The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Rural Emergency Medical Communications Demonstration Project (REMCDP)

NOTE: If you are going to apply for this funding opportunity and have not obtained a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and/or are not currently registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), please take immediate action to obtain a DUNS Number, if applicable, and then to register immediately in SAM. It may take 4 weeks or more after you submit your SAM registration before your registration is active in SAM, then an additional 24 hours for Grants.gov to recognize your information. Information on obtaining a DUNS number and registering in SAM is available from Grants.gov at: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html. Detailed information regarding DUNS and SAM is also provided in Section D of this NOFO, subsection, Content and Form of Application Submission.

A. Program Description

1. **Issued By**
   Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

2. **Assistance Listings (formerly Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance [CFDA] Number)**
   97.120

3. **Assistance Listings Title (formerly CFDA Title)**
   Rural Emergency Medical Communications Demonstration Project

4. **Funding Opportunity Title**
   Rural Emergency Medical Communications Demonstration Project

5. **Funding Opportunity Number**
   DHS-20-CISA-120-001 / PD-REM-20-001

6. **Authorizing Authority for Program**
   Section 102(b)(2) and Title XVIII of the *Homeland Security Act of 2002*, as amended (Pub. L. No. 107-296); (6 U.S.C. § 112(b)(2); 6.U.S.C. § 571 *et seq.)*

7. **Appropriation Authority for Program**
   Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. No. 116-93), Division D; Title III; Protection, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery; Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

8. **Announcement Type**
   One-time

9. Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

Program Overview

This funding opportunity is to fund a demonstration project addressing the *National Emergency Communications Plan* (NECP) implementation gaps and rural medical communications. The Presidential Policy Directive–8 emphasizes national preparedness as a shared responsibility of the whole community, requiring greater involvement across multiple jurisdictions and disciplines to prepare for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation, including acts of terrorism, cyber attacks, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters. The NECP, recently updated in September 2019, recognizes this evolving landscape with the involvement of new stakeholders and rapid changes in technologies and policies impacting emergency communications. Response agencies are becoming more connected to additional sources of information during emergencies, such as medical personnel, public health professionals, critical infrastructure operators, and private citizens. Collaboration with whole community representatives is key to support a broad set of NECP activities, including rural emergency medical care and other needs (e.g., cybersecurity solutions, patient tracking, alerting systems, and social media guidance).

Emergency responders are not always trained for the types of incidents they encounter, but can share valuable information and provide situational awareness during response and recovery efforts. Specifically, medical providers require communications systems and procedures to transmit patient information and coordinate an influx of patients following large-scale disasters or ongoing crises. As the whole community increases its engagement during emergencies and as technology advances, the need for medical communications and trained personnel increases to ensure coordinated and effective response.

In addition to evolving technology and responders, the 2019 NECP update recommends improved planning and coordination across the Emergency Communications Ecosystem and across geographies, especially in rural areas. CISA recognizes the impact of geography on medical response and interoperable communications. Rural communities are often underserved regions with several health disparities, such as high mortality rates and cardiovascular diseases. Due to the dire health needs of rural communities, coordinated emergency response is often provided by a variety of medical providers and non-medical emergency responders.

To implement the 2019 NECP update, CISA must continue to improve its understanding of communications among emergency responders and medical personnel, especially in rural communities. Thus, CISA is reestablishing the Rural Emergency Medical Communications Demonstration Project (REMCDP).

Program Goal

Through demonstration projects with up to two public and state controlled institutions of higher education, REMCDP's goal is to examine communications barriers and identify solutions that enhance existing emergency communications infrastructure to improve the

delivery of rural medical care and address NECP implementation gaps. REMCDP's goal aligns with CISA's mission to support and promote communications capabilities used by emergency responders and government officials to keep America safe, secure, and resilient. In turn, REMCDP supports the 2019 NECP updated goals and objectives.

Program Objectives

The demonstration project must meet the REMCDP Program Objectives. All applicants should clearly state how the following objectives would be addressed in the proposed project:

- Use of a current statewide emergency communications system to address NECP implementation gaps and deliver rural medical care and services;
- Development of trainings and exercises to ensure that first responders and personnel can use emergency medical communications systems and equipment effectively;
- Collaboration with state leaders to address the adoption of broadband communications (e.g., First Responder Network Authority's public safety broadband network) to supplement current land mobile radio and statewide emergency communications systems;
- Collaboration with whole community representatives to support a broad set of NECP activities, including rural emergency medical care and other needs (e.g., cybersecurity solutions, patient tracking, alerting and social media guidance);
- Innovative solutions to ensure that emergency responders and medical practitioners can communicate in various geographies (e.g., rural), operating conditions, and scenarios, as needed and when authorized; and
- Identify, document, and share lessons learned and best practices of the demonstration project, which in turn could be shared with other stakeholders addressing NECP implementation activities.

