APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS for 2018-NIST-PSIAP-MCVQOE

Applicants are strongly advised to use Grants.gov's "Download Submitted Forms and Applications" option to check that their application's required attachments were contained in their submission.

After submitting the application, follow the directions found at this link, https://go.usa.gov/xQqeh in the Grants.gov Online Users Guide.

If any, or all, of the required attachments are absent from the submission, follow the attachment directions found above, resubmit the application, and check again for the presence of the required attachments.

If the directions found at https://go.usa.gov/xQqeh are not effective, please contact the Grants.gov Help Desk immediately. If calling from within the United States or from a U.S. territory, please call 800-518-4726. If calling from a place outside the United States or a U.S. territory, please call 606-545-5035. E-mails should be addressed to support@grants.gov. Assistance from the Grants.gov Help Desk will be available around the clock every day, with the exception of Federal holidays. Help Desk service will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays.

This document consists of seven important sections:

1) Overview;
2) Required Application Forms and Documents;
3) Application Format;
4) Grants.gov Application Submission Process;
5) Attachment of Required Documents;
6) Verifying the Submission and Tracking the Application; and
7) Submission Date and Time.

1) Overview

We strongly recommend that applicants do not wait until the last minute to submit an application. Allowances will not make for any late submissions. To avoid any potential processing backlogs due to last minute Grants.gov registrations, applicants are highly encouraged to begin their Grants.gov registration process early.

When developing your submission timeline, please keep in mind that (1) all applicants are required to have a current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov); (2) the free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM.gov) may take between three and five business days or as long as more than two weeks; and (3) electronic applicants are required to have a current registration in Grants.gov; and (4) applicants using Grants.gov will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency's electronic system has received its application.

Please note that a federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient's registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is not current at the time of the award.

Applicants will find instructions on registering with SAM.gov as part of the Grants.gov process at:
http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html .

All applicants should be aware that adequate time must be factored into an applicant's schedule for delivery of the application.

Submitters are advised that volume on Grants.gov may be extremely heavy leading up to the deadline date.

2) Required Application Forms and Documents

The Application must contain the following:

(1) SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The SF-424 must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

- SF-424, Item 8.d Zip/Postal Code field should reflect the zip code + 4 (##### - ####) format.
- Item 12, should list the NOFO number 2018-NIST-PSIAP-MCVQOE.
- SF-424, Item 18, field a., should list the total Federal budget amount requested for the entire project.
- If the applicant includes voluntary committed cost share, SF-424, Item 18, field b., should list the applicant's anticipated voluntary committed cost share for the entire project.
- For SF-424, Item 21, the list of certifications and assurances is contained in the SF-424B.

(2) SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs. The budget should reflect anticipated expenses for the project, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustments.

The Grant Program Function or Activity on Section A, Line 1, Column (a) should be entered as "Public Safety Communications Research Grant Program". The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number on Line 1, Column (b) should be entered as "11.609". Line 1, Column (e) should reflect the anticipated federal expenses for the full term of the project. If the applicant intends to include voluntary committed cost share, that voluntary committed cost share for the full term of the project should be reflected on Section A, Line 1, Column (f).
Use Section B – Budget Categories to reflect the budget breakdown by year. Column (1) should be used for the first year. Column (2) should be used for the second year. Column (3) should be used for the third year.

Section C, line 8., column (b) of the SF-424A should reflect the applicant's anticipated voluntary committed cost share for the full term of the project. Enter a quarterly breakdown of the first year's budget of federal funds in Section D, line 13.

Section E, line 16, column (b) should reflect the second year's budget of federal funds. Enter the third year's budget of federal funds in column (c).

(3) SF-424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs

(4) CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying. Enter "2018-NIST-PSIAP-MCVQOE" in the Award Number field. Enter the title of the application used in field 15 of the SF-424, or an abbreviation of that title, in the Project Name field.

(5) SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)

(6) Quad Chart. The quad chart must contain a problem statement, the concept of the proposed project, the potential impact of the project, and key milestones and/or deliverables. **The quad chart must not exceed one (1) page.** Any materials provided beyond the one (1) page limit for the quad chart will be redacted and not provided to the reviewers.

(7) Technical Proposal. The Technical Proposal is a document of no more than twenty-five (25) pages total, which is responsive to the program description (*see* Section I. of this NOFO) and the evaluation criteria (*see* Section V.1. of this NOFO). The Technical Proposal must contain the following information:

(a) Project Description. This is a detailed description of the proposed project and potential impacts. This section should include a:

(i) Detailed description of the approach to address the goals and requirements of this NOFO and how the proposed activities will impact and benefit public safety.
(ii) Proposed list of technical outputs, details on how these outputs will be made available to the broader public safety and R&D communities, and how their adoption and impact will be tracked.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the *Technical Merit* evaluation criteria: (*see* Section V.1.a. of this NOFO). **The Project Description section must not exceed fifteen (15) single-sided pages.** Any material provided beyond this page limit will be redacted and not provided to the reviewers.

(b) Project Execution. This section should provide clear and quantifiable goals, milestones, timelines, and methods to assess progress and performance towards achieving the objectives in the Technical Proposal. In addition, this section should describe the cost effectiveness and value of the proposed project in terms of meeting the stated objectives.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the *Project Execution* evaluation criterion (*see* Section V.1.b. of this NOFO). **The Project Execution section must not exceed five (5) single-sided pages.** Any material provided beyond this page limit will be redacted and not provided to the reviewers.

