploy new nuclear reactors;
- Secure and sustain our nuclear fuel cycle; and
- Expand international nuclear energy cooperation.

NE strives to promote integrated and collaborative research conducted by national laboratory, university, industry, and international partners under the direction of NE's programs; deploy innovative nuclear energy technologies to the market; and optimize the benefits of nuclear energy.

Collectively, all NE-sponsored activities support the Department's priorities to combat the climate crisis, create clean energy jobs with the free and fair chance to join a union and bargain collectively, and promote equity and environmental justice by delivering innovative clean energy technologies.

The development of nuclear energy-related infrastructure and basic capabilities in the research community is necessary to promote Research and Development (R&D) that supports nuclear science and engineering (NS&E), NE's mission, and the nation's nuclear energy challenges. Accordingly, DOE intends to facilitate the education and training of nuclear scientists, engineers, and policymakers through graduate and undergraduate study, two-year programs, and R&D that is relevant to the Department and the U.S. nuclear energy industry in general.

As part of its ongoing infrastructure support activities, NE has supported individual, discrete, and definable items or capabilities. This Infrastructure Revitalization NOFO is in addition to the other NE Infrastructure investments and seeks a more holistic approach to improving U.S. university R&D capabilities.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

The intent of this NOFO is to award approximately one (1) grant, for up to four (4) years, to a consortium consisting of universities, national laboratories, industry partners and/or other stakeholders. The consortia must be university led.

The consortia project shall establish and/or enhance nuclear research capabilities at U.S. universities and colleges, especially in support of:

- (1) nuclear cyber-physical protection,
- (2) new digital technologies in advanced nuclear reactors, and
- (3) the development and safety assessments of small modular reactors.

The proposed effort must strengthen and revitalize the academic community's nuclear energy infrastructure, which could include enhancements of existing infrastructure or creation of new capabilities. In addition, the proposed effort must enhance regional or national impact of the investment and must foster the inclusion of underrepresented communities.

This NOFO does not provide any funds for the planning and/or construction of new university nuclear reactors.

It should be noted that DOE has initiated a priority effort to develop and maintain a national R&D framework to achieve NE's research missions, requiring an integrated approach involving people, tools, facilities, and knowledge, tied to strategic partnerships. Experimental infrastructure (i.e., tools and facilities) is a critical piece of this framework. However, these capabilities, especially radiological and nuclear facilities, required to handle nuclear material, are expensive to build and maintain. Therefore, thoughtful management of new capability procurement is required, while also providing researchers with an effective mechanism to obtain access to unique nuclear energy research facilities.

Please note the following:

- NE reserves the right to award portions of a request so that available funding can have the highest impact for the nuclear energy community.
- Proposals that support the sharing and use of equipment and instrumentation by multiple campuses of a university or multiple universities are encouraged.
- Applicants must have the full consent of each collaborator prior to listing them on an application form.
- Non-university collaborators and personnel, in composite, can have no more than 20% of the total funds provided by the Government.

C. Expected Performance Goals

Projects proposed under the Infrastructure Revitalization NOFO are intended to:

- Revitalize the U.S. capacity for university-led nuclear R&D by establishing and/or improving infrastructure to align with the advanced reactor technologies being deployed by the U.S. nuclear industry;
- Support innovative combinations of facilities, equipment, and related capabilities to maximize the value of investments toward R&D;
- Emphasize support for rapid, lower-cost approaches that can enable advanced-reactor-relevant R&D, education and workforce development prior to any universities establishing advanced research reactors; and
- Involve consortia among diverse types of institutions to maximize participation and realization of benefits by underrepresented communities that have historically faced challenges to such access.

Requests should focus on a goal or capability that significantly adds to the current U.S. capacity to support advanced reactor R&D, education, and workforce development. Applicants must clearly demonstrate the connection among requested pieces of equipment or other project elements toward a key objective or outcome.

NE reserves the right to respond to potential shifts in priorities during FY 2025 that may be driven by events, policy developments, or Congressional/budget direction. DOE-NE will factor such considerations into decisions related to the timing and scale of award announcements associated with this NOFO.

D. Applications Specifically Not of Interest

The following types of applications will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered (Please also refer to the [Responsiveness Review](#) section below):

- Applications that fall outside the technical parameters specified in the [Program Goals and Objectives](#) section above
- Applications that do not describe a consortium-style approach to revitalize existing university nuclear research infrastructure
- Applications including several uncorrelated equipment procurement, installation and/or upgrade requests
- Applications that describe performing actions that result in duplicating existing capabilities
- Applications involving the planning or construction of new university nuclear reactors will not be considered
- Applications including costs for the following activities will not be allowed:
 - Routine operation and maintenance of equipment
 - Upgrades to increase operational profit or support for commercial activities
 - Indirect costs for the 50% of the budget that must go to equipment and upgrades (e.g., physical infrastructure/equipment)
- Applications focused specifically in areas not of interest to the NE mission, such as fusion energy, medical physics, nuclear forensics, or environmental management

E. Statutory Authority

The programmatic authorizing statute is Section 951 (a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, as codified at 42 U.S.C. § 16271(a). Additionally, 42 U.S.C. § 16274 and 31 U.S.C. § 6304 apply to this NOFO.

Awards made under this announcement will fall under the purview of 2 CFR Part 200 as adopted and supplemented by 2 CFR Part 910.