10. Performance Metrics

Performance metrics for this program are as follows:

- Number of trainings completed by the grant recipient in support of the program goal identified in the section above
- Number of exercises completed or participated in using the current statewide emergency communications system to address the identified gap and deliver rural medical care
- Percentage of participants with an improved understanding and use of the current statewide emergency communications system
- Percentage of funding allocated by the recipient to planning, training, exercises, and equipment in support of program objectives in the section above

B. Federal Award Information

1. **Available Funding for the NOFO:** Up to $2,000,000 total

2. **Projected number of Awards:** Up to 2

3. **Period of Performance:** 24 months

4. **Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s):** 09/30/2020

5. **Projected Period of Performance End Date(s):** 09/29/2022

6. **Funding Instrument Type:** Grant

C. Eligibility Information

1. **Eligible Applicants**
   Public & state controlled institutions of higher education

2. **Applicant Eligibility Criteria**
   The entity applying for REMCDP must operate or have access to an existing statewide emergency communications system that is leveraged to address rural health disparities such as mortality rates and cardiovascular diseases. The applicant must also be an emergency communications center (e.g., trauma center). Being a level 1 trauma center is not required.

3. **Cost Share or Match**
   There is no cost share requirement for this program.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. **Key Dates and Times**
   a. **Application Start Date:** *05/08/2020*
   b. **Application Submission Deadline:** *06/30/2020 at 11:59:00 PM*
   c. **Anticipated Funding Selection Date**: *EDT 09/25/2020*
   d. **Anticipated Award Date:** *09/29/2020*
   e. **Other Key Dates:**

Event	Suggested Deadline for Completion
Obtaining DUNS Number	05/12/2020
Obtaining a valid EIN	05/12/2020
Updating SAM registration	05/12/2020
Starting application in Grants.gov	06/09/2020

2. **Agreeing to Terms and Conditions of the Award**
   By submitting an application, applicants agree to comply with the requirements of this NOFO and the terms and conditions of the award, should they receive an award.

3. **Address to Request Application Package**
   Application forms and instructions are available at Grants.gov. To access these materials, go to https://www.grants.gov. For a hardcopy of the full NOFO, please write or fax a request to:

Marsha Mathis, Grants Officer
marsha.mathis@hq.dhs.gov, FAX: (202) 447-5600

In addition, the following Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) and/or Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) number available for this Announcement is: 1-800-518-4726 (Grants.gov Help Desk).

Applications will be processed through the Grants.gov portal.

4. Steps Required to Submit an Application, Unique Entity Identifier, and System for Award Management (SAM)

To apply for an award under this program, all applicants must:

a. Apply for, update, or verify their Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) and Employer ID Number (EIN);
b. In the application, provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System DUNS number, which is currently the unique entity identifier;
c. Have an account with Login.gov;
d. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and ensure the account is active before submitting the application;
e. Create a Grants.gov account;
f. Add a profile to a Grants.gov account;
g. Establish an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) in Grants.gov;
h. Submit application in Grants.gov; and
i. 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 awarding agency.

Applicants are advised that DHS may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when DHS is ready to make a federal award. Further, as noted above, an applicant's or recipient's SAM registration must remain active for the duration of an active federal award. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before award, DHS may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

5. Electronic Delivery

DHS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. DHS encourages or requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov, depending on the funding opportunity. For this funding opportunity, DHS requires applicants to submit applications through Grants.gov.

6. **How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov**
   a. *Instructions:* Registering in Grants.gov is a multi-step process. Read the instructions below about registering to apply for DHS 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.

      The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

      Organizations must have a DUNS number, active SAM registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this grant funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 3, 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

      1) *Obtain a DUNS Number*: All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS number from 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 for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html

      2) *Register with SAM*: All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with 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

      3) *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: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html

      4) *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

5) *E-Business Point of Contact (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

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

7) *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.**

7. How to Submit an Application to DHS 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 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 using Workspace, 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.

c. *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

d. *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.

e. *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. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

f. *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.

g. *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 DHS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

8. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

a. *Online Submissions:* All applications must be received by **Midnight Eastern Daylight Time** on the due date established for each program. 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 DHS 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 DHS.

