



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD)
Research and Education Program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities
and Minority-Serving Institutions**

Equipment/Instrumentation

Fiscal Year 2024

Funding Opportunity Announcement W911NF-23-S-0014



**Issued by the U.S. Army Contracting Command
Aberdeen Proving Ground
Research Triangle Park Division
on behalf of the
Army Research Office and
the
Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
(Research, Technology and Laboratories Office)**

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Applications Due: September 15, 2023

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I. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

A. Required Overview Content

Federal Awarding Agency Name(s)

This Department of Defense (DoD) program will be administered through the Army Research Office (ARO), the Office of Naval Research (ONR), and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR).

Funding Opportunity Title

Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 DoD Research and Education Program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions (HBCU/MI) Equipment/Instrumentation

Announcement Type

This is the initial announcement.

Funding Opportunity Number

W911NF-23-S-0014

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number

12.630, Basic, Applied, and Advanced Research in Science and Engineering

Key Dates

Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time, September 15, 2023.

B. Additional Overview Information

Under authority of 10 U.S.C. § 4144 and pending the availability of funds for FY 2024, the Department of Defense (DoD) announces this funding opportunity for the acquisition of equipment/instrumentation under the Research and Education Program for HBCUs/MIs.

The Research and Education Program for HBCUs/MIs aims to (a) enhance research and education programs and capabilities in scientific and engineering disciplines critical to the national security functions of DoD; (b) enhance the capacity of HBCUs/MIs to participate in DoD research programs and activities; and (c) increase the number of graduates, including underrepresented minorities, in fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). This program is executed under policy and guidance issued by the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) and is administered by ARO, ONR, and AFOSR, hereafter called “the Agencies.”

This solicitation invites applications (also referred to as “proposals”) for acquisition of equipment/instrumentation to be used for research in areas of interest to the Agencies and to enhance the education of students in areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) that align with the Agencies’ research interests. Information about these areas of interest is available at the following websites:

Army Research Laboratory / Army Research Office combined Broad Agency Announcement is available at:

<https://www.arl.army.mil/wpcontent/uploads/2022/11/Combined-DEVCOM-ARL-BAA-SolicitationW911NF-23-S-0001.pdf>. This BAA may also be found on Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov>) by entering the BAA number, W911NF-23-S-0001, in the “Search Grants” keyword box.

Office of Naval Research: <https://www.onr.navy.mil/> Select “Work With Us,” then “Funding Opportunities,” and then “BAAs, FOAs and Special Program Announcements” to see the FY21 Long Range Broad Agency Announcement for Navy and Marine Corps Science and Technology, BAA N00014-23-S-B001. This BAA may also be found on Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov>) by entering the BAA number in the “Search Grants” keyword box.

Air Force Office of Scientific Research Broad Agency Announcement is available at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=345653>.

In addition to providing details about the Agencies’ research interests, these documents include names and contact information for technical program managers in each research area. Principal Investigators (PIs) are encouraged to peruse the research interests of each Agency and to contact respective program managers. Note that applications with relevance to interests of multiple Agencies may receive multiple reviews. See Section II.D.5 below.

Note: Use the above-referenced documents only to identify research areas of interest to the Agencies. Disregard instructions contained therein regarding application preparation, content, and submission requirements. Instead, **follow the instructions in this FOA.**

II. DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

A. Program Description

The Department of Defense (DoD) is soliciting applications for the acquisition of equipment/instrumentation under the Fiscal Year 2024 Research and Education Program for HBCU/MI. The Research and Education Program is designed to enhance the research capabilities of HBCUs and MIs and to strengthen their STEM education programs. The purpose of funding under this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to (1) support the acquisition of equipment/instrumentation to augment existing capabilities or to develop new capabilities in research areas of interest to DoD, and (2) attract students to pursue studies leading to STEM careers. Although funding provided under this FOA cannot be used for student support, in order to further DoD's objective of attracting students to pursue studies leading to STEM careers, applicants must address the impact of the requested equipment/instrumentation on student participation in research.

