U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

May 15, 2023

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
Center of Excellence (COE) for Homeland Security in the Arctic (HSA)
Funding Opportunity # DHS-23-ST-061-ARCTIC

DHS received the following questions regarding the above referenced Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Based on the NOFO published material, the following answers ensure that all interested applicants have the same information. Questions have been edited to provide clarity. This FAQ will be updated as needed to address additional questions throughout the open application period.

Questions may be added in the weeks to come.

Question #1: Do you anticipate standard overhead rates for the universities, or will DHS be looking for reduced rates?

Answer:
A cost match or a cost share is voluntary. However, the ability to extend the reach of DHS funds for research and education in support of its mission is an important consideration for DHS. In-kind contributions demonstrate a university's commitment to the COE and will be considered during the Site Visit Review as an "other factor." Please see NOFO Section D.2.I., "Phase 3: Site Visit Review" (page 66).

Applicants should follow instructions on Grants.gov for submitting the **SF424 (R & R) Application for Federal Assistance Form**. If you are requesting Indirect/Fringe Costs, please attach your indirect cost rate agreement, fringe benefit rate agreement, or a description of how fringe rates are calculated, using the "Add Attachments" button at the end of the SF424 form.

Question #2: What is meant by "dedicate substantial time and resources to OUP and DHS"?

Answer:
This speaks to the amount of time that the Center Lead's Management and Administration (M&A) Team, which requires dedicated staff, including a full-time Center Director, to support transition, communications, and program/project management, should expect to dedicate to working with the COE Program. The lead university for a DHS COE has significant M&A responsibilities such as coordination across the consortium and reporting requirements that may not be what you would typically expect in a federally funded financial assistance program. Please see NOFO Section

A.9.b., "Priorities and Expectations for a COE" (page 5) and Attachment A: Terms and Conditions for more information.

Question #3: On the SF424, do you want a budget for the entire time period, just the first year, or something in between?

Answer:
In the SF424, the budget for Block 15 - Total Estimated Project Funding should be prepared for one year in the amount of $4.6 million dollars. Please see NOFO Section D.13., "Content and Form of Application Submission," item a.IV. (page 51).

Question #4: Please confirm that there is a limit of one proposal which can be submitted for the management and administration section. Is a Budget required to be submitted for this section?

Answer:
Yes, there is a limit of one proposal for Management and Administration, which would be part of the applicant's proposal to be the lead university for the DHS COE. This is an important element of the proposal and requires a budget and budget justification to support the proposed management and administration of the COE.

Question #5: What documents do we need to submit for the subawards listed in our budget?

Answer:
Subaward budgets are typically submitted as attachments. Budgets can be prepared in a format of the applicant's choice. The costs should clearly map to the cost categories in the SF-424, Research and Related Budget – Cumulative Budget (e.g., salaries and level of effort by calendar, academic or summer months; fringe benefits; travel; supplies; equipment; total direct costs; total indirect costs; and the indirect cost rate charge).

Question #6: Should each project be submitted with a 10-year budget spreadsheet?

Answer:
No. Project narratives for the proposed Research Program and Education and Workforce Development Program must include the "Total projected costs per year for two (2) years and, if applicable, forecasted costs for up to five (5) years." Please see NOFO Section A.9.h., items II., "Research Program," and III., "Education and Workforce Development Program" (page 27 and page 30).

Question #7: How much detail will be needed in the budget and budget justification for expenses?

Answer:
Please complete the budget forms as part of the application on Grants.gov per the form instructions, to include the SF-424A, Research & Related Budget, and, as applicable, the R & R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) form.

The budget justification is provided as an attachment to the Research & Related Budget form in

Section L (page 3). The budget justification narrative should clearly explain how the proposed budget is derived (e.g., how salaries were calculated, fringe, etc.).

Question #8: Is there a page limit for the budget justification?

Answer:
There is no page limit for the budget justification. The budget justification is not included in the Center narrative page limit. Please see NOFO Section A.9.h, "Application Project Narrative," (page 23).

Question #9: What is the link for the webinar recording?

Answer:
The webinar recording is posted on Grants.gov.