F. Energy, Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations

The Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) is committed to advancing environmental justice as a core component of our mission. Executive Order 14096, *Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*, underscores our responsibility to integrate environmental justice into every aspect of our work at NE.

As part of our efforts to integrate environmental justice into our work and in compliance with Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, which established the [Justice40](#)

[Initiative](#),⁶ the Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) strives to contribute to the President’s goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments – including investments in clean energy and energy efficiency; clean transit; affordable and sustainable housing; training and workforce development; the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution; and the development of clean water infrastructure – flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. The goal is to spur economic development and job creation in disadvantaged communities throughout the U.S., through effective teams and/or partnerships with institutions, located in a disadvantaged community that may receive funding support from the project. In support of the Justice40 Initiative, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) developed the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) tool to identify disadvantaged communities. CEJST can be found at <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>.⁷ **Applicants are encouraged to use CEJST to illustrate how their project supports disadvantaged communities.**

NE also strives to advance energy justice through effective teams and/or partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs). Information on MSIs can be found at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/itudes/eligibility.html#tips>. This information predominately covers institutions that have been awarded grants through the Department of Education and does not include all institutions that may meet the definition of an MSI. The Office of Science has compiled a similar list of institutions: <https://science.osti.gov/grants/Applicant-and-Awardee-Resources/Institution-Designations>. **These lists are not meant to represent an exhaustive summary of MSIs but will be used as a starting point for self-identifying MSIs.** If applicants believe that their institution qualifies as an MSI and is not identified in either of these lists, please contact neup@inl.gov with an explanation for how the university meets the conditions of being considered an MSI.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how the establishment of their consortia will develop resources and programming that will specifically support disadvantaged communities and/or MSIs.

What is a Disadvantaged Community?

According to Executive Order 14008, a disadvantaged community is one that has been historically marginalized and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment in housing, transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure, and health care. A community qualifies as “disadvantaged” if the census tract is above the threshold for one or more environmental or climate indicators and the tract is above the threshold for the socioeconomic indicators, or if they are a Federally Recognized Tribe whether or not they have land as defined by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>.

What is an underrepresented community?

⁶ Established by [Executive Order 14008](#) on *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, the Justice40 Initiative sets the goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments in climate, clean energy, and other areas flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. Consistent with Justice40 guidance, [M-21-28](#) and [M-23-09](#), DOE recognizes disadvantaged communities as the census tracts defined and identified as disadvantaged by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), located at <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/>, as well as all Federally Recognized Tribes (whether or not they have land).

⁷ OMB, CEQ, & CPO, M-23-09, *Addendum to the Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative, M-21-28, on using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)* (Jan. 27, 2023), https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/M-23-09_Signed_CEQ_CPO.pdf.

According to the Equity Executive Orders: 13985, 14020, and EO 14091, an “underrepresented” community refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, such as Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander persons and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; women and girls; LGBTQI+ persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; persons who live in U.S. Territories; persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality; and individuals who belong to multiple such communities. Further, according to the National Science Foundation's 2023, report titled, Diversity and STEM: Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities, (<https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf23315/report>) the U.S. STEM workforce has gradually diversified between 2011 and 2021, with increased representation from these underrepresented communities. However, Hispanic workers represented 15% of the total STEM workforce in 2021, and Asian and Black workers were 10% and 9%, respectively. American Indians and Alaska Natives together made up less than 1% of the U.S. population and STEM workforce in 2021. DOE seeks to inspire underrepresented Americans to pursue careers in energy and support their advancement into leadership positions. (<https://www.energy.gov/articles/introducing-minorities-energy-initiative>).

IV. Application Content and Form

This section includes application information specific to this NOFO Part 1. Refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Application Content and Form](#) for standard information that applies to all DOE NOFOs such as formatting and content requirements, and funding restrictions.

A. Summary

The application process includes one submission phase: Full Application. Neither letters of intent nor concept papers are required.

| Application Submission Phase | Eligibility for Submission |
|------------------------------|---|
| Application | Must be submitted by the specified due date and time to be eligible for comprehensive merit review. |

B. Application Content Requirements

Each application must be limited to a single concept. Applications must conform to the following requirements and must not exceed the stated page limits. Please refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Application Content and Form](#) for a complete list of application requirements. Detailed guidance on the content and form of NOFO-specific requirements is provided following the [Summary of Application Requirements](#) table below.

1. Covered Individual Definition, Designation, and Responsibility

Several of the Application Content Requirements listed below and in the NOFO Part 2 are required of covered individuals.

For the purposes of this NOFO, a Covered Individual means an individual who (a) contributes in a substantive, meaningful way to the development or execution of the scope of work of a project proposed for funding by DOE, and (b) is designated as a covered individual by DOE.

DOE designates as covered individuals any principal investigator (PI); project director (PD); co-principal investigator (Co-PI); co-project director (Co-PD); project manager; and any individual regardless of title that is functionally performing as a PI, PD, Co-PI, Co-PD, or project manager. Status as a consultant, graduate (master’s or PhD) student, or postdoctoral associate does not automatically disqualify a person from being designated as a “covered individual” if they meet the definition in (a) above.

The applicant is responsible for assessing the applicability of (a) above, against each person listed on the application. Further, the applicant is responsible for identifying any such individual to DOE for designation as a covered individual, if not already designated by DOE as described above.

