Financial Assistance
Notice of Funding Opportunity
Part 1

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* ENERGY

Department of Energy (DOE)
Idaho Operations Office
Fiscal Year 2026 Distinguished Early Career Program
Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: DE-FOA-0003540

Application Due: March 3, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET

Mod. No.	Date	Description of Modification

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Before You Begin

Navigating the Notice of Funding Opportunity

To reduce the burden on applicants in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process and limit the length of the NOFO information requests 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. 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 2.0.

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I. Basic Information

A. Key Facts

Issuing Agency	Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office
Funding Opportunity Title	Fiscal Year 2026 Distinguished Early Career Program
Announcement Type	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number	DE-FOA-0003540
Funding Instrument	Grant
Assistance Listing Number	81.121
Funding Opportunity Description	The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is for the **2026 Distinguished Early Career Program**. It is referred to in this document as the "DECP" NOFO.
Program Goals & Objective(s)	The DECP NOFO provides stable support for early career faculty to form the impactful research groups, innovative lines of inquiry, educational approaches, and critical new research directions that will drive the next generation of nuclear energy innovation.
Eligible Applicants	• In accordance with 2 CFR 910.126(b), prime applicant award eligibility is restricted to: U.S. universities and colleges. • Collaborators, Co-Principal Investigators and subrecipients are not allowed.
Application Site and Helpdesk	Application Site: https://proposals.inl.gov Helpdesk: NEUP@inl.gov

KEY DATES

Notice of Funding Opportunity Issue Date: December 15, 2025

Application Deadline: March 3, 2026

Anticipated Selection Notification Date: September 30, 2026

Anticipated Award Date: February 1, 2027

Estimated Period of Performance: 5 years

1. Funding Details

The Department of Energy (DOE) reserves the right to make more or fewer (or even no awards) depending on funding availability and/or the quality of the applications. DOE is under no obligation to pay for any costs associated with preparation or submission of application. DOE reserves the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to the NOFO.

- Approximate total available funding: $3,200,000 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026
- Approximate number of awards: 0 – 4
- Approximate dollar amount of individual awards: 0 – $800,000
- Minimum cost share required: Cost Sharing is not required, but is encouraged
- Approximate award project period: 5 years
- Anticipated length of budget periods: 5 years

2. Period of Performance

DOE - Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) anticipates making awards with a project period of up to five (5) years.

Assuming NE announces awards under this DECP NOFO September 30, 2026, funded projects should begin February 1, 2027. Proposing different start dates for the project and budget periods may make the application ineligible for award. If a different project start date is necessary for the successful performance of the project, it must be fully documented and justified in the application for consideration by NE.

B. Executive Summary

The Distinguished Early Career Program (DECP) is DOE-NE's most prestigious award for the most innovative distinguished faculty members beginning their independent careers. The intent of the program is to provide stable support to those faculty to form the impactful research groups, innovative lines of inquiry, educational approaches, and critical new research directions that will drive the next generation of nuclear energy innovation.

The intent of this NOFO is to award approximately four awards, for up to five (5) years, to distinguished early career applications that provide a clear research and education plan that highlights the applicant's research and educational strengths; the research and education vision to support the development of the faculty member; and research infrastructure, curriculum, and outcomes that will advance the applicant's research focus while training the next generation of nuclear energy professionals.

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.

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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 NOFO Part 2, *Eligibility*.

A. Eligible Applicants

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 (NEUP) supports university research, collaborations with industry and national laboratories, and training and educating the next generation nuclear workforce.

Eligible individuals with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research as a principal investigator (PI) are invited to work with their organizations to develop an application for assistance.