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.

9. Content and Form of Application Submission

All applications must submit all required forms and required documents listed in this section. Applications missing any of the required forms or documents listed in this section may not be considered for review.

REQUIRED FORMS

1. Form SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance

Complete the SF-424 application form. This form may be completed on the Grants.gov website or it can be completed offline in its entirety.

NOTE: Applications submitted through Grants.gov must use the SF-424 provided by Grants.gov. The SF-424 application forms can only be viewed and downloaded once Adobe Reader has been installed. The SF-424 application form on Grants.gov is formatted so applicants are only required to complete fields which are indicated with an asterisk (*) and color coded. Once the application is complete, close the document (you will then be prompted to save changes or not).

2. Form SF-424A – Budget

Complete the budget in its entirety. Provide budget amounts by object class (salaries, fringe, travel, indirect, etc.). Funds may be requested as long as the item and amount are necessary to perform the proposed work and are not precluded by the cost principles or program funding restrictions. Additional guidance on how to complete the Form SF-424A can be found at: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. **Budget Narrative (Double-spaced, no page limit)**
   The Budget Narrative should detail the proposed use of project funds in achieving projected outcomes. The Budget Narrative should address how the funds allocated to each eligible activity will be spent and how costs were determined for the following cost purposes:

   Planning Costs. The Budget Narrative must identify the Planning activities on which proposed costs will be spent. Provide detail on proposed activities.

   Training Costs. The Budget Narrative must provide detail on proposed numbers of personnel to be trained, number of days of training, location of training, outcomes expected.

   Exercises Costs. The Budget Narrative should identify how funds allocated for Exercises will be spent and how costs were determined. The Budget Narrative should detail all activities, location, number of days, personnel involved, contract staff involved, reports or deliverables expected, outcomes expected.

   Equipment Purchase Costs. Each project that proposes equipment purchase must provide a line-item cost breakout of equipment, including equipment description, unit cost, and quantity proposed for purchase. All equipment purchases will be reviewed by the Program Office.

2. **Program Narrative**
   For the proposed project, the REMCDP application must include a program narrative that provides a detailed overview description of the proposed project and thoroughly addresses the objectives. Provide or describe the following:

   a. Title of the project.

   b. Jurisdictional or geographic area(s) of a rural region affected by the proposed project. Provide the county or other equivalent jurisdiction in which the project is located and any other counties or jurisdictions that will benefit from this project.

   c. Confirmation the applicant is an emergency communications center that operates or has access to the existing statewide emergency communications center.

   d. Specific interoperability problem(s) to be addressed by project and how the problem was identified.

   e. Proposed project solution(s) and how the solution addresses identified interoperability problems and risks.

   f. Expected project outcomes.

g. Detailed description of proposed project activities (Planning, Training, Exercises, and Equipment Purchase).

h. Specific information on the ways in which the proposed project addresses REMCDP program objectives, including:

- How the project will address NECP implementation gaps, as well as barriers and challenges in rural emergency medical communications;
- Clearly outline how well the project will advance the rural community's interoperability capabilities to efficiently deliver medical care services using existing statewide medical communications infrastructure;
- Alignment to the goals and objectives of the NECP to inform future emergency communications planning;
- Use of a current statewide system or capabilities that provide emergency communications to, among others, medical care, emergency medical services, and public health, and why the project is the most effective solution for addressing NECP implementation gaps in the rural region;
- How the program is applicable to other rural communities and can generate best practices and lessons learned for other rural areas with similar emergency medical communication needs or future efforts;
- Involvement of whole community representatives, including non-medical professionals and emergency communications stakeholders, that use existing rural emergency medical communications;
- Consideration of the development of trainings and exercises to ensure that first responders and personnel can use rural emergency medical communications systems and equipment safely and effectively; and
- How program feedback and metrics can be collected in rural areas, potentially without internet access.

Reference the CISA *Communications Interoperability Performance Measurement Guide* to develop and propose project-specific performance measures relevant to addressing the REMCDP program objectives.

i. Description of how the project will comply with the *SAFECOM Guidance on Emergency Communications Grants*. Refer to Section F. Federal Award Administration Information of this NOFO for more information.