The applicant’s submission of a current and pending support disclosure and/or biosketch/resume for a particular person serves as an acknowledgement that DOE designates that person as a covered individual.

DOE may further designate covered individuals during award negotiations or the award period of performance.

2. Summary of Application Requirements

| Component | File Format | Page Limit | File Name |
|---|-------------|--------------|--|
| Conflict-of-Interest | Checkbox | n/a | Certified by Lead Applicant for all Participants |
| Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) | PDF | n/a | FY25 SF424 [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Research & Related Other Project Information | PDF | n/a | FY25 R&R Other [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Project Summary/Abstract File | PDF | 2 pages | FY25 Summary Abstract [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Project Summary Slide | PDF | 1 page | FY25 Summary Slide [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Technical Volume | PDF | 25 pages | FY25 Technical Volume [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Resumes (Research and Development (R&D)) | PDF | 3 pages each | FY25 CV [Last Name] [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Current and Pending Support (for each covered individual) | PDF | n/a | FY25 CPS [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Benefit of Collaboration | PDF | 4 pages | FY25 BOC [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Required Infrastructure Capabilities | PDF | 5 pages | FY25 Capabilities [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Letters of Commitment and Support | PDF | 1 page each | FY25 Letters [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Impacted Indian Tribes Documentation | PDF | n/a | FY25 Impacted Indian Tribes [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Research and Related (R&R) Lead Budget Form | MS Excel | n/a | FY25 RR Budget [Tracking ID#].xlsx |
| Budget Justification | PDF | n/a | FY25 Budget Justification [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Vendor Quotes | PDF | n/a | FY25 Vendor Quotes [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Subrecipient Budget Form | MS Excel | n/a | FY25 Subrecipient Budget [Tracking ID#].xlsx |
| Subrecipient Budget Justification | MS Excel | n/a | FY25 Subrecipient Budget [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Work Proposal for DOE FFRDC | PDF | n/a | FY25 FFRDC [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Authorization for Non-DOE or DOE FFRDCs | PDF | n/a | FY25 CO Authorization [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Coordination and Management Plan | PDF | n/a | FY25 CMP [Tracking ID#].pdf |

| | | | |
|--|-----|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lobbying Activities | PDF | n/a | FY25 SF-LLL [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Community Benefits Plan for Research and Development (R&D) (Optional) | PDF | 5 pages | FY25 CBP [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Community Partnership Documentation (If Applicable) | PDF | 1 page each | FY25 CPD [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Transparency of Foreign Connections | PDF | n/a | FY25 TCF [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Potentially Duplicative Funding Notice | PDF | n/a | FY25 PDFN [Tracking ID#].pdf |
| Project/Performance Site Location(s) | PDF | n/a | FY25 Site Location [Tracking ID#].pdf |

3. Technical Volume

The Technical Volume must conform to the following content and form requirements. This volume must address the technical review criteria as discussed in [Technical Review Criteria](#).

Applicants must provide sufficient citations and references to the primary research literature to justify the claims and approaches made in the Technical Volume. However, DOE and reviewers are under no obligation to review cited sources.

The Technical Volume to the application may not be more than 25 pages, including the cover page, table of contents, and all citations, charts, graphs, maps, photos, or other graphics, and must include all information below. The applicant should consider the weighting of each of the technical review criteria (see [Technical Review Criteria](#)) when preparing the Technical Volume.

The Technical Volume should clearly describe and expand upon information provided in the concept paper.

| Technical Volume Content Requirements Overview | |
|--|---|
| Section | Approximate Percent Content of the Technical Volume |
| Cover Page | N/A |
| Project Overview | 10% |
| Technical Description, Innovation, and Impact | 30% |
| Workplan | 40% |
| Technical Qualifications and Resources | 20% |

Cover Page:

The cover page must include all of the following:

- The project title
- Specific NOFO topic areas (if applicable)
- Technical and business POCs
- The project team, including recipient name, entity type and names of all team member organizations
- The project location(s)
- The proposed federal funding level, cost share and period of performance

- Senior/key personnel and other covered individuals
- Statements regarding confidentiality

Project Overview (Approximately 10% of the Technical Volume)

The Project Overview should contain the following information:

- **Background:** The applicant should discuss the background of its organization, including the history, successes, and current research and development status (i.e., the technical baseline) relevant to the technical topic being addressed in the application.
- **Project Goal:** The applicant should explicitly identify the targeted improvements to the baseline technology and the critical success factors in achieving that goal.
- **DOE Impact:** The applicant should discuss the impact that DOE funding would have on the proposed project. Applicants should specifically explain how DOE funding, relative to prior, current, or anticipated funding from other public and private sources, is necessary to achieve the project objectives.

Technical Description, Innovation, and Impact (Approximately 30% of the Technical Volume)

The Technical Description should contain the following information:

- **Relevance and Outcomes:** The applicant should provide a detailed description of the technology or focus area, including the scientific and other principles and objectives that will be pursued during the project. This section should describe the relevance of the proposed project to the goals and objectives of the NOFO, including the potential to meet specific DOE technical targets or other relevant performance targets. The applicant should clearly specify the expected outcomes of the project.
- **Feasibility:** The applicant should demonstrate the technical feasibility of the proposed technology and capability of achieving the anticipated performance targets, including a description of previous work done and prior results. This section should also address the project's access to necessary infrastructure (e.g., transportation, water, electricity transmission), including any use of existing infrastructure, as well as to a skilled workforce.
- **Innovation and Impacts:** The applicant should describe the current state-of-the-art in the applicable field, the specific innovation of the proposed technology or focus area, the advantages of proposed technology over current and emerging technologies, and the overall impact on advancing the state-of-the-art/technical baseline if the project is successful.