PIs must adhere to the respective eligibility standards below:

- The PI must be an untenured assistant professor at a U.S. academic institution on the tenure track and no more than four (4) years beyond the date of their appointment and no more than ten (10) years beyond the date their doctorate was awarded as of the last day of January 2026.
- The PI must be employed in the eligible position as of the last day of January 2026.
- There can be no co-PIs and funding cannot be used to directly support "peer collaborators" or mentors.*
- The PI cannot have received a similar type of federally funded early career award. Similar awards could include, but are not limited to, Office of Science Early Career Program and U.S. National Science Foundation Faculty Career Development Program (CAREER). If you have received another federally funded early career award and are not sure whether or not it is similar, please send your questions to NEUP@inl.gov.
- Only one application on behalf of a PI may be submitted to this FY 2026 DECP NOFO.
- A PI may not submit an application to more than three (3) NE DECP NOFOs.

*A collaborator is an individual who makes a defined, material contribution that is critical to the success of the project. Any individual appearing in the technical narrative, benefit of collaboration, coordination and management plan, or budget documents would be considered a collaborator on the application form.

Extensions to eligibility may be considered for individuals who have had a major life event requiring an extended absence from the workplace including, but not limited to, active military service, an absence due to personal disability, or an absence covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act. Verification stating validity of requests for extended eligibility must be made

by including in the application a letter signed by the dean, research vice president, or equivalent official as of the application deadline. The request for an eligibility extension will be evaluated as part of the application assessment. Extensions may be granted for the duration of the extended absence.

Extensions to eligibility should be submitted for consideration at least 30 calendar days before the application deadline at NEUP@inl.gov.

DOE reserves the right to confirm that the candidate has a tenure-track appointment during the review process and/or during award negotiations.

Proposed research for this submission must have a scope that is different from any non-early career federally funded award.

Limited circumstances may require use of national laboratory facilities, a DOE/National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC), if major facilities are not available on the applicant's campus. The costs associated with the use of a FFRDC may be covered as part of this application. If a FFRDC is used, then the FFRDC must provide a DOE field work proposal (FWP) and an authorization letter. Participation by national laboratories is restricted to activities to gain access to facilities not available at a PI's home institution. Activities must be structured so that there are no national laboratory co-PIs or collaborators.

Applications submitted to this DECP NOFO will be awarded to the institutions of higher education listed and will typically not be transferred to another institution if the PI changes institutions. However, DOE may consider PI requests for transferring or sub awarding an award from the original institution to the PI's new institution. In the event a PI changes institutions, the PI must contact the Contract Specialist for approval prior to the award being transferred.

If a PI has a DECP award and accepts another similar federally funded early career award, the PI becomes ineligible for continued performance under their DECP award and must notify DOE immediately.

2. Domestic Entities

The proposed prime recipient 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 colleges.[1]

3. Foreign Entity Participation

In general, foreign entities are not eligible to apply as a recipient.

[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).

Please see NOFO Part 2, *Application Content Requirements* for the requirements for submission of a foreign entity waiver request. The applicant does not have the right to appeal DOE's decision concerning a waiver request.

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 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. See NOFO Part I, Section II A.1 *Restricted Eligibility*.

4. Performance of Work in the U.S.

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

5. Ineligible Participants

The following entities are ineligible for participation in this NOFO as a recipient

- 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).
- 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.

6. 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

Only one application on behalf of a PI may be submitted to this FY 2026 NOFO. A PI may not submit an application to more than three (3) NE DECP NOFOs as described in the eligibility section of this NOFO.

Applicants may only receive one (1) NE DECP award as outlined in the eligibility criteria of this NOFO. Applicants are not eligible for award if the applicant has already been awarded other similar federally funded early career awards. NOFO Part 1, *Restricted Eligibility* above.

Research objectives for this opportunity must be distinct from current or past funded NE projects that the applicant has participated in as a lead PI, co-PI, or collaborator.

C. Cost Sharing

Applicants are expected to follow through on the 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, NOFO Specific

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 FFRDC

DOE FFRDCs use may be required under limited circumstances for the use of their laboratory facilities if major facilities are not available at the applicant's campus. The costs associated with the use of a FFRDC may be covered as part of this application. If a FFRDC is used, then the FFRDC must provide a DOE Field Work Proposal (FWP) and an authorization letter.

