May 15, 2020

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
Mine Drainage Technology Initiative (MDTI) Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), Department of the Interior (DOI)
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** OSMRE Mine Drainage Technology Initiative (MDTI)
- **Announcement Type:** Initial
- **Opportunity Category:** Discretionary
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** S20AS00009
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 15.255
- **Dates:** Proposals must be received electronically through Grants.gov by Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Time.
- **Application Submission Address:** Application must be submitted using Grants.gov.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** The **MDTI Cooperative Agreement Program** seeks applications from eligible applicants to enhance our understanding of acidic and toxic mine drainage on the environment
- **Anticipated Funding Amounts:** In FY 2020, OSMRE anticipates approximately $200,000 may be available to fund a new MDTI Cooperative Agreement.
- **Funding Instrument Type:** Cooperative Agreement
- **Who Is Eligible:** Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, Federal, State, and local governments, and Native American Tribes. (See Section C, Eligibility Information).
- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost sharing is not required.

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FULL TEXT OF THE NOTICE

A. Program Description

1. The authority to award this Cooperative Agreement is found in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, as amended; Public Law 95-87; 91 Stat. 445-532; in accordance with the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, 31 USC 6301 et seq.; subject to the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR § 200, 2 CFR Part 1402 - Financial Assistance Interior Regulation, Supplementing The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

2. Mine Drainage Technology Initiative (MDTI) (formally known as the Acid Mine Drainage Initiative) provides a forum for collaboration and information exchange with the following goals:

   - Develop an understanding of acidic and toxic mine drainage (MD) so as to better predict, avoid, monitor, and remediate mine drainage;
   - Develop innovative solutions to acidic and toxic MD water-quality problems;
   - Identify, evaluate, and develop "best science" practices to predict acidic and toxic MD prior to mining; and
   - Identify successful remediation practices for existing sources of acidic and toxic MD and describe the best technology for its prevention.

OSMRE is looking for MDTI studies that address the goals listed above that have the potential for improving the effectiveness of both the coal industry and the regulatory authority to conduct and regulate surface coal mining and reclamation activities that protect the environment and the public.

B. Federal Award Information

1. OSMRE is soliciting applications for financial assistance for Fiscal Year 2020.

2. The funding instrument used will be a Cooperative Agreement.

3. Anticipated start dates will be based on OSMRE funding schedule and timing of funding appropriations.

4. Anticipated start dates will be based on OSMRE's funding schedule and timing of funding appropriations.

5. Applicants may request funding up to $200,000.

6. The cooperative agreement will be for a period of time consistent with the proposal but not to exceed two years from date of award

7. The recipient grantee may apply for non-funded extensions of time up to one (1) year, as necessary to complete the project.

8. There are no limitations on the number of applications an applicant may submit under the announcement to include the submitting organization, individual investigator/program director, or both.

9. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.24, a Cooperative Agreement creates an appropriate legal relationship between OSMRE and the performing organization to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States [see 31 U.S.C. 6101(3)]. OSMRE reserves the right to determine the extent of substantial involvement during the course of the approved project.

10. OSMRE will have substantial involvement in the Cooperative Agreement that will include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following areas:

    a. Identification of projects;
    b. Approval of the recipient's implementation plans;
    c. Review of the recipient's monitoring and evaluation plans;
    d. Approval of specified key personnel;
    e. Concurrence in the substantive provisions of sub awards.

11. Funding for the program is contingent on availability of appropriations. Under no circumstance will OSMRE be responsible for the preparation costs incurred by any applicant if this program fails to receive funding or is canceled because of Agency priorities. Publication of this NOFO does not obligate OSMRE or DOI to award funding.

12. There are no pre-application requirements with this NOFO.

13. Proposals will not be accepted that constitute quality control or consumer evaluations for commercial products.

C. <u>Eligibility Information</u>

1. **An Eligible Applicant** MDTI cooperative agreement follows:

    a. Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, Federal, State and local governments, Native American Tribal organizations.
    b. Provide proof of non-profit 501(c)(3) status as determined by the Internal Revenue Service of non-profit organizations and institutions.

    c. Renewal of existing studies are not eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards.

    d. Proposals must specifically address one of the identified goals outlined in the MDTI Program description for FY 2020.

    e. Cost Sharing is not required.