Workplan (Approximately 40% of the Technical Volume)

The Workplan should include a summary of the Project Objectives, Technical Scope, Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), Project Tasks, Milestones, and project schedule. The Workplan should contain the following information:

- **Project Objectives:** The applicant should provide a clear and concise (high-level) statement of the goals and objectives of the project as well as the expected outcomes.
- **Technical Scope Summary:** The applicant should provide a summary description of the overall work scope and approach to achieve the objective(s). The applicant should describe the specific expected end result of each performance period, including milestones in the Community Benefits Plan, if applicable.
- **WBS and Task Description Summary:** The Workplan should describe the work to be accomplished and how the applicant will achieve the milestones, will accomplish the final project goal(s), and will produce all deliverables. The Workplan is to be structured with a

hierarchy of performance period (approximately annual), task and subtasks, which is typical of a standard WBS for any project. The Workplan shall contain a concise description of the specific activities to be conducted over the life of the project. The description shall be a full explanation and disclosure of the project being proposed (i.e., a statement such as “we will then complete a proprietary process” is unacceptable). It is the applicant’s responsibility to prepare an adequately detailed task plan to describe the proposed project and the plan for addressing the objectives of this NOFO.

- **Milestone Summary:** A milestone may be either a progress measure (which can be activity based) or a SMART technical milestone. SMART milestones should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely, and must demonstrate a technical achievement rather than simply completing a task. Unless otherwise specified in the NOFO, the minimum requirement is that each project must have at least one milestone per quarter for the duration of the project with at least one SMART technical milestone per year (depending on the project, more milestones may be necessary to comprehensively demonstrate progress). The applicant should also provide the means by which the milestone will be verified.
- **End of Project Goal:** The Workplan should include a summary of the end of project goal(s). At a minimum, each project must have one SMART end of project goal.
- **Project Schedule (Gantt Chart or similar):** The applicant should provide a schedule for the entire project, including task and subtask durations, and any milestones.
- **Build America Buy America (BABA) Requirements for Infrastructure Projects:** Within the first two pages of the Workplan, include a short statement on whether the project will involve the construction, alteration, maintenance and/or repair of public infrastructure in the U.S. See [Build America, Buy America | Department of Energy](#) and 2 CFR 184 for applicable definitions and other information regarding Infrastructure Projects and the Buy America Requirement.
- **Project Management:** The applicant should discuss the team’s proposed management plan, including the following:
 - The overall approach to and organization for managing the work;
 - The roles of each project team member;
 - Any critical handoffs/interdependencies among project team members;
 - The technical and management aspects of the management plan, including systems and practices, such as financial and project management practices;
 - The approach to project risk management, including a plan for securing a qualified workforce and mitigating risks to project performance including but not limited to community or labor disputes or conflicts related to siting;
 - Approach to addressing permits and tory approvals, including compliance with any current permits, and any permits and natural or cultural resource issues that could require discretionary permits or approvals;
 - A description of how project changes will be handled;
 - If applicable, the approach to Quality Assurance/Control;
 - How communications will be maintained among project team members.
- **Market Transformation Plan:** The applicant should provide a market transformation plan, including the following:
 - Identification of target market, competitors, and distribution channels for proposed technology along with known or perceived barriers to market penetration, including a mitigation plan.
 - Identification of a product development and/or service plan, commercialization timeline, financing, product marketing, legal/regulatory considerations including

intellectual property, infrastructure requirements, data dissemination, and product distribution.

- Identification of current industry interest, commitments for adoption if the project is successful, and impact of those commitments across the industry.

Technical Qualifications and Resources (Approximately 20% of the Technical Volume)

The Technical Qualifications and Resources should contain the following information:

- A description of the project team’s unique qualifications and expertise, including those of key subrecipients;
- A description of the project team’s existing equipment and facilities, or equipment or facilities already in place on the proposed project site, that will facilitate the successful completion of the proposed project; include a justification of any new equipment or facilities requested as part of the project;
- Relevant, previous work efforts, demonstrated innovations, and how these enable the applicant to achieve the project objectives;
- The time commitment of the key team members to support the project;
- A description of the technical services to be provided by DOE FFRDCs, if applicable;
- The skills, certifications, or other credentials of the construction and ongoing operations workforce;
- For multi-organizational projects, describe succinctly:
 - The roles and the work to be performed by the project manager and Senior/Key Personnel at the recipient and sub levels;
 - Business agreements between the applicant and sub;
 - How the various efforts will be integrated and managed;
 - Process for making decisions on technical direction;
 - Publication arrangements;
- Strategy to address known resource, including intellectual property and real property, constraints or challenges; and
- Communication plans.