B. Federal Award Information

DoD intends to award approximately \$45 million under this FOA, subject to the availability of funds. Awards will be in the form of grants, and all awards will be made by the U.S. Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground-Research Triangle Park Division (ACC-APG-RTP) on behalf of ARO and DoD. Individual awards will range from \$100,000 to \$800,000. All awards will have a performance period of 12 months. Award decisions will be based on the results of a merit review by scientists and engineers of the participating Agencies.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

As provided in 10 U.S.C. § 4144, eligibility for this competition is open only to "covered educational institutions," which are defined as:

- a. institutions of higher education eligible for assistance under Title III or Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1051 *et seq.*); or
- b. accredited post-secondary minority institutions.

Eligible applicants include community colleges or other 2-year degree granting institutions meeting the definition of a "covered educational institution."

Enrollments, accreditation, and other factors may affect an institution's eligibility in any given year. With the exception of HBCUs and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), in order to meet the eligibility criterion under C.1.a above, an institution must apply to the Department of Education (DoEd) each year for Title III or Title V eligibility. A copy of the DoEd letter certifying eligibility for Title III or Title V assistance **in the year of the application to this FOA** must be included with each application. The eligibility letter will not be included in the page limit (see Section II.D.5. below).

With the exception of HBCUs and TCUs, if the DoEd eligibility letter is not submitted with the application, the applicant will be deemed ineligible, and the application will not be considered by DoD.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required under this FOA and is not an evaluation factor.

3. Other

a. Amount and composition of requested funding.

- i. An application may request DoD funding ranging in the aggregate from \$100,000 to \$800,000. An application that requests less than \$100,000 or more than \$800,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be accepted for review. Applicants that use a “modified total direct costs” base for reimbursement of indirect (facilities and administration) costs are reminded that the costs of equipment are excluded from the base for purposes of indirect cost calculation.
- ii. An application may request a single item of equipment/instrumentation or multiple items, including items of equipment/instrumentation that comprise a “system” for a common research purpose.
- iii. All requested items must meet the federal definition of equipment, i.e., an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year.
- iv. General purpose equipment, i.e., equipment whose use is not limited to research/research education, including information technology equipment and software, is not eligible for support under this FOA. However, an application may include a request for computers (i.e., laptops, desktops, tablets, mobile devices, and computer software) to be used in research and research-related education programs, as long as they meet the criterion in paragraph 3.a.iii above. The purpose and use of such equipment must be fully justified, itemized, and listed under the equipment category, not under “materials/supplies.”
- v. All equipment/instrumentation proposed for acquisition must be intended for use in research or research-related education at the applicant institution. No costs may be requested for collaboration with other institutions or purchase of equipment/instrumentation at other institutions.
- vi. No costs may be requested for user fees, maintenance agreements, or extended warranties.

vii. DoD, at its discretion, may consider an application that includes types of costs or proposed expenditures that do not conform to the limitations in paragraphs 3.a.iii, iv, v, and vi as non-responsive or may unilaterally remove such items from the budget. See Section II.D.9. below for further information regarding funding restrictions.

b. Number of applications.

No more than three (3) applications are allowed per eligible applicant. If more than three otherwise eligible applications are received from a given eligible applicant, the institution will be required to withdraw all but three.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides submission and receipt instructions for DoD program applications. Please read the following completely and carefully follow instructions.

DoD is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. For this funding opportunity, DoD requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov. This funding opportunity may be found on Grants.gov by going to the Grants.gov Search Grants screen and entering the funding opportunity number for this FOA, W911NF-23-S-0014, in the Funding Opportunity search box. You can also search for the CFDA Number 12.630, Basic, Applied, and Advanced Research in Science and Engineering.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Instructions: Read the instructions below about registering to apply for DoD funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and assemble required information specific to the applicant institution before beginning the registration process. Organizations must have an Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM), and a Grants.gov account.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but an UEI and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Complete instructions can be found here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