As long as they have no conflict, FFRDCs may be proposed subject to the following guidelines:

1.1. 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 Fill-in 1: [Name] Laboratory to participate in the proposed project. The work proposed for the laboratory is consistent with or complimentary to the missions of the laboratory, will not adversely impact execution of the DOE/NNSA assigned programs at the laboratory, and will not place the laboratory in direct competition with the domestic private sector.*"

NOTE: Letter of Authorization for DOE/NNSA FFRDCs is required for all National Laboratory participants listed on the application regardless of funding level or tier.

NOTE: FFRDC activities must be structured so that there are no national laboratory co-PIs or collaborators.

NOTE: The FFRDC's participation in the proposed project is subject to the terms and conditions of its management and operating (M&O) contract with DOE. Participants requiring access to the FFRDC facilities are subject to the FFRDC's policy and DOE regulations.

1.2. 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. For example, if an award is made for $800,000 and $50,000 is budgeted for a FFRDC subrecipient, the prime applicant would receive $750,000 and the FFRDC would receive $50,000 directly from the budget office.

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

All DOE FFRDCs are required to enter into a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement[2] (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 and Sharing 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.

1.3. Limit on FFRDC Effort

The scope of work to be performed by the FFRDC contractor may not be more significant than the scope of work to be performed by the prime applicant.

The effort by non-universities and colleges, in aggregate, shall not exceed 20% of the total project cost.[3]

[2] 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-agreements

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

III. Program Description

A. Background and Context

NE's 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:

- Enable continued operation of existing U.S. nuclear reactors.
- Enable deployment of advanced nuclear reactors.
- Develop advanced nuclear fuel cycles.
- Maintain U.S. leadership in nuclear energy technology.

All applications submitted under this NOFO must demonstrate a strong tie to NE's mission. NE conducts crosscutting nuclear energy research and development (R&D) and associated infrastructure support activities to develop innovative technologies that offer the promise of dramatically improved performance for its mission needs while maximizing the impact of DOE resources.

NE strives to promote integrated and collaborative research conducted by national laboratories, universities, industry, and international partners in conjunction with NE's programs and to deploy innovative nuclear energy technologies to the market to meet the strategic goals and optimize the benefits of nuclear energy. NE funds research activities, through both competitive and direct mechanisms, as required to best meet those goals. This approach ensures a balanced R&D portfolio and encourages new nuclear power deployment with creative solutions to the universe of nuclear energy challenges through various major research programs funded by NE.

NE reserves the right to respond to potential shifts in R&D priorities during Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 that may be driven by events, policy developments, or Congressional/budget direction. Further, NE reserves the right to fund all or part of an application to this DECP NOFO.

B. Program Purpose

DECP is the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Nuclear Energy's (NE) most prestigious award for the most innovative distinguished faculty members beginning their independent careers. The intent of the program is to provide stable support to those faculty to form the impactful research groups, innovative lines of inquiry, educational approaches, and critical new research directions that will drive the next generation of nuclear energy innovation.

The extraordinary characteristic that places the NE Early Career Award into a Distinguished category is the truly integrated nature of excellence in research, education, and leadership. The applicant must demonstrate excellence in all three categories, including an integrated plan over the course of a career.

Excellence in research can be demonstrated by exceptional publications, presentations, invited seminars, research awards, and prestigious funding. Excellence in education can be

demonstrated by the creation of new courses, curricula, national presentations, innovative teaching methods and engagement. Excellence in leadership can be demonstrated by extraordinary efforts to break new ground in interactions with industry, national laboratories, universities, international entities, professional groups, community groups, and startup companies. All examples cited are only for illustrative purposes and are not exhaustive.

Integration of Research and Education - All applications should describe an integrated path that will lead to a successful career as an outstanding researcher, educator, and contributor to the broader nuclear energy community. NE recognizes that there is no single approach to an integrated research and education plan but encourages all applicants to think creatively about the reciprocal relationship between the proposed research and education activities and how they may inform each other in the applicant's career development as both an outstanding researcher and educator. These plans should reflect the proposer's own disciplinary and educational interests and goals, as well as the needs and context of their organization. Because there may be different expectations within different disciplinary fields and/or different organizations, a wide range of research and education activities may be appropriate for this program.