C. Funding Restrictions

Program-specific funding restrictions applicable to awards funded under this NOFO are identified below. Standard funding restrictions are described in the *NOFO Part 2, Funding Restrictions* section.

| Applicable Funding Restrictions | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Title | Location | Additional Information |
| Non-University or College Sub-Recipients | NOFO Part 1, Section III, B. | Non-University or College collaborators, in aggregate, are restricted to 20% of total project funding. |
| Allowable Costs | NOFO Part 2 | Applicable to awards made under this NOFO |

| | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| Pre-Award Costs | NOFO Part 2 | Applicable to awards made under this NOFO |
| Foreign Travel | NOFO Part 2 | Foreign Travel is allowed for awards made under this NOFO. Foreign travel must be included in the budget justification. Any foreign travel not listed in the budget justification will not be approved upon issuance of the grant. |
| Lobbying | NOFO Part 2 | Applicable to awards made under this NOFO |
| Equipment and Supplies | NOFO Part 2 | Purchasing American-made equipment and supplies is applicable to this award. |
| Infrastructure Upgrades and Equipment | NOFO Part 2 | A minimum of 50% of the budget must go to equipment and upgrades (e.g., physical infrastructure/equipment). The remaining portion of the budget may be used for research costs including faculty, students, and staff support. |
| Davis-Bacon Act Requirements | NOFO Part 2 | Applicable to awards made under this NOFO |
| Build America Buy America Requirements for Infrastructure Projects | NOFO Part 1 | Applicable to awards made under this NOFO |

1. Build America Requirement for Infrastructure Projects

Awards funded through this NOFO that are for, or contain, construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of public infrastructure in the U.S. undertaken by applicable recipient types, require that:

- All iron, steel, and manufactured products used in the infrastructure project are produced in the U.S.; and
- All construction materials used in the infrastructure project are manufactured in the U.S.

Please refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Buy America Requirements for Infrastructure Projects; Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials](#) and [2 CFR Part 184](#) to determine whether the Buy America Requirement applies and if they should consider the application of the Buy America Requirement in the proposed project’s budget and/or schedule. (Note that the Buy America Requirement does not apply to prime recipients that are For-Profit Entities.)

V. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

There are several one-time actions applicants must take before applying to this NOFO. Some of these may take several weeks, so it is vital applicants build in enough time to complete them. Failure to complete these actions could interfere with application or negotiation deadlines or the ability to receive an award if selected. These requirements are outlined in detail in the [NOFO Part 2, Get Registered](#).

A. Required Registrations

1. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. To register, go to SAM.gov Entity Registration and click Get Started. From the same page, you can also click on the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.

Each applicant must:

1. Be registered in SAM.gov before submitting an application;
2. Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier in the application; and
3. Continue to maintain an active registration in SAM.gov with current information at all times during which you have an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

DOE may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DOE is ready to make a federal award, the DOE will determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

2. NEUP.gov

Register and create an account at www.NEUP.gov. Electronic applications and instructions are available at the NEUP.gov website. To access these materials: (1) go to www.NEUP.gov; (2) select “Sign In” from the top right-hand corner of the screen; (3) enter your user credentials; (4) select “Applications” from the menu; and (5) click on “Create New Application” for the type of application you are creating.

If you have any questions about NEUP.gov site registration, application processes, eligibility, or application document requirements contact the Nuclear Energy External Innovation Integration Office at 208-526-4854 or at neup@inl.gov.

Each organization or business unit, whether acting as a team or a single entity, should use only one account as the contact point for each submission. Applicants must also designate backup points of contact. **This step is required to apply to this NOFO.**

B. Application Package

The application package requirements are outlined in the [Application Content and Form](#) section above. Several templates for application requirements are included at NEUP.gov. To access these materials, select the appropriate call under “My Applications” once logged into NEUP.gov.

Electronic Authorization of Applications and Award Documents

Submission of an application and supplemental information under this NOFO through electronic systems used by the DOE, including NEUP.gov, constitutes the authorized representative’s approval and electronic signature.

C. Submission Date and Times

All required submissions must be submitted via the NEUP.gov application site no later than 5 p.m. ET on the dates provided on [Key Facts](#) section.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit all required application documents at least 48 hours in advance of the submission deadline. Under normal conditions (i.e., at least 48 hours before the submission deadline), applicants should allow at least one hour to submit application documents. Once the application documents are submitted via the NEUP.gov application site, applicants may revise or update that submission until the expiration of the applicable deadline. If changes are made to any of these documents, the applicant must resubmit them before the applicable deadline. DOE will not extend the submission deadline for applicants that fail to submit required information by the applicable deadline due to server/connection congestion.

D. Intergovernmental Review

This NOFO is not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

VI. Application Review Information

A. Standards for Application Evaluation

Applications that are determined to be eligible will be evaluated in accordance with this NOFO and the guidance provided in the “DOE Merit Review Guide for Financial Assistance,” effective October 1, 2020, which is available at: <https://energy.gov/management/downloads/merit-review-guide-financial-assistance-and-unsolicited-proposals-current>.

B. Responsiveness Review

The following applications will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered:

- Project concepts or approaches not based on established scientific principles.
- Project concepts or approaches identified specifically as NOT of interest (see the [Applications Specifically Not of Interest](#) section above).

C. Review Criteria

1. Compliance Criteria

All applicant submissions for applications must:

- Comply with the applicable content and form requirements listed in Application Content Requirements and Submission Requirements and Deadlines of the NOFO Part 1 and 2;
- Include all required documents;
- Be uploaded successfully in NEUP.gov site indicated in the [Key Facts](#) section above including clicking the “Submit” button; and
- Comply with the submission deadline stated in [Key Facts](#).