10. Other Submission Requirements

To access application forms and instructions for this funding opportunity, go to Grants.gov click on the "Search Grants" tab. Enter the NOFO Number located on the cover of this announcement. Click on the highlighted Funding Opportunity Number that appears and then click on the various tabs to: read the Synopsis; review the Version History; read the Full Announcement; and complete the Application Package. Please read the entire NOFO Application Package carefully before preparing and submitting an application. Application must be submitted in electronic format only. If you experience difficulties accessing information or have any questions, please call the Grants.gov customer support hotline at 1-800-518-4726.

11. Funding Restrictions

DHS grant funds may only be used for the purpose set forth in the agreement and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other federal grants, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings, or for support allocation for other federal awards. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

This grant from CISA is a small award that concentrates on examining barriers and developing solutions to enhance communications for the delivery of rural medical care, including public health, if applicable. The grant will focus on using existing statewide communications systems to deliver rural medical care and address NECP implementation gaps. The Recipient(s) should use funding to leverage existing communications technologies to train and coordinate with whole community representatives (e.g., non-medical professionals) to provide emergency medical response.

12. Allowable Costs

a. Management and Administration (M&A) Costs.

Management and Administration Costs are allowable.

b. Indirect Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs.

Indirect Costs are allowable by the Recipient(s). Applicants with a federally negotiated and approved rate must provide the most recent copy of the federally approved rate agreement confirming the negotiated rate at the time of application.

E. Application Review Information

1. Application Evaluation Criteria

a. Programmatic Criteria

When all applications are received a completeness review will be conducted to confirm the Eligibility Information (see Section C) and Application and Submission Information (see Section D) listed in this NOFO are met. Applications meeting those requirements will then be reviewed by subject matter experts (SMEs) participating in the merit review panel.

The merit review will focus on the overall quality of the proposed project and the completion and thoroughness of the project narratives, budgets, and budget narratives. The review panel will determine whether proposed projects address the REMCDP Program Goals and Program Objectives listed in Section A of this NOFO. In addition, DHS will use the following criteria, weighted as indicated based on their importance, to evaluate applications.

- Innovation (40%): Application review will focus on the innovativeness in approach, including strategies for management, governance, operations, training and exercises, and how well the project uses advanced and innovative technology solutions (e.g., technology solutions that use Voice or Radio over Internet Protocol, broadband voice, data, or video applications, mobile public safety networks, multi-band/multi-mode software designed radios, network interconnect technologies, satellite communication systems) to achieve interoperability with rural communities or address NECP implementation gaps. Reviewers will focus on how an existing solution (technical or non-technical) was altered or enhanced to address the issue, or how the applicant used a combination of solutions to address a unique problem.

- Impact on Rural Community Interoperability Communications (20%): Application review will focus on how significantly the project will advance the community along the Interoperability Continuum. The Continuum can be applied to communications among emergency responders within a jurisdiction and between other local, tribal, state, and federal responders. The review will specifically focus on the impact of the project on its emergency communications capabilities in rural communities (i.e., assess current interactions with rural communities and expected improvements to medical response in these communities resulting from REMCDP funding).

- Stakeholder Engagement (20%): Application review will focus on how extensively the project describes partnerships with various whole community representatives, including, amongst others, non-medical professionals, public health professionals, and critical infrastructure providers. Reviewers will evaluate new partnerships and agreements that will benefit interoperable emergency communications in rural communities.

- Comprehensive Approach (20%): Application review will focus on how the project considers the lanes of the Interoperability Continuum (e.g., governance, standard operating procedures, technology, training and exercises) in its planning and development of the project to ensure stakeholders develop, manage, operate, and maintain communications interoperability to enhance existing emergency communications infrastructure.

b. Financial Integrity Criteria

Prior to making a federal award, DHS is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3321 note, 41 U.S.C. § 2313, and 2 C.F.R. § 200.205 to review information available through any Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:

1. Financial stability.
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards.
3. History of performance in managing federal award.
4. Reports and findings from audits.
5. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

c. Supplemental Financial Integrity Criteria and Review

Prior to making a federal award where the anticipated total federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently $250,000 (see Section 805 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-91, OMB Memorandum M-18-18 at https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/M-18-18.pdf):

1) DHS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM, which is currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) and is accessible through the SAM website.
2) An applicant, at its option, may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered.
3) DHS 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 C.F.R. § 200.205.

