Questions and Answers for NOFO # DE-FOA 0003577

Silicon Carbide Cladding Research and Development

Date Question received	Date Answer Posted	Question	Answer
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 1 Please provide additional information on the distinction between the following performance goals: **a)** SiC cladding irradiation performance qualification **b)** SiC cladding response to irradiation damage	**a)** The irradiation performance qualification uses the PIE results to determine whether the SiC cladding can meet the reactor conditions and design criteria needed for NRC licensing and deployment in a commercial nuclear power reactor. Qualification activities include PIE data compilation, physics-based modeling, model validation, extended essential and limited integral testing, and detailed analysis of the experimental results to reveal and understand governing phenomena in order to prove that the cladding will be able to withstand normal, abnormal, and accidental conditions and failure modes in the reactor irradiation environment. For any reactor system using SiC cladding, we need to qualify the fuel and fuel cladding such that we can "demonstrate that a fuel product fabricated in accordance with a specification behaves as assumed or described in the applicable licensing safety case, and with the reliability necessary for economic operation of the reactor plant". Please refer to the following documents: 1. U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, "Fuel Qualification for Advanced Reactors -- Final," NUREG-2246, ML2206A131, March 2022. 2. Crawford, D. C., Porter, D. L., Hayes, S. L., Meyer, M. K., Petti, D.

			A., & Pasamehmetoglu, K., (2007) "An approach to fuel development and qualification," Journal of Nuclear Materials, 371(1-3), 232-242. **b)** The response to irradiation damage is seen in post-irradiation evaluations (PIEs), i.e., tests using SEM/TEMs, mechanical strength testing (impact tests, stresses, strains), evidence of fibers rupturing or delaminating, changes in thermal properties and geometrical changes in terms of swelling, elongation, etc. The PIE techniques give evidence of the physical changes in the SiC Cladding conditions before irradiation and after conditions.
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 2 On Grants.gov, there are four solicitation documents. The file called FundOpp_DE-FOA-0003577.pdf is the same as the file called SiC Cladding_NOFO_Part_1_DE-FOA0003577.pdf. Is this intentional? If not, please provide the correct documents.	Yes, they are the same document. Choose either one to assist you in completing your application. The wording is the same for NOFO Part 1 using either file as listed in the question.
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 3 Please clarify the distinction between a subrecipient and subcontractor. Are the required submittal documents different depending on if a sub is a subcontractor vs. if they are a subrecipient?	Yes, there are differences in the application procedures between a subrecipient and a subcontractor. 2 CFR 200.331 defines the difference between a subrecipient and a subcontractor. For subcontractors, budget documents are not required for the application package. However, the application package must contain an explanation of how the prime applicant determined the subrecipient costs to be fair and reasonable. Also, the cost

			of the subcontractor must be accounted for in the Prime applicant's budget. As the NOFO explains, budget and budget justification documents must be provided for each subrecipient.
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 4 Please confirm that the only costing documentation required to be submitted by applicants and subrecipients are the "4. Research and Related Budget – Section A-B Form" Excel file and "5. Budget Justification – Applicant" file. There are inconsistent instructions regarding cost-related forms in NOFO Part 2.	The Research and Related Budget - Section A-B form is the document where all costs are listed for the proposed financial assistance project. The Budget Justification -Applicant document is the document the applicant provides in their application package explaining how each of the budget category costs listed in the budget document are fair and reasonably priced. The Prime applicant ensures the budget justification for their costs, their subrecipient costs, and their subcontractor costs are provided in the application package.
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 5 Do we need to differentiate the costing between cost share and not-cost share? In reference to document "4. Research and Related Budget-Section A-B Form" (Excel), is this budget form intended to represent both the federal share and the cost share costs? If yes, how should costs be differentiated between those two buckets?	The budget document doesn't need to be broken out between cost amounts between the DOE and the awardee. Just list the total cost for the budget category cost, as applicable, within the budget document. The total cost for each one-year budget period cost for each budget category will be shown on the budget document. Again, it doesn't need to be broken out by cost share amounts on the budget sheet. Overall proposed cost share percentage breakouts for the applicant and the DOE must be stated on the application page for federal assistance.