2. OSMRE requires recipients to maintain financial data to provide for the safeguard and accountability of Federal funds, to include written procedures for purchases, accounting system, cash management, and organizational structure in accordance with 2 CFR 200.303 Internal Controls. Examples include the following:

    a. Provide accurate, current, and complete financial information about Federal awards and sub-awards.

    b. Maintain records that adequately identify the sources of funds for federally assisted activities and the purposes for which the award was used, including authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, outlays or expenditures, and any program income. Accounting records must be supported by source documentation such as canceled checks, paid bills, payrolls, and time and attendance records.

    c. Maintain effective control over and accountability for all cash, real and personal property, and other assets under the award; adequately safeguard those assets; and ensure that they are used only for authorized purposes.

3. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that proposed budget costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable, in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Programs, 2 CFR 200.403; 200.404; and 200.405.

4. **Suspension and Debarment:** Funds will not be awarded to any applicant that is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal debarment or agency, or are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity.

No funds will be awarded to recipients who have, within a three-year period preceding this proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, and making false statements or receiving stolen property.

5. **Applicant Violator System (AVS):** All applicants, organization officers, and others having authority to make study related decisions will be screened through the Applicant Violator System (AVS). AVS is an automated information system owned and operated by OSMRE that contains information on applicants, permittees, operators, application and permit records, as well as unabated or uncorrected environmental violations of SMCRA.

6. **Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS**): Prior to any award of Federal funds, the Federal award agency will review and consider information about the applicant that is in Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS). Applicants may review and comment on information about them in FAPIIS and the agency will consider any applicant comments in making award decisions; the agency will address post-award grant reporting requirements and inform applicants about post-award FAPIIS reporting requirements, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.212(c)(5).

7. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures:**

    a. **Applicability:**

        i. This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

        ii. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub-recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

    b. **Requirements:**

        i. Non-Federal entities must avoid prohibited conflicts of interest, including any significant financial interests that could cause a reasonable person to question the recipient's ability to provide impartial, technically sound, and objective performance under or with respect to a Federal financial assistance agreement.

ii. In addition to any other prohibitions that may apply with respect to conflicts of interest, no key official of an actual or proposed recipient or sub-recipient, who is substantially involved in the proposal or project, may have been a former Federal employee who, within the last one (1) year, participated personally and substantially in the evaluation, award, or administration of an award with respect to that recipient or sub-recipient or in development of the requirement leading to the funding announcement.

iii. No actual or prospective recipient or sub-recipient may solicit, obtain, or use non-public information regarding the evaluation, award, or administration of an award to that recipient or sub-recipient or the development of a Federal financial assistance opportunity that may be of competitive interest to that recipient or sub-recipient.

c. **Notification:**

i. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.

ii. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub-recipients.

d. **Restrictions on Lobbying:** Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under this grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR Part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.

e. **Procedures:** The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

f. **Enforcement:** Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR Part 180).

8. **Subawards:** The award recipient must request and receive written approval from OSMRE before any subawards can be made to a sub-recipient. If the recipient is

permitted to make subawards under this award, the recipient must execute a legally binding written agreement with the sub-recipient. This agreement must incorporate all the terms and conditions of your Award, including any Special Award Conditions, and must include the information at 2 CFR 200.331. The recipient must perform all responsibilities required of a pass-through entity, as specified in 2 CFR Part 200.

The recipient must evaluate and document each sub-recipient's risk of noncompliance with federal statutes, federal regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward for purposes of determining the appropriate sub-recipient monitoring strategy, as described in 2 CFR 200.331(b).

9. **Delinquency on Federal Debt:** Any organization or individual that is indebted to the United States, and has a judgment lien filed against it for a debt to the United States, is ineligible to receive a Federal grant. Applicants are required to indicate in their applications if they are delinquent on any Federal debt. By signing the SF-424, the applicant is certifying that they are not delinquent on federal debt in accordance with OMB Circular A-129. Examples of relevant debt include delinquent payroll or other taxes, audit disallowances, guaranteed and direct student loans, benefits that were overpaid, etc. If an applicant is delinquent on Federal debt, they should attach an explanation that includes proof that satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Agency to which the debt is owed.