- a) Obtain an UEI: All entities applying for funding must have an UEI. Applicants must enter the UEI in the data entry field labeled "Unique Entity Identifier" on the Standard Form (SF) 424 form. Instructions to obtain an UEI are available at:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>
- b) *Register with SAM*: All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>
- c) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>
- d) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI Number for the organization in the UEI field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>
- e) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles*: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>
- f) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.htm>

- g) *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. How to Submit an Application to DoD via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

- a. *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- b. *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

- 1) *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- 2) *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
- 3) *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and UEI Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

- c. *Submit a Workspace:* An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package **at least 48 hours prior to the closing date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
- d. *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the DoD with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

Online Submission. **All applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. Eastern time on September 15, 2023.** Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission. Questions submitted after the **August 18, 2023** deadline may not be answered.

When DoD successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by DoD.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

5. Content and Form of Application Submission

DoD is interested in the research and related educational purposes that the equipment/instrumentation would facilitate. For this reason, the application narrative must clearly describe (1) the equipment to be acquired; (2) whether the equipment will augment existing capabilities or provide new capabilities; (3) the area(s) of research and education in which the equipment would be used; (4) how the equipment would advance research of interest to DoD; and (5) how it will enhance the ability of the institution to encourage students to pursue degrees in STEM fields, including how it will be used in research-related education.

Applicants must complete all mandatory forms and any optional forms (e.g., SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) in accordance with the instructions on the forms and the additional instructions below. The required fields should be completed in accordance with the “pop-up” instructions on the forms. To activate the instructions, turn on the “Help Mode” (icon with the pointer and question mark at the top of the form). All attachments to Grants.gov forms must be in PDF format (Adobe Portable Document Format). Please ensure that your attachments are not password protected.

The following formatting rules apply for the file attachments except as indicated below:

- Paper size when printed – 8.5 x 11-inch white paper, one-sided
- Margins – 1 inch
- Spacing – single
- Font – No smaller than Times New Roman, 12-point font (excluding mandatory forms, which may have other font requirements)
- Number of pages – 25: The 25-page limit applies to the technical portion of the application, which consists of the following: Project Summary/Abstract and Project Narrative, as described below. Pages exceeding this limit will not be considered in the application evaluation. Letters of support should not be submitted.

The following SF-424 (R&R) forms and, as applicable, attachments are required for all applications:

FORM: SF-424 (R&R) (Mandatory) - The SF-424 (R&R) form is to be used as the cover page. Complete this form first to populate data in other forms. By submitting an application through Grants.gov, the AOR (identified by username and password) is

providing an “electronic signature.” By “signing” the SF-424 (R&R), an applicant is providing the certification required by 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying as contained in Section II.F.2 of this FOA, and the representations on tax delinquency and felony convictions and prohibition on using funds under grants and cooperative agreements with entities that require certain internal confidentiality agreements (see below regarding “Other Attachments,” Field 12). If you encounter problems, contact customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or at support@grants.gov. If you forget your username or password, follow the instructions provided in the Credential Provider tutorial. Tutorials may be printed by right-clicking on the tutorial and selecting “Print.”

FORM: SF-424 Research & Related Other Project Information (Mandatory) – Complete questions 1 through 6 and attach a file for items 7, 8, and, as applicable, 12. Under this FOA, applicants are not required to provide attachments for items 9, 10, and 11. The files **must** comply with the following instructions:

Project Summary/Abstract (Field 7 on the form) (Mandatory) – The Project Summary/Abstract must be no longer than a single page (up to 4,000 characters). It must be marked to indicate that it is publicly releasable, as abstracts for all awarded applications will be placed on a DoD website(s) searchable by the public. Using terminology that the public can understand, the abstract should provide a concise description of the equipment/instrumentation requested and the research/research-related education that it will support. The header of the abstract should identify the PI, the institution, and the application title.

To attach a project summary/abstract, click “Add Attachment.”

