



AEOP Cooperative Agreement Re-solicitation (W911SR-15-R-0003) | Q & A

1. **Question:** Is this a follow-on requirement? If so, could you please provide the incumbent contract number for this opportunity?

Answer: Yes, this is a follow-on award to the current AEOP Cooperative Agreement, which includes revised and updated requirements. The previously awarded AEOP cooperative agreement number is W911NF-10-2-0076.

2. **Question:** Is there a limit to the number of applications you will accept from a potential lead organization to this program?

Answer: Yes, a lead organization may only submit one application.

3. **Question:** Does my office need to coordinate an internal selection process, so that only one lead application goes forward from XXXXX?

Answer: Only one application may be submitted from any organization.

4. **Question:** Is there any limit to the number of applications on which XXXXX can appear as a Consortium member?

Answer: No, there's no limit.

5. **Question:** We did not find any instructions for what information/formatting requirements are expected for the submission for this RFI.

Answer: Please reference Section IV of the public announcement titled "Application and Submission Information" for guidance on submission and formatting. Additionally please note this is a Public Announcement soliciting applications for award of a Cooperative Agreement; this is not a Request for Information (RFI).

6. **Question:** Who are the current Lead Organization and partners?

Answer: Please refer to usaeop.com.

7. **Question:** Who administers the AEOP portfolio now?

Answer: Virginia Tech



- 8. Question:** On page 12 of the RFP, Apprenticeship Programs are all combined and listed as #6. Is it the intention of the RFP to have all internships administered by one partner or can multiple organizations partner to administer them?

Answer: It is the intent to have one face for the public to engage in the Army's apprentice programs and look to a provider to address how that can be done through the various Army resources and assets.¹

- 9. Question:** Will you be publishing a list of the attendees at the opportunity day meeting on February 26th?

Answer: Yes. All documents shared at the opportunity day will be published.

- 10. Question:** I work for an external evaluation and consulting firm, XXXXX, and we would like to potentially partner with interested organizations for an external evaluation components of the programs. Would we be able to attend the Opportunity Day as an interested vendor or is the meeting primarily for the organizations interested in managing the program aspects of the projects?

Answer: Yes.

- 11. Question:** I am an independent consultant who would like to make contact with prospective organizations responding to the AEOP solicitation. Is there a list of such companies and/or contact information available?

Answer: The attendee list will be published along with the agenda. However, attendees reserve the right to publish their contact info or not.

- 12. Question:** I recently received a follow-on award (URAP/HSAP), although the award covers only a couple of students. Would you think the opportunity day is something beyond what I have received, or similar in nature which may allow me to participate in some sort of Consortium (or individual application)?

Answer: "Apprenticeship Programs" are one of the Army Educational Outreach Program Cooperative Agreement's (AEOP COA's) individual program management components. HSAP and URAP are two of five programs that will be managed collectively as "Apprenticeships". The recipient of the AEOP COA single-award will select a Consortium of organizations to help manage individual AEOP components, such as the "AEOP Apprenticeship Management."

- 13. Question:** Regarding Opportunity Day, is it appropriate to bring an executive summary of our plans for distribution? Is there anything else I might need to bring in terms of networking and making the best outcomes possible for the Opportunity Day?

¹ The answer to Questions #8 has been amended in this version of the Q&A document.





Answer: Opportunity Day attendees may bring anything they wish to share with other attendees, including an executive summary. However, please note that Government representative will NOT accept any documentation or other materials from any attendee.

**Questions & Answers received at and after the AEOP COA Opportunity Day
(Thursday, 26 Feb 2015):**

14. Question: Will Power Point Slides be sent to us?

Answer: All briefing slides will be made available on Grants.gov.

15. Question: Can we please ask the lead organizations to identify themselves so programs can know who to reach out to?

Answer: The government does not know which organizations will submit an application as lead organization. It is recommended to identify them through networking.

16. Question: Who leads the Consortium – a university or corporation?

Answer: Please reference “Awards Instruments” on page 7 of the public announcement.

17. Question: Can the lead organization also run individual programs?

Answer: No. Please reference “Award Instruments” on page 7 of amendment #2 of the public announcement.

18. Question: What time is allowed for a transition to a new team?

Answer: Please reference Section E, “Program Transition” on page 66 of the public announcement.