C. Expected Performance Goals

Projects proposed under the DECP NOFO are intended to provide a clear research and education plan that highlights the applicant's research and educational strengths; the research and education vision to support the development of the faculty member; and research infrastructure, curriculum, and outcomes that will advance the applicant's research focus while training the next generation of nuclear energy professionals. Applications are required to focus on the NE mission areas as outlined above.

D. Applications Specifically Not of Interest

The following types of applications will be deemed non-responsive 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 Program Goals and Objectives section above.
- 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 focused specifically in areas not of interest to the NE mission, such as fusion energy, medical physics, nuclear forensics, or environmental management.

E. Major Funded Program Areas

This section describes various major research programs funded by NE. Applications are not limited to the specific programs described in this section.

1. Fuel Cycle Research and Development (FC R&D)

The mission of FC R&D is to develop used nuclear fuel management strategies and technologies to support meeting the Federal Government responsibility to manage and dispose of the nation's commercial used nuclear fuel and high-level waste, as well as to develop sustainable fuel cycle technologies and options that improve resource utilization and energy generation, reduce waste generation, enhance safety, and limit proliferation risk.

FC R&D's vision is that by mid-century, strategies and technologies for the safe, long-term management and eventual disposal of U.S. commercial used nuclear fuel and any associated fuel cycle technologies that enhance the accident tolerance of light water reactors and enable sustainable fuel cycles are demonstrated and deployed.

Current challenges include the development of high burn-up fuel and cladding materials to withstand irradiation for longer periods of time with improved accident tolerance; simplified materials recovery technologies; waste management technologies including storage, transportation, and disposal; proliferation risk reduction methods; and processes and tools to evaluate and communicate sustainable fuel cycle system options.

- **Interim Storage for Commercial Spent Nuclear Fuel**

The Office of Integrated Waste Management (IWM) is exploring consolidated interim storage for commercial spent nuclear fuel with interim storage and associated transportation as key components of an integrated waste management system that, along with disposal pathways, will enable the federal government to take an important step toward fulfilling its responsibilities to dispose of the Nation's spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.

IWM activities address the technical, engineering, and operational aspects of implementing a storage facility and associated transportation in parallel with a collaborative-based approach to siting, which includes broad public participation and a focus on collaboration between community, local and State decision makers.

FC R&D and IWM Points of Contact (POC) Table

POC	Area	Contact Information
Frank Goldner	Advanced Fuels / Accident Tolerant Fuels / Metal Fuels	Frank.Goldner@nuclear.energy.gov
Madeline Feltus	TRISO Fuels / Next Generation Fuels	Madeline.Feltus@nuclear.energy.gov
Bill Del Cul	Material Recovery and Waste Form Development – Aqueous and Vapor Phase Separation	Bill.Delcul@nuclear.energy.gov
Nathan Philipovich	Material Recovery and Waste Form Development – Molten Salt Separation and Molten Salt Fuels	Nathan.Philipovich@nuclear.energy.gov
Kimberly Gray	Material Recovery and Waste Form Development – Waste Form and Off-gas	Kimberly.Gray@nuclear.energy.gov
Tansel Selekler	Material Protection, Accounting, and Control Technologies	Tansel.Selekler@nuclear.energy.gov

Ming Tang	Innovative Nuclear Materials	Ming.Tang@nuclear.energy.gov
Marla Morales	Spent Fuel Storage and Transportation	Marla.Morales@nuclear.energy.gov
Dan Fagnant	Spent Fuel Disposition	Dan.Fagnant@nuclear.energy.gov
Erica Bickford	Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage, Transportation, and Systems Analysis	Erica.Bickford@nuclear.energy.gov
Marla Morales	Collaborative-based Siting	Marla.Morales@nuclear.energy.gov

2. Reactor Concepts Research, Development, and Demonstration (RC RD&D)

The RC RD&D program supports RD&D on existing and advanced reactor designs and technologies. This RD&D enables industry to address technical and regulatory challenges associated with maintaining the existing fleet of nuclear reactors; promoting the development of a robust pipeline of advanced reactor designs, technologies, and associated supply chains; and progressing these advanced reactor designs and technologies towards demonstration when appropriate.