2. Review and Selection Process

The REMCDP review process will involve two review phases. First, all applications will be reviewed to confirm eligibility and completeness. Then, a panel of federal employees and SMEs knowledgeable in emergency communications and interoperability in local communities will review the applications and determine a merit score. The merit score will be based on the degree to which an application addresses the Application Evaluation Criteria listed above (see Section E). DHS will review the applications and recommend for funding based on the reviews described above. DHS' designated Selection Authority will make a final funding decision to implement the demonstration project(s) based upon the results of all evaluations, availability of funds, and the overall goals of REMCDP.

In addition, DHS will also review the budget narrative to ensure proposed cost estimates are in line with eligible costs and available program funding.

- Prior to making a federal award with a total amount of federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, DHS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS).

- An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

- DHS will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, 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."

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Notice of Award

Before accepting the award, the AOR and recipient should carefully read the award package. The award package includes instructions on administering the grant award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under federal awards. **Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any special terms and conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.**

Successful applicants can expect to receive a grant executed by a DHS Grants Officer authorized to obligate DHS funding. Award notices will be sent via email.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants for DHS grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with DHS Standard Terms and Conditions, which are available online at: DHS Standard Terms and Conditions

The applicable DHS Standard Terms and Conditions will be those in effect at the time the award was made, unless the application is for a continuation award. In that event, the terms and conditions in effect at the time the original award was made will generally apply. What terms and conditions will apply for the award will be clearly stated in the award package at the time of award.

SAFECOM Guidance

As part of the DHS Standard Terms and Conditions, all DHS grant recipients that wholly or partially provide funding for emergency communication projects and related activities must comply with Appendix D of the *SAFECOM Guidance on Emergency Communications Grants* (*SAFECOM Guidance*). Appendix D outlines requirements for any DHS recipient using funds for emergency communication activities. These requirements include alignment to national and state communications plans, project coordination, and technical standards for emergency communications technologies. The *SAFECOM Guidance* is intended to ensure that federally funded investments are compatible, interoperable, and support the national goals and objectives for improving emergency communications nationwide.

3. Reporting

a. Federal Financial Reporting Requirements

The Federal Financial Reporting Form (FFR) is available online at: SF-425 *OMB #4040-0014*

The Recipient(s) is responsible for the:

1) Quarterly Federal Financial Report. The Recipient(s) shall submit quarterly financial reports (SF-425, FFR) to the DHS Grants Officer within 30 days following the end of the reporting period. Reports may be emailed to DHS-GrantReports@hq.dhs.gov and include the grant program name and number in the subject line. Reports shall be submitted no later than 1/30, 4/30, 7/30, 10/30.

2) Annual Federal Financial Report. The Recipient(s) shall submit annual financial reports (SF-425, FFR) to the DHS Grants Officer within 30 days following the end of the reporting period. Reports may be emailed to DHS-GrantReports@hq.dhs.gov and include the grant program name and number in the subject line.

3) Final Federal Financial Report. The Recipient(s) shall submit the final financial report (SF-425, FFR) to the DHS Grants Officer no more than 90 days after the Project Period end date. Reports may be emailed to DHS-GrantReports@hq.dhs.gov and include the grant program name and number in the subject line.

b. Program Performance Reporting Requirements

The Recipient(s) shall submit quarterly performance reports to the DHS Grants Office. Reports may be emailed to DHS-GrantReports@hq.dhs.gov.

1) Quarterly performance reports are due within 30 days of the end of the reporting period.

2) The Recipient(s) must use the REMCDP provided performance reporting template.

3) Performance reports must include information on the following topics:
   a) Overall progress of the demonstration project;
   b) Progress against program goals and objectives;
   c) Lessons learned, challenges, or best practices; and
   d) Delineation of funding expenditures within the quarter.

c. Close Out Reporting Requirements.

Within 90 days after the end of the period of performance, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a grant, recipients must submit the following:

1) The final request for payment, if applicable;
2) The final FFR (SF-425);
3) The final progress report detailing all accomplishments;
4) A qualitative narrative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance; and
5) Other documents required by this NOFO, terms and conditions of the award, or other DHS guidance.

If applicable, an inventory of all construction projects that used funds from this program must be reported with the final progress report.