19. Question: Will 2013 AEOP evaluations be available before applications are due?

Answer: They are already available on the AEOP website.

20. Question: What are the maximum and minimum # of Consortium members?

Answer: Please reference the public announcement. There is no specific maximum or minimum number of Consortium members.

21. Question: Is each applicant supposed to assemble a comprehensive team encompassing Consortium management (lead organization) and administration for the individual programs (subcontractors) or does the applicant apply solely for the Consortium management?



Answer: Yes, the applicant is expected to assemble a Consortium. Please reference the public announcement for more details.

22. Question: Is the list of the existing 11/12 GEMS sites with points of contact at each site published?

Answer: Please refer to the AEOP website for the Help-Desk contact information. Individual site POCs may be requested through the current program administrator help-desk upon request.

23. Question: How important is student geographic diversity? If one attracted large numbers of underserved students from a single or a few areas would that meet AEOP goals?

Answer: Please reference definition of “underserved populations” in the Executive Summary on page 5 of the public announcement.

24. Question: Is there any discussion of Pre-K programs?

Answer: No.

25. Question: Regarding the current performers, can you please clarify:

Will the ultimate awardee automatically work with the current performers OR will the awardee be selected based on their teaming arrangements with the current performers?

Answer: Please reference Section E, “Program Transition,” page 66 in the public announcement.

26. Question: Will the existing centralized website and registration system be turned over the COA?

Answer: Yes.

27. Question: Can new programs be proposed or is the slate of programs fixed?

Answer: The programs outlined in the public announcement are fixed. However, the public announcement states on page 14 under “Consortium/COA Management” that “At the request of the Consortium and at the discretion of the U.S. Army, additional components and/or STEM Educational Outreach oriented organizations may be added to or removed from the COA to advance the AEOP COA towards meeting the core objectives in support of AEOP priorities. Please also reference “Strategic Outreach Initiatives” on page 28 for more information regarding partnerships with new like-minded organizations/programs.

28. Question: Is it the Army’s desire to have a single Individual Program Administrator (IPA) for all AEOP Apprenticeship Management?

Answer: Please reference Question #8 on the published Q&A.

29. Question: Is an LO allowed to manage one of the individual programs?

Answer: No, please reference “Award Instruments” on page 7 of amendment #2 of the public announcement.

30. Question: The Unite program has a biennial competitive RFP process. Are we in the RFP year?

Answer: No, the next RFP process is FY16.

31. Question: Is it possible to have the IPA for each of the 12 elements/programs identify themselves and indicate if they are interested in continuing to run the program?

Answer: Current IPAs can be found on the AEOP website. The Government cannot ask current IPAs to indicate if they are interested in re-competing.

32. Question: How can those interested in being an IPA connect with a potential LO?

Answer: It is entirely at the discretion of interested organizations to identify other organizations that are interested in becoming an AEOP Consortium member and to submit an application.

33. Question: How much are current partners considered part of the “AEOP brand?”

Answer: Please reference the Marketing / Communications Overview on page 23 of the public announcement. As administrators of individual programs on behalf of AEOP, the Consortium and its members are considered AEOP partners in promoting the AEOP brand.

34. Question: For the Consortium – do the organizations assisting the lead receive sub-awards?

Answer: Please reference pages 5 through 7 of the public announcement. The Government anticipates making a single award to the LO of a proposed Consortium. The LO is responsible for the distribution of AEOP funding to all members of the Consortium.

35. Question: Are the budget numbers shown in the solicitation an upper cost limit?

Answer: Budget numbers shown represent the current estimated limit.

36. Question: URAP and HSAP budget of \$80,000 seems very low. Is this correct?

Answer: Yes, it is correct. Please reference public announcement, page 38, item 3 (b), “Funding of HSAP/URAP sites to include apprentice stipends will be executed by the program coordinator external to AEOP cooperative agreement award via qualifying Army Research Laboratory/Army Research Office research grants.”



37. Question: Please clarify funding for internship programs. For example, how is \$80K on page 68 broken down for awards/admin for 110 students?

Answer: The 80K is comprised of the approximate allocation in admin/overhead funds of the HSAP/URAP in its first year. The 80K does not include educational stipends.

38. Question: Page 37, paragraph (d) states “At least 85% of REAP funds will be allocated directly to host academic institutions.” This leaves 15% of \$400K for admin costs.