Project Narrative (Field 8 on the form)

1. At the beginning of the project narrative, i.e., preceding the full text of the narrative, indicate the DoD Agency(ies) and research area(s) to which the proposed project and equipment/instrumentation acquisition is relevant, and provide suggested Agency assignment(s) information in the following format:
 - a. DoD Agency(ies) to evaluate the application: ARO, ONR, and/or AFOSR.
 - b. Scientific Division(s) or Directorate(s), if known, and
 - c. Technical Area(s)/Program Manager(s), if known.
2. The project narrative must clearly describe the requested equipment/instrumentation and explain how it will enhance the institution’s research/research-related education capabilities and the quality of the applicant institution’s STEM programs.
3. Indicate the academic departments that will use the equipment/instrumentation.

4. Describe how the requested equipment/instrumentation will interface with existing resources or how it will enhance current capabilities.
5. Describe any special circumstances regarding the acquisition or installation of the equipment/instrumentation, e.g., plumbing or electrical upgrades. These costs may be included in the budget if they are necessary to make the equipment fully operational and if they do not fall within the limitations specified in Section II.D.9 below.
6. Indicate the estimated useful life of the equipment/instrumentation. Describe how the institution plans to service and maintain the item(s) after the 12-month period of the award, including source(s) of funding for continued operation and maintenance.
7. Indicate if the PI will require training for optimal use of the requested equipment/instrumentation. If so, associated training costs and travel may be included in the budget and must be explained in the budget justification.
8. Describe how faculty and students are expected to use the equipment/instrumentation including, as applicable:
 - a. Will the equipment/instrumentation be used for instruction only or also in research? If used in research, describe its usage by students and faculty members.
 - b. Will there be opportunities for local high school teachers and/or students to be introduced to the equipment/instrument and to understand its usage? If so, will it be part of a broader outreach effort to interest students in pursuing STEM disciplines as undergraduates?

To attach the project narrative, click “Add Attachment.”

Other Attachments (Field 12 on the form) – To include other relevant attachments, all of which must be in PDF format, click “Add Attachment.” This must include completed representations on tax delinquency and felony convictions (included as part of the application package for this FOA).

To evaluate compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. A§ 1681 Et. Seq.), the Department of Defense is collecting certain demographic and career information to be able to assess the success rates of women who are proposed for key roles in applications in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics disciplines. To enable this assessment, each application must include the following two forms completed as indicated.

FORM: SF-424 Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) (Mandatory) – The Degree Type and Degree Year fields on the Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) form will be used by DoD as the source for career information. In addition to the required fields on the form, applicants must complete

these two fields for all individuals who are identified as having the project role of PD/PI or Co-PD/Co-PI on the form. Additional senior/key persons can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button. U.S. citizenship is not required for the PD/PI, Co-PD/Co-PI, and key personnel.

Biographical sketches are required for the PD/PI, Co-PD/Co-PI, and for other key personnel (not to exceed three (3) pages each). These will not be included in the page count. Be sure to include education and the year in which each degree was received.

To attach biographical sketches, click “Add Attachment.”

FORM: SF-424 (R&R) Personal Data (Mandatory) - This form will be used by DoD as the source of demographic information, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and disability information for the Project Director/Principal Investigator and all other persons identified as Co-Project Director(s)/Co-Principal Investigator(s). Each application must include this form with the name fields of the Project Director/Principal Investigator and any Co-Project Director(s)/Co-Principal Investigator(s) completed; however, provision of the demographic information in the form is voluntary. If completing the form for multiple individuals, each Co-Project Director/Co-Principal Investigator can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button. The demographic information, if provided, will be used for statistical purposes only and will not be made available to merit reviewers. Applicants who do not wish to provide some or all of the information should select the “Do not wish to provide” option.

FORM: SF-424 (R&R) Research & Related Budget (Mandatory) – Complete Sections A through H and attach a budget justification in Section L. Do not include any amount for fee under Section J. The budget must be consistent with a 12-month period of performance showing the total amount requested and a breakdown by cost element. Assume a proposed start date of June 1, 2024. The budget justification should provide additional data (not included in Sections A through H) by element of cost, sufficient to meet the guidance provided below and allow for meaningful evaluation. DoD fully expects that the proposed equipment/instrumentation will be ordered and installed, and any training obtained, within the 12-month period of performance. The budget justification should indicate the time frames in which these activities would take place.