DOE will not review or consider submissions submitted through means other than the NEUP.gov site indicated in [Key Facts](#), submissions submitted after the applicable deadline, or incomplete submissions.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit all required application documents at least 48 hours in advance of the submission deadline. Under normal conditions (i.e., at least 48 hours before the submission deadline), applicants should allow at least one hour to submit application documents. Once the application documents are submitted in the NEUP.gov site identified in the [Key Facts](#) section, applicants may revise or update that submission until the expiration of the applicable deadline. If changes are made to any of these documents, the applicant must resubmit them before the applicable deadline. DOE will not extend the submission deadline for applicants that fail to submit required information by the applicable deadline due to server/connection congestion.

2. Technical Review Criteria

Applications

Initial Review Criteria

Prior to a comprehensive merit evaluation, DOE will perform an initial review to determine that:

- a) Applicant is eligible for an award; and

b) Information and documents, required by the NOFO, have been submitted.

Applications that fail to pass the initial review will not be forwarded for merit review and will be eliminated from further consideration.

Relevancy Criteria

Following the initial review, programmatic experts will assess relevance to the NE mission. All applications that meet the objectives of this NOFO will move forward to the technical review phase.

Technical Review Merit Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be utilized by the Technical Evaluation Committee and Federal Merit Review Panel members in conducting their evaluations of applications subjected to comprehensive merit review.

| Review Criterion Overview | |
|---|--|
| Criterion | Weight |
| Merit of the Project Relative to Revitalizing Nuclear Research Infrastructure | 35% |
| Appropriateness of the Proposed Method or Approach | 35% |
| Applicant Team Capabilities, Risks, and Experience | 30% |
| Bonus Points: Diverse Team Review | Up to 3 points (equivalent of up to 3% of the maximum overall technical rating based upon the technical review criteria ratings) |

Criterion 1: Merit of the Project Relative to Revitalizing Nuclear Research Infrastructure (35%)

DOE will evaluate the merit of the application with respect to revitalizing nuclear science and engineering infrastructure. This may include evaluating the extent to which the project goals and objectives will advance the state of scientific knowledge and understanding by addressing key infrastructure challenges that will enable promising developments and enhance efforts in identified high priority areas. Evaluations will consider how well the proposed project presents a balanced and comprehensive program that revitalizes scientific infrastructure in support of experimental, theoretical, and computational efforts in the nuclear science and engineering community.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of the Proposed Method or Approach (35%)

DOE will evaluate the appropriateness of the proposed method or approach, including risk posed by the approach, as well as the extent to which the strategy and plan for the development and operation of the proposal identifies an acceptable approach involving senior/key personnel, the means for achieving integration on the project, and plans for leadership and guidance for the scientific and technical direction. DOE shall consider whether the applicant presents a comprehensive management plan for a world-class program that encourages research, including high-risk, high-reward research, as well as synergisms among investigators. The organization structure should delineate the roles and responsibilities of senior/key personnel and describe the means of providing external oversight and guidance for scientific and technical direction and approval of the research program. Additionally, DOE will also consider the following:

- The applicant's plans (if any) for education, outreach, and training are appropriate and, if needed, described as part of the scope.
- Appropriateness and reasonableness of applicant's plans (if any) for external collaborations and partnerships.
- The roles and intellectual contributions of the lead PI, other investigator(s), and each senior/key person.
- Relation to existing and planned research programs at the host or collaborator institution.

Criterion 3: Applicant Team Capabilities, Risks, and Experience (30%)

DOE will evaluate the extent to which the applicant team provides objective evidence that it has or can obtain the professional resources and abilities to successfully complete the project in a technically defensible manner. Current activities, relevance, integration of students, and depth of the organization's experience and capabilities, together with that of the PI, will be evaluated as it relates to the likely successful completion of the project. DOE will evaluate risk posed by the applicant team. In evaluating this criterion, DOE will consider the extent to which the application demonstrates the following:

- Maximizing the use of other available facilities and existing equipment.
- The proposed access to existing research space, instrumentation, and facilities at the host institutions and its partners are likely to meet the needs of the project.
- There is adequate access to experimental and computational capabilities as needed to ensure successful completion of the proposed research.
- The lead institution and the senior/key personnel for the project have proven records of success in project, program, and personnel management for projects of comparable magnitude.
- The plan for recruiting any additional scientific and technical personnel including new senior staff, students, and post-docs is reasonable and appropriate.
- The project leadership has the capability to communicate effectively with scientists of all required disciplines.
- The lead PI and senior/key personnel will be adequately involved in the proposal, particularly taking into account their potential involvement in other major projects.

Bonus Points: Diverse Team Review

DOE may allocate up to 3 bonus points (constituting up to 3% of a maximum achievable technical score based upon the merit ratings given) to be added to the average, overall technical score during the merit review process based on the degree to which an application is led by or effectively partner with MSIs, including HBCUs and TCUs. For a directory of MSIs please visit:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/ides/eligibility.html#tips> and [College Navigator - Search Results \(ed.gov\)](#).

NOTE: Diverse teams and partnerships are not required for projects to be evaluated as unquestionably relevant; however, diverse teams and partnerships will increase the average overall score by up to 3 points, based on the project meeting one of the following criteria: (1) the project has a substantive contribution by MSIs, including HBCUs and TCUs, as lead or collaborator; (2) the project has a demonstrable contribution by MSIs, including HBCUs and TCUs, as lead or collaborator; or (3) the project has some relevant partnership with MSIs, including HBCUs and TCUs, as lead or collaborator.