Answer: An amendment to the REAP requirements on page 37 of the public announcement will be forthcoming.

39. Question: How many applications will be funded?

Answer: A single award will be made to one recipient with an established Consortium.

40. Question: What is the ceiling of the budget for each application?

Answer: Please reference section F on page 67 of the public announcement.

41. Question: What is the application mechanism if the faculty is from a Hispanic serving institution?

Answer: The application mechanism is the same for any organization that is interested in submitting an application.

42. Question: Please offer “break-down” explanation of annual funds (page 68).

Answer: First year approximate allocations of funds are provided on Table 2, page 68. Further explanation and break-down of annual funds cannot be provided at this time. Annual funding of the AEOP COA and its programs (beyond the first year) is contingent upon on-time submission and approval of Annual Program Plans as well as a congressionally approved Federal budget.

43. Question: If faculty aims to increase students (from XXXX), what are your suggestions for the application development?

Answer: The Government cannot provide any guidance on application development beyond what is outlined in the public announcement.

44. Question: Under the Outreach Initiatives - Can this include new programs? New development? How does an organization get involved in this?

Answer: The section “Strategic Outreach Initiatives” encourages the establishment of strategic partnerships with new programs/organizations. Please reference “Strategic



Outreach Initiatives” on page 28 of the public announcement for more details. Organizations can submit applications in response to the RFP for “Strategic Outreach Initiatives” separately.

45. Question: Can programs be tailored regionally (for instance, creation of a regional “hub”)?

Answer: The Government cannot provide any guidance on how offerors address the execution of program requirements on this announcement.

46. Question: Is there a cap on indirect cost?

Answer: Applications will be evaluated as described in the public announcement. Please reference “Application & Submission Information” on page 70 and “Application Review Information” on page 76 of the public announcement for more details.

47. Question: Can you please provide specific requirements and details as to the Blanket Insurance Policy (e.g. limitations of liability and specific elements for required coverage).

Answer: Please reference page 45 of public announcement, item J for detailed information on life and accident insurance policy.

48. Question: Regarding current performers, when do the contracts with current performers expire? Presumably they will continue in their roles until the contracts expire.

Answer: Please reference “Program Transition” on page 66 of the public announcement.

49. Question: Will the current performers have to re-compete now?

Answer: All offerors are competing for the follow-on award of the AEOP COA within the same terms, as outlined in the public announcement.

50. Question: Will current performers automatically be assigned to the winners’ team?

Answer: No, all offerors are competing within the same terms, as outlined in the public announcement.

51. Question: Is there interest in expanding camps and K-8 programs outside of summer camps (& competitions), i.e. programs that complement formal in-classroom learning?

- Programs that run throughout the school year
- After-school clubs & camps, weekend awareness events, etc.

Answer: Please refer to the requirements specifically outlined in this the public announcement.



52. Question: Is there just one (1) award for this program for all programs of approx. \$14-19K per year?

Answer: No. It is \$14-19M per year. Please refer to section F “Funding” on page 68 of the public announcement.

53. Question: Is the July 20th date (“Final Applications² Due”) only applicable to the top finalists to submit additional information to be able to discern the final awardee?

Answer: Yes, please reference section C “Review and Selection Process” under “Application Review Information” on page 82 of the public announcement.

54. Question: Is continuous engagement of K-12 students important to the 10-year strategic plan? (many of these programs culminate in a competition or are short term camps)

Answer: Please refer to the public announcement, specifically the “Executive Summary” on page 5 of the public announcement. AEOP programs are designed to engage K-College students in a continuum of STEM education and outreach programs.

55. Question: How do the existing stand-alone AEOP programs fit into the Consortium objectives & mission? Stand-Alones: Unite, REAP, GEMS, etc.

Answer: AEOP elements are not “stand-alone” programs. AEOP is funded through a cooperative agreement for the purpose of providing a continuation of experiences designed with increasingly sophisticated challenges/opportunities that necessitate progressively advanced STEM literacy and competency to succeed. Please reference the public announcement for more details.

56. Question: Have you looked at partnering with other departments like NIST (national Institute of Standard and Technology) to use their teacher training? We had one teacher go to their 2-week training, which brought a lot of info back to our middle school.