The following additional guidance is provided:

Within the equipment budget category, the applicant must separately identify each item of equipment/instrumentation to be purchased and indicate the cost per item as well as the total cost of all requested items. The budget justification must specify the proposed source(s) of the requested equipment/instrumentation and include a complete vendor (manufacturer or distributor) quotation dated no earlier than 90 days before submission of the application. A complete vendor quotation must include the following:

- Name, address, and telephone number (or website) of vendor
- Type of equipment/instrumentation
- Unit price and total price

- Catalog or part number

If quotations are not provided or do not meet the above requirements, the application may be rejected for non-compliance with program requirements.

If the budget includes costs for assembly or installation of the equipment/instrumentation, including any required utility upgrades, those costs must be separately identified in the budget and explained in the budget justification.

If the budget includes costs for support and training, e.g., costs of a vendor representative spending time on campus to train faculty on use of the equipment/instrumentation or time spent by the PI at the vendor's site, those costs must be separately identified in the budget in the appropriate budget category, e.g., travel, and explained in the budget justification. DoD generally will consider up to 2 weeks to be adequate for training purposes.

To attach the budget justification at Section L, click "Add Attachment."

Note: Be sure that the total amount requested in the budget agrees with the amount entered in Block #15 of the Cover Page (Form SF-424 (R&R)).

FORM: SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Optional) - This form is applicable if any funds other than federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the application for a grant under this FOA. If the applicant has lobbying activity to disclose, complete this form and include it with the other Grants.gov forms in the application package.

6. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

Each eligible applicant under this FOA is required to (a) be registered in SAM prior to submitting its application; (b) provide a valid UEI number in its application; and (c) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

ACC-APG-RTP Division on behalf of the ARO, as the awarding office for awards under this FOA, will not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time ACC-APG-RTP Division is ready to make an award, the evaluation panel will determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

7. Submission Dates and Times

- Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time, September 15, 2023.

Applicants are responsible for submitting their applications in sufficient time to allow them to reach Grants.gov by the specified time. To minimize the possibility of a late submission due to unexpected network or equipment issues, DoD recommends that applications be submitted at least two days prior to the date and time indicated above. If the application is received by Grants.gov after the exact time and date specified as the deadline for receipt, it will be considered “late” and will not be considered for review. Acceptable evidence to establish the time of receipt by Grants.gov includes documentary evidence of receipt maintained by Grants.gov.

If an emergency or unanticipated event interrupts normal federal government processes so that applications cannot be received by Grants.gov by the exact time specified in this FOA, and the situation precludes amendment of the FOA closing date, the time specified for receipt of applications will be deemed to be extended to the same time of day specified in this FOA on the first work day on which normal federal government processes resume.

- b. **Application Receipt Notices** - As indicated in Section II.D.4. above, Grants.gov will provide a series of emails to the applicant confirming submission and receipt of the application. Applicants can track the status of their applications at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/track-my-application.html>.

8. Intergovernmental Review

There is no requirement for intergovernmental review under this FOA.

9. Funding Restrictions

- a. Applications may not request funds for, and awards under this FOA may not be used for the construction or modification of buildings or building support systems (e.g., heating/ventilation/air conditioning, as distinguished from specific installation requirements for the equipment/instrumentation; raising the ceiling of a building; moving HVAC systems/air handlers and/or re-routing associated ductwork), or purchase or installation of fixed equipment (e.g., clean rooms and fume hoods).
- b. Applications may not request funds for, and awards under this FOA may not be used for operation and maintenance, including extended warranties, user fees, and maintenance agreements.
- c. Applications may not request funds for, and awards under this FOA may not be used for any form of student support (e.g., stipends, tuition, fees).
- d. Applications may not request funds for, and awards under this FOA may not be used for carrying out research. However, funds may be used to pay for the salary costs of

the PI, or other individuals identified in the application whose salaries would appropriately be considered as direct costs, associated with the time spent in learning how to operate the equipment, including any time spent at a vendor site for which travel also is requested. Applications may not request travel costs outside of the contiguous U.S.

