

Questions and Answers

S21AS00165

Question 1: In order to maximize R&D funding, BSEE and DOE indicate in the RFP an expectation that less than 10% of the funds will be utilized to manage the OESI 2.0 program. The R&D program administration includes competitive and/or non-competitive solicitations, proposal evaluations, selections and award negotiation, for specific research projects pursuant to approved roadmaps. Please advise the details of what can be included in the 10% administration costs

Answer 1: The tasks associated with program administration at no more than 10% are as follows:

- (A) Administer the research program in accordance with the approved annual plan;**
- (B) Issue research project solicitations;**
- (C) Make project awards to research performers;**
- (D) Disburse research funds to research performers;**
- (E) Oversee projects pursuant to individual project management plans.**

Question 2: Please advise if there is a restriction on the eligibility of states from which we can look for potential partners.

Answer 2: There is no partner eligibility restriction.

Question 3: We're wondering if there might be a way to facilitate our partnering by making our capabilities broadly known to potential applicants. Are you able to provide something like this via Q&A? Or do you have other recommendations on this front?

Answer 3: While partnerships with other organizations is encouraged, it would be up to your organization to seek out those partnerships.

Question 4: Can you please provide clarification on the 10% limit of Administrative Costs? Does this limit applicant's indirect cost charges?

Answer 4: See response to Question 1. This does not limit the applicant's indirect rates.

Question 5: In looking over the Ocean Energy Safety Institute NOFO, our office was confused by some terminology. Section D2 mentions a Project Summary and then Project Narrative (twice). Further down, the announcement goes on to state the requirements for the "Proposal Text," but I didn't see a mention of Project Summary again. Under "Proposal Text," I noticed the first item is "Abstract." Is that the "Project Summary" or is a separate summary required? I noticed that the "Project Narrative" listed under the Application Checklist (in D8) seems to align

with everything mentioned under "Proposal Text" prior to the budget information (i.e., items 1-7 of the Proposal Text in D2).

Answer 5: Please disregard the Project Summary heading in this section. The Project Narrative was incorrectly listed twice. The Project Narrative section of your proposal should include a Cover Sheet and Proposal Text with items noted in Section D2.

Question 6: Are Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC's) eligible to respond and receive funding under the subject Funding Opportunity as a subrecipient to a University?

Answer 6: Yes

Question 7: Effort distribution on energy technologies: Can DOE and BSEE specify an appropriate percent distribution of effort for R&D across the technical areas of Oil & Gas, Marine Wind Energy, and Marine Hydrokinetic energy development?

Answer 7: 50% Oil & Gas, 25% Offshore Wind, 25% MHK

Question 8: Joint Steering Committee:

- a) The RFP mentions the establishment of a Joint Steering Committee. To clarify, will this committee be established by DOE and BSEE, or will it be established by the Institute funded by this opportunity?

Answer 8 a): The Joint Steering Committee (JSC) will be established by DOE and BSEE.

- b) If established BSEE and DOE, will both agencies be equally represented, or will the JSC answer more to one agency?

Answer 8 b): There will be equal representation by BSEE and DOE.

- c) If established by federal agencies, will industry members be included?

Answer 8 c): No. For FACA reasons, the JSC should be a federal-only body.

Added 11/20:

Question 9: Are “administrative costs” the allocable direct costs which are associated with managing tasks A-E below; OR, Are “administrative costs” the allocable direct costs plus associated allocable indirect costs (at applicant’s approved federally negotiated rate) associated with managing tasks A-E below?

- (A) Administer the research program in accordance with the approved annual plan;
- (B) Issue research project solicitations;
- (C) Make project awards to research performers;
- (D) Disburse research funds to research performers;
- (E) Oversee projects pursuant to individual project management plans.

Answer 9: "Administrative Costs" would be allocable direct costs and associated allocable indirect costs (at applicant’s approved federally negotiated rate) associated with managing tasks of the Institute, in order to maximize research funding.

Question 10: Is the limit of “administrative costs” up to 10 percent of the entire Institute budget or up to 10 percent of the total R&D Program budget?

Answer 10: Up to 10% of the entire Institute budget related to management activities for OESI.

Added 11/24:

Question 11: The S21AS00165 Funding Opportunity Description indicates that both competitively and non-competitively awarded R&D projects can be funded. A review of the 2018-2019 OESI Research Highlights at <https://oesi.tamu.edu/research> indicates that the majority of R&D projects funded by OESI 1.0 were conducted by the three partner universities: Texas A&M University, University of Texas, and University of Houston. This leads to two questions:

- a) Can a proposing team request a budget for R&D projects that would be performed by team partners, as long as those projects fall within the specific technical areas of interest listed in the Funding Opportunity Description, the projects are justified by demonstrated industry needs, and that project work plans would be subject to Joint Steering Committee review and approval before being authorized to proceed?

Answer 11 a): Yes

- b) Is there a target percentage of R&D projects that must be competitively awarded to entities outside the proposing team as compared with the percentage that would be non-competitively awarded to proposing team partners, under the terms and conditions stated in a), above?

Answer 11 b): No

Added 12/2:

Question 12: Is a national laboratory eligible to be part of a proposal team? If eligible and an award is made under which the national laboratory is a partner, can the national laboratory perform OESI research efforts under that award?

Answer 12: Yes, a national laboratory is eligible as a partner, and can perform research efforts under a resulting award.

Federal entities as partners are allowed, however tasks performed by the Federal partner and the associated budget must be presented separately. The Applicant's proposal and the Federal proposal should be cross referenced to each other, but each should stand alone, as opposed to a non-federal partner organization whose tasks should be included in the Applicant's proposal.

Question 13: One of the key tasks is to manage and create " R&D program administration includes competitive and/or non-competitive solicitations, proposal evaluations, selections and award "

This activity will require for a percentage of total budget to be set aside for this activity, however there is no clear instruction for this. For instance will 50-60% total budget a good and acceptable range for BSEE regarding R&D program?

Answer 13: It is the responsibility of the Applicant to determine the appropriate budget.

Added 12/21:

Question 14: In the BSEE Ocean Energy Safety Institute 2021-2026 announcement, it is not clear how a national lab would be paid if they were part of the team.

It says the national lab's tasks and the associated budget must be presented separately, but if awarded would the national lab be paid directly from BSEE or DOE, or would the funds come through the submitting institution to be distributed to the national lab as a subaward?

Answer 14: If awarded, the Federal partner funds would be obligated via a BSEE interagency agreement as opposed to a non-Federal partner whose funds would be obligated to the cooperative agreement and distributed as a subaward.