10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 6 NOFO Part 2 mentions a control number; do we need one and if so, how do we obtain it?	The control number mentioned in NOFO Part II deals with using EXCHANGE for submittal of application packages. For this NOFO EXCHANGE is not being used for application submittals. Therefore, Control numbers are not needed for submittal under this NOFO Applications are to be sent to the email address listed in NOFO Part 1 page 5 and page 26.
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question # 7 Is the Data Management Plan required at the time of proposal submission or after award?	NOFO Part 1 (Page 23): The Data Management Plan is listed in the Summary of Application Requirements table as a mandatory document named Lead Applicant Name_DMP in PDF format. It also explicitly references NOFO Part 2, page 38, for further instructions. - When must it be sent to the DOE? At the Application Stage because it is included in the mandatory application package requirements table in NOFO Part 1 (Page 23).
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	Question #8 There are several discrepancies between the documents called NOFO Part 1 and NOFO Part 2, especially regarding which documents need to be submitted with the proposal. **a)** Should we submit our proposal via email (NOFO Part 1 page 5, page 17, and page 26) or to the eXCHANGE portal (NOFO Part 2 page 12)? **b)** NOFO Part 1 on page 16 says to refer to NOFO Part 2 page 14 if the Impacted Indian Tribes Documentation is applicable. However, there is no mention of this	**a**) Submit the application to the email address of SiC_Cladding_NOFO@id.doe.gov **b)** Looking at the requirements in NOFO Part 1 (page 21) under the Summary of Application Requirements table, the entry for *Impacted Indian Tribes Documentation* is explicitly qualified as: (If applicable) Because this is a research, development, and fabrication project focused on Silicon Carbide cladding for research reactor insertion and testing (rather than a project with site footprints on or near tribal lands), this document is only required if your specific project touches upon or

		on page 14 or anywhere else in NOFO Part 2. Is this document required? **c)** NOFO Part 1 page 16 says to name the budget justification file as "Lead Applicant Name_ Budget Justification-Applicant" but NOFO part 2 page 15 says to name the file as "Control Number_LeadOrganization_424A". Which is correct? **d)** NOFO Part 1 page 16 says there is information about the Research and Related Budget – Section A-B Form on NOFO Part 2 page 18, but the information is not there. Does this refer to the Budget Justification Workbook with information in NOFO Part 2 page 14? **e)** NOFO Part 1 page 16 says there is information about the field work proposal for FFRDC on NOFO Part 2 page 17 but there is not. **f)** NOFO Part 1 page 16 says there is information about the authorization for FFRDCs on NOFO Part 2 page 17 but there is not. **g)** NOFO Part 2 page 19 sections 15 and 16 say to refer to NOFO Part 1 to determine if the Environmental Considerations Summary and Environmental Impact Volume are required. NOFO Part 1 page 17 says to refer to NOFO Part 2 page 33. There is no information explaining if these environmental forms are required. Are they required? If so, please provide a template/ instructions. **h)** NOFO Part 1 page 16 says the resumes have a 2-page limit each, but NOFO Part 1 page 21 says the biographical sketches do not have a page limit. Please clarify if there is a page limit.	impacts Indian Tribes or tribal lands. If your project has no tribal impacts or involvement, this document does not need to be submitted with your application package. **c)** Follow NOFO Part 1 page 16 – name the budget justification document as "Lead applicant Name_Budget Justifiation-Applicant **d)** Correct, there is nothing in NOFO part 2 page 18, it is now on page 14. discussing this form. The table in NOFO part 1 has been updated to reflect page 14. **e)** There is nothing in NOFO part 2 discussing the Field Work Proposal. The reference in Part 1 page 16 has been removed. DOE O 412.1A is the regulation covering the FFRDC field work Order. The FFRDC will create this document and send it to the prime applicant. f) There is nothing in the NOFO part 2 discussing authorization for FFRDCs. The reference in Part 1 on page 16 has been removed. Prime applicants must receive an authorization letter from the DOE contracting officer over the FFRDC for the FFRDC to participate in the scope of the project. The purpose of this letter is to verify the FFRDC is not competing against other contractors of the same type of scope to be completed by the new financial assistance award scope. g) The environmental checklist requirement is discussed on page 19 of NOFO Part 2, not page 33.