- e. Applications may not request funds for, and awards under this FOA may not be used for subawards.

10. Other Submission Requirements

An applicant may withdraw an application at any time before award by written notice or by email. Notice of withdrawal shall be sent to the Grants Officer identified in Section II.G of this FOA. Withdrawals are effective upon receipt of notice by the Grants Officer.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

Primary evaluation criteria (of equal importance to each other) are:

- a. Impact of the requested equipment/instrumentation on the institution's ability to conduct research/research-related education in areas of interest to DoD, either by enhancing current capabilities or establishing new capabilities.
- b. Impact of the requested equipment/instrumentation on STEM programs of the institution.
- c. Impact of the requested equipment/instrumentation on student participation in STEM programs, including students at the applicant institution and high school students.
- d. Qualifications of the PI and other key personnel to use the requested equipment/instrumentation.

Secondary evaluation criteria, of less importance than primary criteria but of equal importance to each other, are:

- a. Ability of the institution to operate and maintain the equipment/instrumentation after the end of DoD support.
- b. Realism and reasonableness of cost.

2. Review and Selection Process

Scientists and engineers of the DoD Agencies will evaluate applications according to the above criteria. The most meritorious applications will be recommended for an award. The Research Director of the USD(R&E) Research Directorate is the approving authority of a recommendation for award.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Award decisions are expected to be announced in late March 2024. The PI and AOR will receive a letter via e-mail indicating whether the application was accepted or declined. Grant awards are expected to be issued by early May 2024.

4. Recipient Qualification

- a. Prior to making an award under this FOA in an amount greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, which currently is \$250,000, the DoD Grants Officer must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).
- b. An applicant may, at its option, review information currently in FAPIIS (accessible through SAM) and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency (DoD or other federal awarding agency) previously entered.
- c. DoD will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.205, Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants, as implemented by DoD at 2 CFR part 1103.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Federal Award Notices

The notification e-mail, specified in Section II.E.3 above, regarding a successful application must not be regarded as authorization to commit or expend DoD funds. A grant award signed by the DoD Grants Officer is the authorizing document. Applicants whose applications are recommended for negotiation of award will be contacted by a DoD Contract/Grant Specialist to discuss any additional information required for award. This may include representations and certifications, revised budgets or budget explanations, or other information pertinent to the proposed award. The actual award start date will be determined at this time.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

- a. Each award under this announcement will be governed by the general award terms and conditions in effect at the time of the award that conform to DoD's implementation of OMB guidance applicable to financial assistance in 2 CFR part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards." The DoD Research and Development General Terms and Conditions (latest version, January 2023) are located at <https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/manage-your-award/manage-grant-award/grants-terms-conditions>.

These terms and conditions are incorporated by reference in this announcement.

- b. Awards must comply with all applicable national policy requirements. The key national policy requirements that may relate to an award under this FOA are included in the terms and conditions specified in paragraph 2.a. above.
- c. By electronically signing the SF-424, the applicant affirms its agreement with the following certification.

Certification Required for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards

The certification at Appendix A to 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying is the only certification required at the time of application submission for a grant or cooperative agreement award. The certification is as follows:

"By signing and submitting an application that may result in the award of a grant exceeding \$100,000, the prospective awardee is certifying, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that:

- (1) No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employ of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" in accordance with its instructions.

The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, and loans, or cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty or not less than \$10,000.00 and not more than \$100,000.00 for each failure.

d. Representations Required for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards

Appropriations Provisions on Tax Delinquency and Felony Convictions

Check either “is” or “is not” for each of these two representations, as appropriate for the proposing institution, include the AOR signature and point of contact information, and attach the representation page to Field 12 of the SF-424 Research & Related Other Project Information form. The page for these representations is provided with the application materials that are available for download at Grants.gov.