   If the applicant discloses a delinquency, OSMRE may not award the grant until the debt is satisfied or satisfactory arrangements are made with the agency to which the debt is owed. In addition, once the debt is repaid or satisfactory arrangements made, it will continue to take that delinquency into account when determining whether the applicant would be responsible with respect to an OSMRE grant, if awarded.

   Anyone who has been judged to be in default on a Federal debt and who has had a judgment lien filed against him or her, should not be listed as a participant in an application for an OSMRE grant until the judgment is paid in full or is otherwise satisfied. No funds may be rebudgeted following an award to pay such an individual. OSMRE will disallow costs charged to awards that provide funds to individuals in violation of this requirement.

10. **Mandatory Disclosures:** The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner and in writing to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity, all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award in accordance with 2 CFR 200.113. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in including suspension or debarment. (See also 2 CFR 180; 2 CFR 376; and 31 U.S.C. 3321 for Federal Improper Payment). Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing to the awarding agency and to the DOI Office of Inspector General (OIG), all information related to violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal Award. Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

U.S. Department of the Interior Office
Attention: Fraud Hotline
1849 C Street NW
Mail Stop 4428
Washington, D.C. 20240
Website: www.doioig.gov
Phone Hotline: Toll-Free 1-800-424-5081
Washington D.C. area: 202-208-5300

11. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.300, applicants must comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, 2 CFR 170.

12. Applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in the Federal awarding agency returning the applications without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude the Federal awarding agency from making a Federal award.

13. Data Availability:

a. **Applicability:** The Department of the Interior is committed to basing its decisions on the best available science and providing the American people with enough information to thoughtfully and substantively evaluate the data, methodology, and analysis used by DOI to inform its decisions.

b. **Use of Data:** 2 CFR 200.315 applies to data produced under a Federal award, including the provision that the Federal Government has the right to obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data produced under a Federal award, as well as authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes.

c. **Availability of Data:** The recipient shall make the data produced under this award and any subaward(s) available to the Government for public release, consistent with applicable law, to allow meaningful third-party evaluation and reproduction of the following:

   i. The scientific data relied upon;
   ii. The analysis relied upon; and
   iii. The methodology, including models, used to gather and analyze data.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. **Application Package:** The application is available at www.Grants.gov under NOFO #S20AS00009.

2. **Forms and Content of Application Submission:** The application must contain the following required forms and documents available on Grants.gov:

   a. • SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance (Mandatory)
   b. • SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
   c. • SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (Mandatory)
   d. • SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
   e. • Project/Performance Site Location(s)
   f. • Project Abstract
   g. • Project Narrative Attachment
   h. • Budget Narrative Attachment
   i. • Key Contacts Form
   j. Other Attachments Form: Please include Proof of 501(c)(3) non-profit status and indirect cost rate agreement

3. **Application Format:**

   a. **Submissions:** All applications must be submitted utilizing Grants.gov.
   b. **Font:** Use 12-point font and 1-inch margins.
   c. **Figures, Graphs, Images and Pictures:** Should be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
      i. Smaller font may be used in figures and tables, but type must be clearly legible.
   d. **Page Limit:** The Application Package must not exceed a total of forty (40) pages, not including the required forms. The Technical Proposal for Applications is limited to twenty (20) pages. Resumes are also excluded from the page count.
   e. **Page Size:** 8 ½ inches by 11 inches
   f. **Application language:** English
   g. **Application Replacement Pages:** Applicants may not submit replacement pages and/or missing documents once an application has been submitted. Any revisions must be made by submission of a new application that must be received by OSMRE by the submission deadline.
   h. **Pre-Applications:** There are no pre-applications with this NOFO.
   i. **Cover Sheet:** The cover sheet for the Technical Proposal should reference Mine Drainage Technology Initiative Funding Opportunity #S20AS00009.
   j. **Page Layout:** The Technical Proposal must be in portrait orientation.
   k. **Page Numbering:** Number pages sequentially.
   l. **Table of Contents:** Include major sections and the corresponding page numbers.