Program activities are focused on addressing technical, economic, safety, and security enhancement challenges associated with the existing commercial light water reactor fleet and advanced reactor technologies, covering large, small, and micro-sized designs across an array of reactor concepts including those cooled by light water, liquid metal, gas, and molten salt.

RC RD&D POC Table

POC	Area	Contact Information
Dan Warner	Advanced Reactor Safeguards and Security and Light Water Reactor Sustainability (LWRS) – Physical Security	Daniel.Warner@nuclear.energy.gov
Chris Bunting	LWRS – Plant Modernization and Risk Informed Systems Analysis	Christopher.Bunting@nuclear.energy.gov
Chris Bunting	LWRS – Materials R&D	Christopher.Bunting@nuclear.energy.gov
Jason Marcinkoski	LWRS – Flexible Plant Operation, Generation, Cybersecurity, and Integrated Energy Systems	Jason.Marcinkoski@nuclear.energy.gov
Diana Li	Microreactors	Diana.Li@nuclear.energy.gov
Matt Hahn	High Temperature Gas Reactor (HTGR) and Graphite Qualification	Matt.Hahn@nuclear.energy.gov
Kaatrin Abbott	Fast Reactor Program (FRP)	Kaatrin.Abbott@nuclear.energy.gov
Janelle Eddins	Advanced Reactor Regulatory Development and Molten Salt Reactor (MSR)	Janelle.Eddins@nuclear.energy.gov
Melissa Bates	Advanced Small Modular Reactor (SMR) RD&D	Melissa.Bates@nuclear.energy.gov

Savanah Fitzwater	National Reactor Innovation Center (NRIC)	Savannah.Fitzwater@nuclear.energy.gov
Susan Seger	Space Reactor Program	Susan.Seger@hq.doe.gov

3. Nuclear Energy Enabling Technologies (NEET)

NEET conducts R&D and makes strategic investments in research capabilities to develop innovative and crosscutting technologies that resolve nuclear technology development issues. NEET programs are:

- **Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies (AMMT)** that focuses on innovative research to accelerate the development, qualification, demonstration and deployment of advanced materials, manufacturing technologies, and supply chain capacity.

- **Advanced Sensors and Instrumentation (ASI)** that directs and performs research and development of ASI to expand measurement capabilities by enhancing performance of existing technologies or developing novel techniques and systems to address critical technology gaps.

- **Nuclear Energy Advanced Modeling and Simulation (NEAMS)** that accelerates early-stage development of advanced reactor and fuel concepts and enables improved economics of new and existing designs by providing leading-edge computational tools to U.S. industry. The primary objective is to develop and deploy these predictive tools and methods to industry, academia, and Government, including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), for research, analysis, design, and regulatory acceptance of advanced reactor and fuel cycle systems. These advanced computational tools employ scalable simulation methods on high-performance computing architectures, in combination with a science-based, mechanistic approach to physics modeling, to allow scientists and engineers to better understand reactor materials properties and coupled phenomena in nuclear energy systems. These tools span length scales from atomic to mesoscale to engineering scale, and time scales from picoseconds to seconds to days. These tools are currently being used to move certain advanced reactor concepts forward to commercialization in several key ways, including design optimization, which is required to fully realize the economic and technological advantages of those concepts. NEAMS capabilities also support the development of advanced nuclear fuels, design and analysis of nuclear fuel experiments, and expansion of NRC confirmatory analysis capabilities.