D. Other Selection Factors

In addition to the above criteria, the Selection Official may consider the following program policy factors in determining which applications to select for award negotiations:

1. The degree to which the proposed project exhibits technological diversity when compared to the existing DOE project portfolio and other projects selected from the subject NOFO;
2. The degree to which the proposed project, including proposed cost share, optimizes the use of available DOE funding to achieve programmatic objectives;
3. The degree to which the proposed project, or group of projects, represent a desired geographic distribution (considering past awards and current applications);
4. The degree to which the proposed project incorporates partnerships with businesses majority owned or controlled by underrepresented persons or groups of underrepresented persons or Indian Tribes;
5. The degree to which the proposed project will employ procurement of U.S. iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials.
6. Other Cost/Budget considerations, including availability of funding.
7. Extent that the applicant has awards in progress, or not completed, from NE, from a previous year's NOFO, or has existing no-cost time extensions.
8. Demonstrated ability of the applicant to successfully complete projects (including relevant prior projects) and to do so within budget and within the specified timeframe of the award.
9. Applicability across multiple reactor technologies, including future design types.
10. Projects that contribute to energy justice. Any applicants' submission of a Project Commitment to Energy Justice and the Justice40 Initiative (*NOFO Part 1, Program Description; Energy, Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations*), will be included in the SO briefing for consideration. Applicants are encouraged to describe how their projects or project teams will contribute to energy justice. Applicants may include a section or submit a Community Benefits Plan to describe how the projects advance energy justice, including for example: the degree to which the proposed project incorporates team member diversity with participants from MSIs, including HBCUs and TCUs; and/or partnerships with Minority Business Enterprises, Minority Owned Businesses, Woman Owned Businesses, Veteran Owned Businesses, or Tribal nations.
11. Projects that support the Justice 40 Initiative. Any applicants' submission of a Project Commitment to Energy Justice and Justice40 Initiative (*NOFO Part 1, Program Description; Energy, Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations*), will be included in the SO briefing for consideration. Applicants were provided examples in the NOFO of how their projects could support the Justice40 Initiative, including:
 - Extent to which the project would contribute to meeting the objective that 40% of the benefits of climate and clean energy investments will flow to disadvantaged communities;
 - The degree to which the proposed project provides funding to disadvantaged communities or seeks to address communities with environmental justice concerns that experience disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental burdens in accordance with Executive Order 14096;
 - Whether the entity is located in a disadvantaged community. The onus is on the applicant to self-identify whether it is located in a disadvantaged community or partners with an entity, located in a disadvantaged community;
 - The degree to which the proposed project incorporates applicants or team members from disadvantaged communities; and

- Whether the proposed project may directly or indirectly benefit disadvantaged communities or has team member participants from disadvantaged communities.

Extent to which the applicant identifies the following: specific and measurable benefits for disadvantaged communities (disadvantaged communities); how the benefits will flow to disadvantaged communities; and how negative environmental impacts affecting disadvantaged communities would be mitigated. Benefits include (but are not limited to) measurable direct or indirect investments or positive project outcomes that achieve or contribute to the following in disadvantaged communities: (1) a decrease in energy burden; (2) a decrease in environmental exposure and burdens; (3) an increase in access to low-cost capital; (4) an increase in high-quality job creation, the clean energy job pipeline, and job training for individuals; (5) increases in clean energy enterprise creation and contracting (e.g., minority-owned or disadvantaged business enterprises); (6) increases in energy democracy, including community ownership; (7) increased parity in clean energy technology access and adoption; and (8) an increase in energy resilience.

The Selection Official may consider any of the above factors independently in determining the optimum mix of applications that will be selected for support. These factors, while not indicators of the application's merit, may be essential to the process of selecting the application(s) that, individually or collectively, will best achieve the program objectives. Such factors are often beyond the control of the applicant.

Applicants should recognize that some very good applications might not receive an award because of program policy factors and available funding. Therefore, the Selection Official may use program policy factors to assist in determining which applications shall receive DOE funding support.

VII. Selection and Award Notices

Please see the *NOFO Part 2, Selection and Award Notices* for information on notifications for Applications, Award Negotiations, and Post-Selection Information Requests.

VIII. Award Administration Information

A. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

DOE requires all award recipients to follow and accept requirements governed by laws and policies – both federal government-wide and DOE or program specific. These post-award requirements include all National and Administrative Policy Requirements; financial assistance general Certifications and Representations; Build America, Buy America requirements; Davis-Bacon Act requirements; Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-Specific Requirements; Fraud, Waste and Abuse requirements; Safety, Security, and Regulatory requirements; and Environmental Review in Accordance with National Environmental Policy Act requirements.