4. **The full technical proposal must include the main and supplementary documents described below:**

a. **Executive Summary/Project Abstract:** This is a concise summary/abstract of the proposed effort. The Project Abstract must contain a summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained document that identifies the name of the applicant, the project director/principal investigator(s), the project title, the objectives of the project, a description of the project, including methods to be employed, the potential impact of the project (i.e., benefits, outcomes), and major participants (for collaborative projects). The Project Abstract must not exceed one (1) single-sided page and counts towards the page limit of the Technical Proposal.

b. **Problems, Solutions, and Technical Approach:** This is a description of the methods through which the goals of the MDTI Program will be achieved. This section must explain how the awardee will be able to address the needs of the program, the way in which these needs will be met, and the benefits for the approach taken.

c. **Technical Proposal**--The technical proposal should describe in depth the scope of the proposal, its goals, methods, its schedule, personnel working on the study their qualification and the instructional capabilities of the applicant.

d. **Statement of Work and Potential Impact of the Results:** This is a complete statement of work to meet the approach that directly addresses the information described in the Problems, Solutions, and Technical Approach of the Technical Proposal. The statement of work must include a schedule of milestones for the overall project, the applicant's plan to manage the project tasks, and metrics for measuring the success of the proposal.

e. **Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel and Resources Availability:** This is a description of the qualifications, proposed roles, and level of planned effort of the participants, including the proposed role of the program leader, key personnel, and staff. A description of the applicant's access to the necessary resources to accomplish the proposed objectives must be included.

f. **Budget Narrative:** (This does not count toward the page limit and must be submitted using the budget narrative attachment form). The Budget Narrative must provide a detailed breakdown of each of the object class categories as reflected on the SF-424A. The budget justification should address all of the budget categories for which Federal funds are requested. The written justification must include the necessity and the basis for obtaining each cost estimate. Proposed funding levels must be consistent with the project scope, and only allowable costs should be included in the budget. Information on allowable cost is available in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR 200.

i. **Personnel:** At a minimum, the budget justification for all personnel must include the following: name, job title, commitment of effort on the proposed project in terms of average number of hours per week or percentage of time, salary rate, total direct charges on the proposed project, description of the role of the individual on the proposed project, and the work to be performed.

ii. **Fringe Benefits:** Fringe benefits must be identified separately from salaries and wages and based on rates determined by organizational policy. A link or information on how to access the organizational policy must be included. The items included in the fringe benefit rate (e.g., health insurance, parking, etc.) must not be charged under another cost category.

iii. **Equipment:** Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. Any items that do not meet the threshold for equipment can be included under the "Supplies" line item. The budget justification must list each piece of equipment, the cost, and a description of how it will be used and why it is necessary to the successful completion of the proposed project. Please note that any general use equipment (computers, etc.) charged directly to the award must be allocated to the award according to expected usage on the project.

iv. **Travel:** For travel costs required by the recipient to complete the project, the budget justification for travel must include the following: destination; names and number of people traveling; dates and/or duration; mode of transportation; lodging and subsistence rates; and description of how the travel is directly related to the proposed project. For travel that is yet to be determined, please provide best estimates based on historical data. If a destination is not known, an approximate amount may be used with the assumptions given for the location of the meeting.

v. **Supplies:** Provide a list of each supply, the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost, and the basis for obtaining the estimate. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed project.

vi. **Contracts/Subawards:** Each contract or subaward must be treated as a separate item. Describe the services provided and the necessity of the subaward or contract to the successful performance of the proposed project. Contracts are for obtaining normal goods and services. Subawardees perform part of the project scope of work. For each subaward, applicants must provide budget detail justifying the cost of the work performed on the project and the basis for obtaining the estimates.

vii. **Other Direct Costs:** For costs that do not easily fit into the other cost categories, please list the cost and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed project and the basis for obtaining the estimates. Only allowable costs can be charged to the award.

g. **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement:** If indirect costs are included in the proposed budget, provide a copy of the approved negotiated agreement if this rate was negotiated with a cognizant Federal audit agency. If the rate was not established by a cognizant Federal audit agency, provide a statement to this effect. Alternatively, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.414(f), applicants that have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge indirect costs to an award pursuant to a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct cost (MTDC), in which case a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is not required. Applicants proposing a 10 percent de minimis rate pursuant to 2 CFR 200.414(f) should note this election as part of the budget and budget narrative portion of the application.

g. **Resumes of Key Personnel:** A resume for the program leader is required as part of the proposal. This individual is considered key personnel to the project. Resumes of additional key personnel may also be supplied. Resumes are limited to two pages per individual.