			h) Please follow NOFO Part 1 page 16 and limit biographical sketches to a 2-page limit.
10/28/2026	11/02/2026	Question # 9 Environmental Report – How do we determine if this is needed? The Question response document also asked this question, but there is no answer provided in the NOFO on part 1 pg. 18 or part 2 pg. 19 where environmental questionnaires are mentioned. There are circular references to check between documents, but no actual of when the document is needed or the template that would need to be used. Can you clarify if this is needed and under what circumstances this is needed since this is missing from both documents? The table also notes the Environmental Report with a "*" which notes that DOE forms are provided as part of the NOFO solicitation package, but there is no provided form.	An environmental checklist will be provided to the award winner after the selectee is notified they have been selected by DOE to negotiate on completing the project. There is no need to provide a environmental report or checklist to the DOE at time of application.
10/28/2026	11/02/2026	Question # 10 Locations of Work document – the provided template is an Excel document, but the requested format is PDF within the table in part 1 pg. 18. Would you like this submitted as a PDF from the Excel workbook once finalized, or should this be submitted as an Excel document as provided?	The location of Work document can be submitted as and Excel spread sheet, or it can be submitted as a PDF document. DOE will accept either format.
10/28/2026	11/02/2026	Question # 11 Disclosures of Lobbying Activities – the table on part 1 pg. 18 says "(Two Forms)" when this is one document. Can you clarify what the "(Two Forms)" means within the table or	On page 19 there are two website references. One of the references is for disclosing lobbying activities (if applicable) and the other reference is for recipients and subrecipients to disclose they have no lobbying activities currently in progress. These

		can you provide both forms which are being referenced? I'm assuming this means to provide EITHER the Disclosures of Lobbying activities form OR the Certification of Lobbying Activities document depending on if the SF-LLL is required or not.	two documents are also found in the NOFO template attachment package on Grants.gov. These documents are listed as document #8 and #9. The prime applicant, and each sub recipient, must provide either a disclosure of lobbying activities document, as appliable, or provide the document stating no lobbying activities are applicable.
10/28/2026	11/02/2026	Question # 12 Noting that the Certification Regarding Lobbying form is provided twice within the "Attachments- Silicon Carbide Cladding NOFO" document as documents #8 and #9.	See answer to question # 11.
10/28/2026	11/02/2026	Question # 13 Summary Slide Template – Where can we get a copy of the Summary Slide Template? The NOFO says to get this from the funding opportunity in eXCHANGE, but there is no funding opportunity listed on eXCHANGE for DE-FOA-0003577 which would have the template. Can this be added to the "Attachments-Silicon Carbide Cladding NOFO" document since it is a required document for the proposal? Or where can we get the template?	This NOFO has not been posted on eXCHANGE, and eXCHANGE will not be used for this NOFO. Applicants will not need to access eXCHANGE to apply for this NOFO. Refer to answer above for question #6. DOE is not providing a slide template with this NOFO. There is no required format for applicants to submit their summary project information. Applicants are to provide their own slide or single page document to summarize the scope of their project.
11/7/2026	11/10/2026	Question #14 The attached template for the Statement of Project Objectives was included in the NOFO package, but this template appears to be tailored to a NSUF program. Could you confirm if this is the correct template we should use?	The template listed in the table "summary of application requirements" for the NOFO is the correct one provided for this SiC Cladding NOFO and identifies the possible reactors and facilities available in the National Scientific User Facilities complex for experiments. Other facilities may be used and listed. Page 13, NOFO Part

			2, requests that the SOPO form be used but also states that the applicant may choose not to use the template: "**Statement of Project Objectives (SOPO)** NOFO Part 1, *Technical Volume*, provides specific requirements to each NOFO. If required, you must submit a SOPO. A SOPO template is available in provided documents. We strongly encourage you to use the template to complete your SOPO, but you are not required to do so. If you do not use the template, be sure you address all the elements described in NOFO Part 1, *Technical Volume*, and as outlined in the SOPO template. "
11/07/2026	11/10/2026	Question #15 In the Milestones section of the technical volume instructions (2nd bullet on the top of page 21 of NOFO Part 1: "Explain how the milestone will be verified"), could you provide additional detail as to what this means/what DOE is looking for us to provide in response to this bullet?	Milestones are clearly defined on pages 19-20 of NOFO part 1: **"Milestones:** Milestone verification includes SMART project reports that summarize technical achievements with comprehensive documentation including figures, graphs, descriptions of testing methods, results, photographs and detailed discussions about observations that demonstrate progress. Issuing corporate letters that simply state that a task has been completed are not sufficient. NOFO part 2 p. 40 clearly states that: 1. "Recipient's technical progress compared to the Milestone Summary Table included in the award" 2. " At the Go/No-Go decision points, DOE will evaluate project performance, project schedule adherence, the extent milestone objectives are met, compliance with reporting requirements, and overall

			contribution to the program goals and objectives.”