- **Nuclear Science User Facilities (NSUF)** that provides access to world-class capabilities at nuclear facilities to aid the advancement of nuclear science and technology. This is supported by providing access, at no cost to the user, to state-of-the-art experimental irradiation testing and post-irradiation examination (PIE) facilities, as well as technical assistance, including the design and analysis of reactor experiments. This unique model is best described as a distributed partnership with each facility bringing exceptional capabilities and expertise to the relationship, including reactors, beamlines, state-of-the-art instruments, hot cells, and high-performance computational resources. Together, these capabilities and people create a nation-wide infrastructure that allows the best innovative ideas to be proven using the most advanced capabilities.

Through NSUF, researchers and their collaborators are building on current knowledge to better understand the complex behavior of materials and fuels under irradiation.

NEET POC Table

POC	Area	Contact Information
Dirk Cairns-Gallimore	Advanced Materials & Manufacturing Technologies (AMMT)	Dirk.Cairns-Gallimore@nuclear.energy.gov
Chris Barr	Advanced Sensors & Instrumentation (ASI)	Christopher.Barr@nuclear.energy.gov
Dave Henderson	Nuclear Energy Advanced Modeling & Simulation (NEAMS)	David.Henderson@nuclear.energy.gov

F. Statutory Authority

The activities to be supported under this NOFO are authorized under § 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 applies.

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

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IV. Application Content and Form

This section includes application information specific to this NOFO Part 1. Refer to 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.

All non-budget documentation (use templates where provided) is to be prepared using standard 8.5" × 11" paper with 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left, right) and a font size no smaller 11 point. This is a requirement for **all** pages included in the document (i.e., table of contents, references, etc.). The preferred file format is Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) for all documents except for spreadsheets. All spreadsheets are to be uploaded in Excel file format to the online application. Do **NOT** lock any cells in the spreadsheet.

Applicants must comply with all pertinent page limitations. Any text (including references and data tables) in a document that does not adhere to the requirements listed above (except graphics, graphs, charts, and equations) will be removed from the document and will not be reviewed. DOE reserves the right to dismiss applications that violate formatting requirements. Signature blocks must be signed by the designated official.

Documents should be saved using the document naming suggestion at the bottom of each document description. The tracking ID will automatically be generated by the application system and can be found at the top of the application form under "Tracking ID."
DOE reserves the right to dismiss applications which it deems, after initial review, lacking enough detail for reviewers to adequately judge technical merit. Applications submitted with corrupt, incomplete, or incorrect files may be dismissed without further review.

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. All requested information must be provided. Forms and optional templates may be used to provide the information in accordance with the instructions below. Optional document templates can be found on the NEUP.gov website by clicking the 'Documents'.

You must save the Application before a tracking ID number will be generated.

Applications must conform to the following requirements and must not exceed the stated page limits. Please refer to NOFO Part 2, *Application Content and Form* for a complete list of application requirements.

1. 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	FY26 DECP SF424 [Tracking ID#].pdf
Research & Related Other Project Information	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP R&R Other [Tracking ID#].pdf
Project Summary/Abstract File	PDF	1 page	FY26 DECP Summary Abstract [Tracking ID#].pdf
Technical Volume (Previously titled Project Narrative)	PDF	10 pages	FY26 DECP Technical Volume [Tracking ID#].pdf
Resumes of Research and Development (R&D)	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP CV [Last Name] [Tracking ID#].pdf
Career Objective Statement	PDF	2 pages	FY26 DECP Career Statement [Tracking ID#].pdf
Endorsement Letter from Academic/Unit Department Head	PDF	2 pages	FY26 DECP Endorsement [Tracking ID#].pdf
Capabilities	PDF	2 pages	FY26 DECP Capabilities [Tracking ID#].pdf
Research and Related (R&R) Budget Form	MS Excel	n/a	FY26 DECP RR Budget [Tracking ID#].xlsx
Budget Justification	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP Budget Justification [Tracking ID#].pdf
Field Work Proposal for DOE FFRDC	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP FFRDC [Tracking ID#].pdf
Authorization for Non-DOE or DOE FFRDCs	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP CO Authorization [Tracking ID#].pdf
Current and Pending Support	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP CPS [Tracking ID#].pdf
Digital Persistent Identifies (PID)	PDF	n/a	Include in Current & Pending Support
Research Security Training Requirement (for each covered individual)	n/a	n/a	Include in Current & Pending Support
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP Site Location [Tracking ID#].pdf
Impacted Indian Tribes Documentation	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP Impacted Indian Tribes [Tracking ID#].pdf
Transparency of Foreign Connections	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP TFC [Tracking ID#].pdf