After these reports have been reviewed and approved by the DHS Grants Officer, a closeout notice will be completed to close out the grant. The notice will indicate the period of performance as closed, list any remaining funds that will be deobligated, and address the requirement of maintaining the grant records for three years from the date of the final FFR, unless a longer period applies, such as due to an audit or litigation, for equipment or real property used beyond the period of performance, or due to other circumstances outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.333.

In addition, any recipient that issues subawards to any subrecipient is responsible for closing out those subawards as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.343. Recipients acting as pass-through entities must ensure that they complete the closeout of their subawards in time to submit all necessary documentation and information to DHS during the closeout of their prime grant award.

The recipient is responsible for returning any funds that have been drawn down but remain as unliquidated on recipient financial records.

d. Disclosing Information per 2 C.F.R. § 180.335

This reporting requirement pertains to disclosing information related to government-wide suspension and debarment requirements. Before a recipient enters into a grant award with DHS, the recipient must notify DHS if it knows if it or any of the recipient's principals under the award fall under one or more of the four criteria listed at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335:

1) Are presently excluded or disqualified;

2) Have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it or any of the recipient's principals for one of those offenses within that time period;
3) Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a); or
4) Have had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

At any time after accepting the award, if the recipient learns that it or any of its principals falls under one or more of the criteria listed at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335, the recipient must provide immediate written notice to DHS in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 180.350.

4. Monitoring

Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.336, DHS, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems to review project accomplishments and to provide any required technical assistance. During site visits, DHS will review grant recipients' files related to the grant award. As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, grant recipients must permit DHS, upon reasonable notice, to review grant-related records and to interview the organization's staff and contractors regarding the program. Recipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner to DHS requests for information relating to the grant program.

G. DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information

1. Contact and Resource Information

The Program Officer shall be the DHS staff member responsible for monitoring the completion of work and technical performance of the demonstration project as described in the Program Narrative.

Elizabeth (Bess) Mitchell
Department of Homeland Security
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
(703) 705-6318
ECD@cisa.dhs.gov

The Grant Officer shall be the DHS staff member responsible for executing and monitoring financial and regulatory compliance of the demonstration project:

Marsha Mathis
Department of Homeland Security
Grants and Financial Assistance Division
(202) 447-5950
marsha.mathis@hq.dhs.gov

H. Additional Information

1. Period of Performance Extensions

Extensions to the period of performance under this program are allowed.

a. Requests for extensions to the Period of Performance will be considered, though not automatically granted and must be supported by adequate justification to be processed. The justification is a written explanation of the reason or reasons for the extension and a description of project activities necessary to complete the project.

b. The extension request and justification shall be submitted to the DHS Grants Officer, via DHS-GrantReports@hq.dhs.gov, thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date of the performance period.

c. Extensions to the Period of Performance can only be authorized in writing by the DHS Grants Officer. Following a review of the request and justification, the Recipient will receive written notification of the decision.

d. DHS has no obligation to provide additional resources/funding as a result of an extension.

Disclosure

Risk Assessment Evaluation

DHS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria, and results from this evaluation may assist funding decisions. If an award is made, DHS may apply special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk of the award.

In evaluating risks, DHS may consider the following:

- Financial stability;
- Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance;
- Applicant's record in managing previous DHS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  1. Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements;
  2. Accuracy of data reported;
  3. Conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards;
  4. If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;

5. Information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as: FAPIIS, DUNS, and SAM;
6. Reports and findings from single audits performed under Subpart F – Audit Requirements, 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and findings and reports of any other available audits;
7. Applicant organization's annual report;
8. Publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website; and
9. Applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.

In addition, organizations who have not received prior DHS Grants and Financial Assistance Division awards may be required to complete a risk assessment questionnaire as part of the pre-award financial and administrative review.

Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status

Applicants are to disclose if they are currently designated as high risk by a federal awarding agency. This includes, but is not limited to, any status requiring additional oversight by a federal awarding agency due to past programmatic, administrative or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated as high risk by a federal awarding agency, it should provide an explanation with the application package and include the following information:

- The federal awarding agency that assigned the high risk status;
- The federal awarding agency's point of contact for the risk status, including name, phone number, and email address;
- Date of the risk status designation; and
- Reason(s) for the risk status.

DHS seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of all grant awards. The disclosure of an organization's risk status does not disqualify it from receiving an award; however additional grant oversight may be required. If necessary, this information will be provided in the award documentation. Failure to disclose high risk status may result in award termination or other remedies.