Post-Award requirements and administration applicable to awards funded under this NOFO are identified below. Detailed descriptions of standard funding restrictions are provided in the [NOFO Part 2, Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) section. Detailed descriptions of program specific funding restrictions are provided below the table.

| Applicable Post-Award Requirements and Administration | |
|---|-------------|
| Title | Location |
| Award Administrative Requirements | NOFO Part 2 |
| Subaward and Executive Reporting | NOFO Part 2 |
| National Policy Requirements | NOFO Part 2 |
| Applicant Representations and Certifications | NOFO Part 2 |
| Statement of Federal Stewardship | NOFO Part 2 |
| Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) Financing Statements | NOFO Part 2 |
| Interim Conflict of Interest Policy for Financial Assistance | NOFO Part 2 |
| Whistleblower Protections | NOFO Part 2 |
| Fraud, Waste, and Abuse | NOFO Part 2 |
| Participants and Collaborating Organizations | NOFO Part 2 |
| Current and Pending Support | NOFO Part 2 |
| Prohibition Related to Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs | NOFO Part 2 |
| Foreign Collaboration Considerations | NOFO Part 2 |
| U.S. Manufacturing Commitments | NOFO Part 2 |
| Subject Invention Utilization Reporting | NOFO Part 2 |
| Intellectual Property Provisions | NOFO Part 2 |
| Technology Protection Plan | NOFO Part 2 |
| Data Management Plan | NOFO Part 2 |
| Conference Spending | NOFO Part 2 |
| Invoice Review and Approval | NOFO Part 2 |

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| Cost-Share Payment | NOFO Part 2 |
| Implementation of Executive Order 13798, Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty | NOFO Part 2 |
| Affirmative Action and Pay Transparency Requirements | NOFO Part 2 |
| Human Subjects Research | NOFO Part 2 |
| Real Property and Equipment | NOFO Part 1 |
| Rights in Technical Data | NOFO Part 1 |

1. Real Property and Equipment

Real property and equipment purchased with project funds (federal share and recipient cost share) are subject to the requirements at 2 CFR 200.310, 200.311, 200.313, and 200.316 (non-federal entities, except for-profit entities) and 2 CFR 910.360 (for-profit entities).

For resulting awards under this NOFO, the recipients may (1) take disposition action on the real property and equipment; or (2) continue to use the real property and equipment after the conclusion of the award period of performance with Grants Officer approval. The recipient’s written request for Continued Use must identify the property and include: a summary of how the property will be used (must align with the authorized project purposes); a proposed use period, (e.g., perpetuity, until fully depreciated, or a calendar date when the recipient expects to submit disposition instructions); acknowledgement that the recipient shall not sell or encumber the property or permit any encumbrance without prior written DOE approval; current fair market value of the property; and an estimated useful life or depreciation schedule for equipment.

When the property is no longer needed for authorized project purposes, the recipient must request disposition instructions from DOE. For-profit entity disposition requirements are set forth in 2 CFR 910.360. Property disposition requirements for other non-federal entities are set forth in 2 CFR 200.310 – 200.316. In addition, pursuant to the FY23 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Pub. L. No. 117-328), Division D, Title III, Section 309, at the end of the award period the Secretary or a designee of the Secretary, at their discretion, may vest unconditional title or other property interests acquired under this project regardless of the fair market value of the property.

2. Rights in Technical Data

Data rights differ based on whether data is first produced under an award or instead was developed at private expense outside the award.

“Limited Rights Data”: The U.S. government will not normally require delivery of confidential or trade-secret-type technical data developed solely at private expense prior to issuance of an award, except as necessary to monitor technical progress and evaluate the potential of proposed technologies to reach specific technical and cost metrics.

Government Rights in Technical Data Produced Under Awards: The U.S. government normally retains unlimited rights in technical data produced under government financial assistance awards, including the right to distribute to the public. However, pursuant to special statutory authority, certain categories of data generated under DOE awards under this NOFO may be protected from public disclosure for up to five years after the data is generated (“Protected Data”). For awards permitting Protected Data, the protected data must be marked as set forth in the award’s intellectual property terms and conditions

and a listing of unlimited rights data (i.e., non-protected data) must be inserted into the data clause in the award. In addition, invention disclosures may be protected from public disclosure for a reasonable time in order to allow for filing a patent application.

3. Cost Share Payment

If cost share is proposed in the application, DOE requires recipients to contribute the cost share amount incrementally over the life of the award. Specifically, the recipient's cost share for each **billing period** must always reflect the overall cost share ratio negotiated by the parties (i.e., the total amount of cost sharing on each invoice when considered cumulatively with previous invoices must reflect, at a minimum, the cost sharing percentage negotiated).

B. Questions and Support

1. Questions

Upon the issuance of a NOFO, DOE personnel are prohibited from communicating (in writing or otherwise) with applicants regarding the NOFO except through the established question and answer process described below. Questions regarding this NOFO must be submitted to NEUP@inl.gov no later than three (3) business days prior to the application due date and time. Please note, feedback on individual concepts will not be provided through Q&A.

All questions and answers related to this NOFO will be posted on the NEUP.gov site listed in the [Key Facts](#) section above. DOE will attempt to respond to a question within three (3) business days unless a similar question and answer has already been posted on the website.

Questions related to the registration process and use of the NEUP.gov site listed in the [Key Facts](#) should be submitted to NEUP@inl.gov.

2. Support

Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. You can call 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. Retain your ticket number.

SAM.gov

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

NEUP.gov

If you have any questions about NEUP.gov site registration, application processes, eligibility, or application document requirements contact the Nuclear Energy External Innovation Integration Office at 208-526-4854 or at neup@inl.gov.

IX. Other Information

Please see the [NOFO Part 2, Other Information](#) for additional information and requirements that apply to all DOE NOFOs.