Potentially Duplicative Funding Notice	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP PDFN [Tracking ID#].pdf
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP Site Location [Tracking ID#].pdf
Lobbying Activities	PDF	n/a	FY26 DECP SF-LLL [Tracking ID#].pdf

2. 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. Often, these individuals have doctoral or other professional degrees, although individuals at the master's level may be considered covered individuals if their involvement meets this definition. Consultants, graduate students, and those with a postdoctoral role also may be considered covered individuals if they meet this definition.

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.

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.

3. Technical Volume (previously - Project Narrative)

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. The Technical Volume **must not exceed a page limit of 10 pages** of technical information, including title page, table of contents, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations. The font must not be smaller than 11-point. Merit reviewers will only consider the number of pages within the specified 10 pages. Unlimited references are allowable at the bottom of the narrative beyond the limited 10-page Technical Volume described above.

Do not include any internet addresses (URLs) that provide supplementary or additional information that constitutes a part of the application. Merit reviewers are not required to access internet sites; however, internet publications in a list of references will be treated identically to print publications.

The table below comprises the Technical Volume requirements for the project. It should contain enough background material in the introduction, including review of the relevant literature, to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the state of the science. The majority of the Technical Volume should be devoted to the description and justification of the proposed project, including details of the method to be used. It should also include a timeline for the major activities of the

proposed project and should indicate which project personnel will be responsible for which activities.

There should be no ambiguity about which personnel will perform particular parts of the project, and the time at which these activities will take place.

Technical Volume Content Requirements	
SECTION/ PAGE LIMIT	**DESCRIPTION** / 10 page limit
Cover Page	The cover page should include the project title, both the technical and business points of contact (including the Administrative Officer, if applicable), names of all team member organizations, names of covered individuals and their organizations, the project location(s), and any statements regarding confidentiality.
Background/Introduction	Explanation of the importance and relevance of the proposed work, as well as a review of the relevant literature.
Project/Objectives	This section should provide a clear, concise statement of the specific objectives/aims of the proposed project.
Proposed Research and Methods	Identify the hypotheses to be tested (if any) and details of the methods to be used, including the integration of experiments with theoretical and computational research efforts.
Integration of Research and Educational Activities	Identify the educational aspects of the application and details about the methods and approaches the PI will use to integrate educational activities into overall project activities.
Leadership	Identify potential leadership in your area including, but not limited to, research performance, transformative nature of the work, creative vision, and leadership performance in scientific, technical, service-based activities, and educational areas.
Timetable of Activities	Timeline for all major activities including anticipated milestones and deliverables.

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**
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.
Davis-Bacon Act Requirements	NOFO Part 2	If applicable to awards made under this NOFO.
Build America Buy America Requirements for Infrastructure Projects	NOFO Part 1	If 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 United States undertaken by applicable recipient types, require that:

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

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.)

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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 NEUP.gov. Electronic applications and instructions are available at the NEUP.gov website. To access these materials: (1) go to 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 in under Documents tab on NEUP.gov. To access these materials, select the appropriate NOFO on the Funding Opportunity page of 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 to the NEUP.gov application site no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on all dates provided in the Key Facts section of NOFO Part 1.

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 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.

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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.

2. Technical Review Criteria

2.1. Initial Review Criteria

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

a) the applicant is eligible for the award;
b) the information and documents required by the NOFO have been submitted;
c) all mandatory requirements are satisfied;
d) the proposed project is relevant to the NE mission;
e) the proposed project is responsive to the objectives of the NOFO; and
f) the proposed project is not duplicative of programmatic work.