h. **Identification of Proprietary Information:** Technical data or other data (i.e., trade secrets, confidential financial or commercial information), or other privileged information which the applicant prefers to withhold from public disclosure or use by OSMRE for any purpose except for proposal evaluation may be included in this application. To protect confidential data, each page must be specifically identified indicating each paragraph or line that contains confidential data the applicant wishes to protect.

i. **Trade Secret Information:** In order to explain properly the proposed work, it may be necessary to disclose within the proposal document trade secret information. If such is disclosed, the OSMRE wishes to take steps to keep such information confidential. However, it must be aware that such information does or does not exist within a given proposal. Therefore, please complete the following:

___There is NO trade secret information contained in this proposal package.

___There IS trade secret information contained in this proposal package. Such information is noted on pages_____.

NOTE: Redact or conspicuously highlight or mark those passages, diagrams, drawings, etc. that contain trade secret information

5. **Information that successful applicants must submit after notification by OSMRE to make a Federal award, but prior to a Federal Award:**

    a. **Unique entity identifier or DUNS number and System for Award Management (SAM):** Unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempt from the requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c) or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d), all recipients are required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an allocation or plan under consideration by the Federal awarding agency. Registration instructions are available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html or www.sam.gov.

    b. Successful applications must provide evidence of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. 4321-4370(h), Endangered Species Act (ESA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and other applicable Federal and State laws and regulations.

6. **Application Submission**--Application submission must completely address the following:

    a. The applicant must have **written measurable goals** for the study.

    b. Background information must provide a comprehensive description of the relevance of the study.

    c. If the total study costs include in-kind donations of services or materials, the applicant must provide the documentation that these service or materials are properly valued in accordance with 2 CFR 200 § 306.

7. **Submission Dates and Times:**

    a. Proposals must be received electronically through Grants.gov by Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Time. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered.

    b. Review of applications, selection of successful applicants, and award processing is expected to be completed approximately 60–120 days after the end of the review process.

8. **Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures:**

This section provides instruction for the submittal of applications and outlines the procedure for the receipt of application by OSMRE.

a. **Electronic Delivery**

OSMRE is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grants community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. OSMRE requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

b. **How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov**

Instructions: Read the instructions below about registering to apply for OSMRE 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.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity, then you may begin with step (iii), Create a Grants.gov Account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

i. **Obtain a DUNS Number:** All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS Number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. For more detailed instructions on obtaining a DUNS Number, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html

ii. **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

iii. **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

iv. **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 DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS 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

v. **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 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.

vi. **Track Role Status:** To track your role request, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html

vii. **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.

c. **How to Submit an Application to OSMRE 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 web forms within an application. For each NOFO, 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

i. **Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

ii. **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.

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

iv. **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.

v. **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 DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

vi. **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 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

vii. **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.

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

d. **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 your organization with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

e. **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

i. **Online Submission:** All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on the due date established. 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.

When OSMRE 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 OSMRE.

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. Late applications will neither be reviewed nor considered.

ii. **Amendments:** Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up on Grants.gov to receive amendment notification emails.

E. Application Review Information

1. **Evaluation Criteria:**

The criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the OSMRE MDTI Program projects are as follows:

The review criteria are designed to enable the review panel to assess the quality of a proposed study and determined the likelihood of its success. Review criteria are outlined below with specific detail and scoring points:

a. **Criterion 1: NEED ASSESSMENT (10 POINTS)**

Items under this criterion address Problems, Solutions and Technical Approach of the proposal.

The extent to which:

1. The proposed study has the potential to address specific environmental or safety impacts known to currently be associated with mining or reclamation.

2. The results of the study have the potential to improve quality of life for residents of mining communities.

3. The results of the proposed study are directly applicable to improving mining or reclamation practices, from an environmental perspective.

4. The proposed study is directly associated with one or more SMCRA based regulations or directives (Please provide SMCRA citation).

b. **Criterion 2: METHODOLOGY AND WORK PLAN (35 POINTS)**

Items under this criterion address the Statement of Work and Potential Impact of the Results section of the proposal.