Representations

The applicant is () is not () a “Corporation” meaning any entity, including any institution of higher education, other nonprofit organization, or for-profit entity that has filed articles of incorporation. If the applicant is a “Corporation” please complete the following representations:

(1) The applicant represents that it is () or is not () a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

(2) The applicant represents that it is () is not () a corporation that was convicted of a criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months.

NOTE: If an applicant responds in the affirmative to either of the above representations, the applicant is ineligible to receive an award unless the agency suspension and debarment official (SDO) has considered suspension or debarment and determined that further action is not required to protect the Government’s interests. The applicant therefore should provide information about its tax liability or conviction to the agency’s SDO as soon as it can do so, to facilitate completion of the required considerations before award decisions are made.

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0704-
0494 OMB EXPIRATION DATE:
11/30/2019

AGENCY DISCLOSURE NOTICE

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average five minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Executive Services Directorate, Directives Division, 4800 Mark Center Drive, East Tower, Suite 02G09, Alexandria, VA 22350-3100 [0704-0494]. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

Prohibition on Contracting with Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements

Agreement with the representation below will be affirmed by checking the “I agree” box in block 17 of the SF-424 (R&R) as part of the electronic application submitted via Grants.gov. The representation reads as follows:

By submission of its application, the applicant represents that it does not require any of its employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting those employees, contractors, subrecipients from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information

Note that: (1) the basis for this representation is a prohibition in Section 743 of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2015, Pub. L. 113-235) on provision of funds through grants and cooperative agreements to entities with certain internal confidentiality agreements or statements; and (2) Section 743 states that it does not contravene requirements applicable to SF-312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTING WITH ENTITIES USING CERTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT

Section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 (Public Law 115-232) prohibits the head of an executive agency from obligating or expending loan or grant funds to procure or obtain, extend, or renew a contract to procure or obtain, or enter into a contract (or extend or 105 renew a contract) to procure or obtain the equipment, services, or systems prohibited systems as identified in section 889 of the NDAA for FY 2019. For more information on how this applies to all grant recipients and sub-recipients after August 13, 2020, please see DoD Research General Terms and Conditions (SEP 2021) NP Article IV. Other national policy requirements, paragraph 18.

3. Reporting Requirements

- a. Grant recipients must submit a final financial report using the SF-425, Federal Financial Report, and a final technical report describing how the acquired equipment/instrumentation facilitated achievement of objectives as stated in the approved application. Details will be provided in the grant document.
- b. If the total federal share of the award exceeds \$500,000, the reporting requirements reflected in Appendix II to Part 200 of Title 2 CFR will be included in the terms and conditions of the award.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions concerning programmatic content, potential applicants are advised to contact the Agencies' program managers identified in the FOAs listed in Section I.B above. For help with administrative questions or problems, points of contact are as follows:

Questions regarding program policy should be directed to:

Evelyn Kent

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering

Evelyn.W.Kent.civ@mail.mil

Questions regarding program execution and administration should be directed to:

Patrice D. Collins

Army Research Laboratory

patrice.d.collins.civ@army.mil

OR

Monique N. Wright

Army Research Laboratory

monique.n.wright3.civ@army.mil

Anthony C. Smith, Sr.

Office of Naval Research

anthony.c.smith9.civ@us.navy.mil

Edward Lee

Air Force Office of Scientific Research

edward.lee@us.af.mil

The DoD Grants Officer:
William A. Creech
US Army Contracting Command, Aberdeen Proving Ground
RTP Division
william.a.creech3.civ@army.mil

H. Other Information

Applications must not include any information that has been identified as classified national security information under authorities established in Executive Order 12958, Classified National Security Information.

Applicants are advised that employees of commercial firms under contract to the government may be used to administratively process applications. By submitting an application, an applicant consents to allowing access to its application(s) by support contractors. These support contracts include nondisclosure agreements prohibiting their contractor employees from disclosing any information submitted by applicants.