Applications that fail to pass the initial review may be eliminated from further consideration

2.2. 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.

2.3. 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 reviews.

Review Criterion Overview	
Criterion	**Weight**
Advances the State of Knowledge and Understanding and Addresses Gaps in Nuclear Science and Engineering Research	33.34%
Demonstrates an Integrated Research, Education and Service Plan to Address Broader Impacts to Society	33.33%
Demonstrates an Integrated Research, Education and Service Plan to Address Broader Impacts to Society	33.33%
Relevancy to the NE mission	Yes/No
Peer Review score	Sum of rating x weights

Criterion 1 (33.34%)– Advances the State of Knowledge and Understanding and Addresses Gaps in Nuclear Energy Science and Engineering Research Areas: The technical merit of the proposed research will be evaluated, including the extent to which the project advances the state of knowledge and understanding and addresses gaps in nuclear energy science and engineering research areas. Evaluation will consider how important the proposed project is to advance knowledge and understanding within the topic area and how well the proposed project advances, discovers, or explores creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts that have broader impact.

Criterion 2 (33.33%) – Demonstrates an Integrated Research, Education and Service Plan to Address Broader Impacts to Society: The extent to which the plan advances nuclear energy related research, educational outcomes and addresses societal broader impacts. The overall integration of the research and educational aspects of the application. The extent to which the research and education vision supports the development of the faculty member, research infrastructure, curriculum, and research that will advance the applicant's research focus while training the next generation of nuclear energy professionals. Service impacts can include, but are not limited to, leadership for student, university, and community programs, and STEM outreach.

Criterion 3 (33.33%)– Qualifications and Potential for Leadership Within the Nuclear Energy Community: The extent to which the applicant has the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to execute the project, the probability that the PI will be able to provide direct

research contributions, the potential for scientific leadership and creative vision, and the potential for leadership in the research and technical area.

Multiple peer reviewers will independently evaluate the applications in accordance with the technical review evaluation criteria described in this DECP NOFO. Also, DOE will complete a Relevancy Criteria Review in accordance with the criteria described above. DOE will consider the overall evaluation results and subjective programmatic factors to ultimately recommend a final set of applications for approval by the Selection Official (SO).

D. Other Selection Factors

The SO may consider the following program policy factors in the selection process:

- Degree to which proposed project optimizes/balances/maximizes use of available DOE funding to achieve DOE program goals and objectives, including how projects support DOE research. It may also include research portfolio diversity, geographic distribution and/or how the projects support other complementary efforts that, when taken together, will best achieve program research goals and objectives.
- Application selection may optimize appropriate mix of projects to best achieve DOE research goals and objectives.
- Cost/Budget considerations, including availability of funding.
- Extent that the applicant has awards in progress or not completed (e.g., unsubmitted final report, where applicable, by the milestone due date, from DOE, from a previous year's NOFO, or has existing no cost extensions).
- Demonstrated ability of the applicant to successfully complete projects, including relevant prior projects, and do so within budget and within the specified timeframe of the award.
- Applicability across multiple nuclear technologies.
- Potential to enhance U.S. nuclear infrastructure.
- Consistent and conformant work proposed in the application with current NE Congressional appropriations.

Any of the above factors may be independently considered by the SO 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 priorities and available funding. Therefore, the above factors may be used by the SO to assist in determining which applications shall receive DOE funding support.

VII. Selection and Award Notices

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

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VIII. Award Administration Information

A. Type of Award Instrument

DOE anticipates awarding Grants under the DECP NOFO.

B. 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; Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act-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
Cost-Share Payment	NOFO Part 2

Implementation of Executive Order 13798, Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty	NOFO Part 2
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 Contracting 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).

C. 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

2.1. Grants.gov

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

2.2. SAM.gov

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

2.3. 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 NOFO Part 2, *Other Information* for additional information and requirements that apply to all DOE NOFOs.

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