

Responses to FY2020 FFPr Merit-Based NOFO Questions

Questions received July 24 - 28, 2020

1. Our organization has a pending amendment request for a budget realignment with FAS – should we proceed with our application using the budget in the unapproved amendment or the last approved budget?

A: The application should follow the requirements in the NOFO and as part of those requirements must include the latest approved final budget.

2. **Page 3, Section c, Eligibility Information, Eligibility of Applicants states:** “Current FFPr award recipients with active cooperative agreements which have completed monetization and have a minimum of \$400,000 in remaining freight funding available.”

Question: Under a current FFPr award, we have already completed monetization with US vessels; given the limited freight budget, additional freight activities can be performed using non-US vessels. The offeror respectfully requests that USDA confirms it is allowed to use non-US Flag vessels?

A: Cargo preference is determined at the time of sale based on many factors outside of the project scope. For planning purposes implementers should assume a mixed shipment of 50% US flagged and 50% foreign flagged, understanding that the entire shipment may go on either on a US or Foreign flagged vessel. Final decisions on compliance with US Cargo Preference law are held with the US Maritime Administration and not USDA.

3. **Page 2, Estimated Funding per Award, states:** “\$100,000 – \$11,000,000; *Maximum award would be calculated at 150% of the original (active) cooperative agreement budget.”

Question: The offeror requests clarification if this means that the additional award can be up to 150% of the original (current) award?

A: The maximum expected budget request under this NOFO cannot exceed 150% of the current expected budget in Attachment C. For example, if the budget outlined in your current, signed agreement under Attachment C, Grand Total Costs is \$10,000,000 then the maximum amount an applicant can request is an additional \$5,000,000. The new Grand total cost in attachment C will be \$15,000,000 or 150% of the current budget. Grand total costs in attachment C is the result of monetized commodities, CCC Funds, and cost share.

Please note, that applications are not only limited to 150% of their current budget, but that the requests for additional commodities will also depend on the available freight of the referenced award see section C. Eligibility Information which states eligible awards must have “a minimum of \$400,000 in remaining freight funding available”

4. **Page 2, Estimated Funding per Award, states:** “\$100,000 – \$11,000,000; *Maximum award would be calculated at 150% of the original (active) cooperative agreement budget.”

Question: The offeror requests clarification if this means that the total award (current plus additional) may not exceed 150% of the original (current) award?

A: The total award (current plus additional) under this NOFO cannot exceed 150% of the current expected budget in Attachment C. For example, if the budget outlined in your current, signed agreement under Attachment C, Grand Total Costs is \$10,000,000 then the maximum amount an applicant can request is an additional \$5,000,000. The new Grand total cost in attachment C will be \$15,000,000 or 150% of the current budget. Grand total costs in attachment C is the result of monetized commodities, CCC Funds, and cost share.

Please note, that applications are not only limited to 150% of their current budget, but that the requests for additional commodities will also depend on the available freight of the referenced award see section C. Eligibility

Information which states eligible awards must have “a minimum of \$400,000 in remaining freight funding available”.

5. Page 2, Estimated Funding per Award, states: “\$100,000 – \$11,000,000; *Maximum award would be calculated at 150% of the original (active) cooperative agreement budget.”

Question: The offeror requests clarification if the 150% apply to award total (i.e. total federal funding including freight, commodity and operating budget)?

*A: 150% here refers to the current expected budget in attachment C. The total award (current plus additional) under this NOFO cannot exceed 150% of the current expected budget in Attachment C. For example, if the budget outlined in **your current, signed agreement** under Attachment C, Grand Total Costs is \$10,000,000 then the maximum amount an applicant can request is an additional \$5,000,000. The new Grand total cost in attachment C will be \$15,000,000 or 150% of the current budget. Grand total costs in attachment C is the result of monetized commodities, CCC Funds, and cost share.*

Please note, that applications are not only limited to 150% of their current budget, but that the requests for additional commodities will also depend on the available freight of the referenced award see section C. Eligibility Information which states eligible awards must have “a minimum of \$400,000 in remaining freight funding available”.

6. Q: The offeror requests clarification if the purpose of the additional funding under this NOFO is intended to deal with the impact of coronavirus or is it for new activities?

A: The intent of the limited-competition NOFO is to enhance activities under current scope of the agreement that have demonstrated the ability to have a significant impact on achieving the objectives of the agreement. Additional funding provided under this limited-competition NOFO can be used for activities that fall within the scope of the existing agreement objectives.

7. Q: Is this funding in addition to that available under Standing Supplemental NOFO USDA-FAS-0700-10.606-S?

A: No. This funding is available in parallel to the funding made available under Standing Supplemental NOFO USDA-FAS-0700-10.606-S.

8. **Page 3, Eligibility Information, states:** “Applicants must have a completed mid-term evaluation on file in FAIS (see Appendix I: Document Checklist).”

Question: For those offerors that have received a waiver for the mid-term evaluation, are they still eligible to apply for this opportunity?

A: No. Applicants must have a completed mid-term evaluation on file in FAIS.