Answer: AEOP partners with other departments when and where appropriate. However, AEOP does not provide general STEM professional development or training to teachers. Please reference “Research Experience for STEM Educators and Teachers” (RESET) on page 49 of the public announcement for more details.

57. Question: For STEM Enrichment, how are the strategies developed? How involved will the Consortium be in the development of strategy?

Answer: Please reference the “Executive Summary” on page 5 of the public announcement for more details on the Consortium’s involvement in the development of strategies in support of AEOP priorities and objectives.

² The next amendment to the AEOP COA will reflect this change in terminology. In alignment with the terminology used on Grants.gov, please not the use of “application” instead of “proposal.”



58. Question: Can we get the contact information for the current IPAs and is it allowable for these people to be “hired” by the new lead to promote continued positive efforts? Also, would it be possible to get the current costs of these people to build budget?

Answer: The Government cannot provide contact information of current IPAs and has no involvement in the development of applications. These and similar topics must be discussed directly with potential offerors and interested IPAs/individuals. Please refer to AEOP website for current Consortium members.

59. Question: Assuming that the Army is very pleased with the same past providers and partners (because of their performance and impact), are there any program areas where the Army is particularly interested in looking for new partners/solutions?

Answer: Please reference public announcement, specifically “Strategic Outreach Initiatives” on page 28.

60. Question: Will individual programs ever be put out for bid by themselves?

Answer: Please refer to the public announcement. AEOP is looking for applications to the current public announcement of the AEOP COA follow-on award, which includes fundamental elements 6-12. We cannot speak for the future.

61. Question: How is it decided if a new IPA is needed for a program after the COA award?

Answer: Please reference the public announcement. Offerors are required to submit Articles of Collaboration as part of their application. The Articles of Collaboration must be signed by each Consortium member, and will detail the Consortium’s operating structure. A sample Articles of Collaboration can be found as an appendix to the public announcement.

62. Question: Can new programs be proposed or is the slate of programs fixed?

Answer: Please reference Q&A #27.

63. Question: Is the current Institutional Review Board (IRB) transferrable to another LO?

Answer: No it isn’t.

64. Question: We would like to talk more about the RESET scale-up to DoD Schools – perhaps IPA or Title I?

Answer: Please reference PA requirements on RESET under Fundamental Program Element 9 on page 49 of the public announcement and address those requirements in your application.



65. Question: Assuming (as we do) that the Army is happy with the current performers, what kind of transition is envisioned?

Answer: Please reference Section E. “Program Transition” on page 66 of the public announcement.

66. Question: Is it correct to assume that transitioning all current performers at once would be unnecessarily disruptive and this is better done as each contract expires?

Answer: Please reference section E (Program Transition) on page 66 of the public announcement. The existing cooperative agreement will expire 31 October 2015.

67. Question: Will the existing centralized website and registration system be turned over to the COA?

Answer: Yes. Please reference Section E (Program Transition) on page 66 of the public announcement.

68. Question: Can IPAs also host students in any of the programs? Serve as local program host sites?

Answer: Yes, however it is the responsibility of the IPA and the Consortium to ensure that any potential organizational conflicts of interest³ are mitigated.

69. Question: If a university also has a separate applied research institute, could the academic side be an LO and the RI be an IPA?

Answer: Yes, if the separate research institute is clearly discernible as a separate legal entity and no organizational conflict of interests exist between the two entities.

70. Question: The projected budget and pricing are based on the Program Fundamental Elements. The CLIN structure and funding as outlined in Section B of the agreement solicitation is based on the different funding agencies. How will the final agreement manage and administer these different funding approaches? How will costs be invoiced / reimbursed? Can funds be realigned between CLINs?

Answer: The CLIN structure only pertains to the SEAP and CQL program, which fall under “Apprenticeship Programs.” Army laboratories are responsible for obligating SEAP and CQL stipend funds to the AEOP COA upon selection of their SEAP and CQL apprentices. The IPA administering “Apprenticeship Programs” issues stipends to SEAP/CQL students

³ A document with more details and examples about Organizational Conflict of Interests will be forthcoming in the next amendment to the AEOP COA public announcement.



directly and invoices the LO accordingly. The LO then invoices the Army for the SEAP/CQL stipends, which are paid from the funding lines (CLINs) that Army laboratories have obligated to the AEOP COA ahead of time. The Government will provide specific invoicing instructions upon award of the Cooperative Agreement.