The extent to which:

1. The study description and statement of work are thoroughly discussed, detailed, and logically sequenced.

2. The proposal addresses all technical variables that could reasonably be expected to impact success.

3. The proposal includes a technology transfer plan or indicates a technology transfer plan will be implemented.

4. The study is an investigation of practical application of accepted theory.

5. Does the proposed study present new or innovative techniques that are relevant to coal mining and/or coal mine reclamation?

6. Is the proposed time frame appropriate for the stated scope of work?

c. Criterion 3: TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER POTENTIAL (5 POINTS)

Items under this criterion address the technology transfer approaches outlined in the proposal.

The extent to which:

1. Will the results be posted on a website other than OSMRE's or the Principal Investigator's institution website?

2. Will the results be presented at a subject specific or local workshop or

conference?

3. Will the results be presented at a multi-themed or national conference?

4. Will the results be published in a peer-reviewed publication with national distribution?

5. Is there a specific plan for training, workshops, forums, or publications to transfer results?

d. Criterion 4: IMPACT/BENEFITS (35 POINTS)

Item under this criterion address the Statement of Work and Potential Impact of the Results.

The extent to which:

1. The results of the proposed study will be a valuable addition to the science.

2. The proposal addresses all technical variables that could reasonably be expected to impact success.

3. The results of the proposed study will be applicable to specific geologic, climatic conditions, or applicable to a variety of conditions associated with coal mining.

4. Will the results of the proposed study provide on-the-ground benefits rather than lead to subsequent study?

e. Criterion 5: RESOURCES/CAPABILITIES (5 POINTS)

Items under this criterion address the Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity and Organizational Information section of the Program Narrative.

The extent to which:

1. To the extent that the roles and responsibilities clearly defined for each of the primary participants in the study.

2. To the extent that each entity participating in the study has the ability to deliver the services, and otherwise meet the needs of the study.

3. The capability of the applicant to implement and fulfill the requirement of the proposed study based the resources availability; the extent to which the applicant has broad based support, collaborators, and consultants to complete the study.

4. The extent which applicant has been able to secure other funds for

completion.

f. Criterion 6: FINANCIAL SUPPORT REQUESTED (10 POINTS)

The SF-424 A itemized budget along with the budget justification components of the budget narrative, are being used in the review of this section. Together, they will provide the reviewers with the information to determine the reasonableness of the requested support.

The extent to which:

1. The budget justification clearly documents how and why each line item request supports the goals and activities of the proposed study.

2. The degree to which the estimated cost to the government of proposed activities appear allowable, allocable and reasonable.

2. **Review and Selection Process:**

a. Proposals, reports, documents, and other information related to applications submitted to OSMRE and/or relating to financial assistance awards issued by OSMRE may be reviewed and considered by Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel who have entered into nondisclosure agreements covering such information, when applicable.

b. **Initial Screening:** All applications received in response to this NOFO will be reviewed to determine whether they are eligible, complete, and responsive to the requirements of the NOFO and all required documents/forms have been submitted.

c. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive based on the initial screening will be eliminated from further review. However, OSMRE, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for an application that is missing non-substantive information that can easily be rectified or cured.

d. All applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive, will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection processes set forth below.

e. OSMRE reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with the applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove certain costs.

f. OSMRE may request that the applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information. OSMRE also reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to

the responsibility of the applicant. OSMRE may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any particular application. In some cases, OSMRE may ask applicants to consider combining projects. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the Assistant Director of the OSMRE Program Support Directorate.

3. **Evaluation, Review, Ranking, and Recommendation:**

   a. At least three (3) objective reviewers knowledgeable in the subject matter of this NOFO and its objectives will evaluate each application based on the evaluation criteria (Section E, Part 1).

   b. While every application will have at least three (3) reviews, applications may have differing numbers of reviews if specialized expertise is needed to evaluate the application. The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

   c. Each reviewer will assign individual scores to each criterion for each application.

   d. The scores provided by each reviewer for each application will then be combined to form a composite score for each application, which serves as the basis for the relative ordering or ranking of applications.

   e. OSMRE may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any particular application.