71. Question: You indicated AEOP is not in the business of teacher training, but you also mention that some the programs involve opportunities for teachers. Please elaborate on this contradiction.

Answer: That is correct. AEOP does not conduct teacher trainings. Please reference Individual AEOP Program Management, page 30-66 of the public announcement, for more details.

72. Question: Is the RESET a new program initiative in this cooperative agreement? Is this considered a teacher training initiative, which is I understand is not the focus of AEOP? Please explain.

Answer: Yes, RESET is a revamped AEOP initiative, previously known as STEM Teacher Program Initiatives. It is not considered a teacher training initiative, but rather a teacher research experience. Please reference Individual AEOP Program Management, page 30-66 of the public announcement, for more details on the RESET and its requirements.

73. Question: Are the current AEOP overall and individual program APPs and APRs for 2013 & 2014 available for viewing? If not can they be made available?

Answer: No, AEOP APPs and APRs for 2013 and 2014 are not available for potential offerors to view. These are internal documents and will be transitioned upon selection of a recipient. Please refer to Section E “Program Transition”, Item J on page 67 of the public announcement.

74. Question: On page 67 of the Program Announcement (W911SR-15-R-003), Section E, Item C, transitioning to the new recipient are “License agreements to Cvent application and survey tools.” When will these licenses expire and, upon their expiration, can another vendor be sought to replace Cvent?

Answer: The Army intends to transition the license and use of the Cvent application tool for AEOP’s centralized applications to the new recipient. Considerable investment in this tool would make it difficult to transition to another vendor and any proposal to do so would have to be justified.

75. Question: On page 67 of the Program Announcement (W911SR-15-R-003), Section E, Item F, transitioning to the new recipient are “100 Samsung Tablets and 10 MIFIs.” Must these devices be distributed or can they be stored and replaced with other tools that will accomplish the same task?



Answer: The Samsung Tablets that were purchased through the current cooperative agreements will be transitioned to the new recipient to be utilized for AEOP programming to include evaluations. Other tools will be considered based on a reasonable and acceptable justification to do so.

76. Question: On pages 14-15 of the Program Announcement (W911SR-15-R-003), Section 1, Item 1.1, the suggested key positions are described. Have the CAM, the IPAs, and the LPCs already been named? If so, will a list of filled positions and vacancies be provided to the new recipient?

Answer: The Government will designate the CAM (cooperative agreement manager) and the LPCs (local program coordinators). The recipient, as required in their application, will have an established consortium with clearly defined roles. The recipient will designate the IPAs.

77. Question: On page 7 of the Program Announcement (W911SR-15-R-003), Section 5, under the executive summary, "Additionally, the Army reserves the right to re-compete the cooperative agreement after the initial three years." Are there any restrictions for past recipients to re-compete for the award? If so, what are those restrictions?

Answer: There are no restrictions for past recipients to re-compete for the award.

78. Question: On page 28 of the Program Announcement (W911SR-15-R-003), Section 5.1-5.2, Strategic Outreach Initiatives, "AEOP is looking to explore and adapt innovative ways to form mutually beneficial relationships" and "promote and integrate AEOP's portfolio of STEM opportunities within the framework of partners' existing STEM programming." Is this envisioned to be a reciprocal relationship whereby AEOP advertises and promotes the other organization's programs/objectives while the other organization promotes for AEOP?

Answer: Per PA section Strategic Outreach Initiative, section, please refer to the requirements under 5.2 (page 28).

79. Question: On page 20 of the Program Announcement (W911SR-15-R-003), Section 2.1, Program Evaluations: Data Collection, Analysis and Reports, "employs study designed and methods that are appropriate, aligned to the evaluation objectives....for varying development stages of the programs and the AEOP COA and its objectives." Does "varying development stages of the programs" refer to the maturity of the program or the age of the student? In other words, are the evaluations intended to be age-appropriate for the students?

Answer: "The varying developmental stages of programs" in this section refers to the maturity of the respective programs. However, evaluation instruments should be as age/grade-appropriate as possible while ensuring that the evaluation of fundamental AEOP elements is aligned with the Federal and DoD's STEM Strategic Plan. Please reference page 19 of the public announcement, Section D "Fundamental Elements", 2 "Program Evaluations: Data Collection, Analysis and Reports" for more details.