4. **Selection Factors:**

   a. The Merit Review Panel Lead will compile and recommend applications for award based upon the relative ranking order of the applications.

   b. The Selecting Official must prepare a Recommendation Memorandum for the Approving Official which demonstrates that the evaluation and selection process was compliant with the procedures published in the NOFO.

   c. The Approving Official may approve funding based on the Recommendation Memorandum, however an application may be awarded out of rank order based on one or more of the following selection factors: the availability of Federal funds and the alignment with program priorities.

   d. If an application is selected out of rank order, there must be a detailed justification relative to the selection out of rank order.

   e. **Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants:** Every unsuccessful applicant is entitled to a full explanation of why the application was not funded. The initial

notice should provide a complete explanation, when possible. However, a notice may contain limited information regarding the unsuccessful application and indicate that a more detailed explanation will be provided at a later date or upon request.

f. **Retention of Unsuccessful Applications:** A copy of each non-selected application will be retained for at least three (3) years for recordkeeping purposes in accordance with 2 CFR 200.333.

g. **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants:** After applications are proposed for funding by the Approving Official and prior to the issuance of an award, the OSMRE Grants Office will conduct an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualification or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by OSMRE will include the following:

    i. Review of applicant's single audit submitted to Federal Audit Clearinghouse;

    ii. Review of applicant's most recent independent audit;

    iii. Completion of financial capability questionnaire;

    iv. The financial stability of an applicant;

    v. Quality of the applicant's management systems;

    vi. An applicant's history of performance;

    vii. Previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant; and

    viii. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

    Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that correspond to the degree of risk may be applied by the OSMRE Grants Office pursuant to 2 CFR 200.207. In addition, OSMRE reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety when information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of the applicant.

h. **Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates:** Review of applications, selection of successful applicants, and award processing, is expected to be completed approximately 60 – 120 days after the end of the review process.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. **Notices Federal Award:** Successful applicant will receive a Financial Assistance award notifying them that the project has been approved for funding. This agreement will provide information pertaining to programmatic and financial reporting requirements. In addition, terms and conditions pertaining to managing the agreement will be provided. This document will also include key contact information for personnel associated with the award.

   If the Federal awarding agency determines that a Federal award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the Federal award.

2. **Administrative and National Policy Requirements:** The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR 200 apply to awards made pursuant to this NOFO. Refer to http://go,usa,gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

3. **Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability:** Funding for the program listed in this NOFO is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. In no event will OSMRE or the Department of the Interior be responsible for application preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or funding is canceled because of agency priorities. Publication of this NOFO does not obligate OSMRE or the Department of the Interior to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

4. **Electronic Funds Transfer:** Recipient will be required to establish and account in the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments system (ASAP), where OSMRE will disburse funding by means of an electronic funds transfer. The ASAP Account Settlement Report for the ASAP system should be referenced to reconcile with internal accounting systems to complete the quarterly SF-425. Refer to http://asap.gov to enroll.

5. **Programmatic and Financial Reports:** Each award recipient will be required to submit an SF-425 Federal Financial Report and a Performance (Technical) Report, on a quarterly basis for the period ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 of each year to the OSMRE's grants management specialist and project technical representative named in the award documents. Reports will be due with 30 days after the end of the reporting period. Final Federal project technical and financial reports are due within 90 days after the end of the project period.

6. **Audits:** In accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F, non-Federal entities that expend financial assistance of $750,000 or more in Federal awards must have a single or a program-specific audit conducted for that year.

   Non-Federal entities that expend less than $750,000 a year in Federal awards are exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in 2 CFR 200.503.

Applicants are reminded that OSMRE, the Department of the Interior Office of Inspector General, or another authorized Federal agency, may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

7. **Records:** Records for Federal financial assistance must be maintained in accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR 200 Subpart D.

8. **Record Retention:** Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other non-Federal entity records pertinent to a Federal award must be retained for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report or, for Federal awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, be retained for at least three (3) years for recordkeeping purposes. (See 2 CFR 200.333)

9. **Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006:** In accordance with 2 CFR 200.170, all recipients of a Federal award made on or after October 1, 2010, are required to comply with reporting requirements under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. L. No. 109-282). In general, all recipients are responsible for reporting sub-awards of $25,000 or more. In addition, recipients that meet certain criteria are responsible for reporting executive compensation. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive funding. See the Federal Register notice published September 14, 2010, at 75 FR 55663 available at http://go.usa.gov/hKnQ.

G. OSMRE Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

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