(c) Qualifications. This section should provide detailed examples demonstrating:
(i) Qualifications of the individuals, teams, and organizations that will be executing or supporting the proposed project relative to the program goals.
(ii) Demonstrated success executing projects similar in scope and magnitude to the proposed project, including any examples of working with a broad cross-section of public safety practitioners.
(iii) Access to the necessary staff, equipment, facilities, support, and resources to accomplish the proposed objectives.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the *Qualifications* evaluation criterion (*see* Section V.1.c. of this NOFO). **The Qualifications section must not exceed five (5) single-sided pages.** Any material provided beyond this page limit will be redacted and not provided to the reviewers.

(8) Resume(s). Resumes are required for all key personnel, including the principal investigator/project lead. Awardees are advised that any changes to individuals deemed ‘key personnel’, including disengagement from the project for more than

three months or a 25% reduction of effort, will require prior approval, in writing, by the NIST Grants Officer.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the *Qualifications* evaluation criterion (*see* Section V.1.c. of this NOFO). There are no page limits for resumes. However, any material considered inappropriate for inclusion in a resume (e.g. supplementary text for another section) will be redacted and not provided to the reviewers.
Resumes do not count against the twenty-five (25) page limit of the Technical Proposal.

(9) Budget Narrative. 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 the budget categories (personnel, fringe benefits, equipment, travel, supplies, other direct costs and indirect costs) for which Federal funds are requested. The written justification should include the necessity and the basis for the cost. Proposed funding levels must be consistent with the project scope, and only allowable costs should be included in the budget. Information on cost allowability is available in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (http://go.usa.gov/SBYh), which apply to awards in this program. Voluntary committed cost share must be included in the appropriate categories. Information needed for each category is as follows:

(a) Personnel. At a minimum, the budget justification for all personnel should 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.

(b) Fringe Benefits. Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salaries and wages and based on rates determined by organizational policy. The items included in the fringe benefit rate (e.g. health insurance, parking, etc.) should not be charged under another cost category.

(c) Travel. For travel costs required by the recipient to complete the project, including attendance at any relevant conferences, the budget justification for travel should 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 prior experience. If a destination is not known, an approximate amount may be used with the assumptions given for the location of the meeting.

As described in the Program Description (*see* Section I. of this NOFO), recipients will be required to attend the PSCR Public Safety Broadband Stakeholder Meetings (PSBSM) to meet with stakeholders and present key plans and findings of their work to date. Recipients must send a minimum of one team member to each event during the term of the grant. The PSCR PSBSMs are held each June in the continental United States and are typically four days in length. The dates and locations of the PSBSM for 2019 – 2022 have not been determined at this time. Applicants should factor in the cost for attending this event in their budget narrative and SF424A form.

(d) 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 should 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 should be allocated to the award according to expected usage on the project. Applicants should provide at least two (2) quotes, if available, for equipment costing $25,000 or more. If two (2) quotes are not available, please provide a statement as to why two (2) quotes are not available.

(e) Supplies. Supplies are defined as all tangible personal property other than those described in equipment (*see* Section IV.2.a.(9)(d) of this NOFO). Provide a list of each supply necessary for the project, 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.

(f) Contracts/Subawards. Each contract or subaward should be treated as a separate item. Describe the services to be provided and the necessity of the subaward or contract to the successful performance of the proposed project. Contracts are for obtaining 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.

(g) Construction. Applications to PSIAP-MCVQoE may not include construction costs as part of their budget.

(h) Other Direct Costs. For costs that do not easily fit into the other cost categories, e.g. publishing fees or software distribution expenses, 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. Only allowable costs can be charged to the award.

The Budget Narrative does not count against the twenty-five (25) page limit of the Technical Proposal.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the *Project Execution* evaluation criteria (*see* Section V.1.b. of this NOFO). It will also be reviewed to determine if all costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable under 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart E, Cost Principles.

(10) 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. If the successful applicant includes indirect costs in the budget and has not established an indirect cost rate with a cognizant Federal audit agency, the applicant will be required to obtain such a rate in accordance with the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (http://go.usa.gov/xXRxK).

Alternatively, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 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 costs (MTDC), in which case a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is not required. Applicants proposing a 10 percent de minimis rate pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f) should note this election as part of the budget and budget narrative portion of the application.

(11) Letters of Commitment. Letters of Commitment must be submitted by all funded and unfunded entities that will have an active role in executing the activities outlined in the Technical Proposal. Letters of Commitment must address the level of participation, qualifications of the personnel who will be actively involved, and how successful completion of this project would positively impact their profession or community. Letters of Commitment must also specify any voluntary committed cost-share, including the specific services and/or products to be used in the project. Letters of Commitment must be signed by an individual with sufficient authority to legally bind the organization to its commitment.

Letters of Commitment will be evaluated in accordance with the *Qualifications* evaluation criteria (*see* Section V.1.c.) of this NOFO). Letters of commitment do not count against the twenty-five (25) page limit of the Technical Proposal.

(a) Public Safety Organizations. All applications must include at least one Letter of Commitment from an eligible PSO, unless the applicant organization is itself an eligible PSO. Letters of commitment from PSO partners must address the importance of the proposed work as well as potential impact for first responders and public safety in general. The letters of commitment must also include a detailed description of how the PSO will be actively engaged throughout the proposed project. For purposes of this NOFO, eligible PSOs

include U.S. federal, state, and local EMS, fire services, law enforcement, and public safety communications/911 centers. Please note that Federal entities are not eligible to receive funding under this NOFO, though they may participate as unfunded collaborators.

(12) Data Management Plan. Consistent with NIST Policy 5700.00[1], *Managing Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Research*, and NIST Order 5701.00[2], *Managing Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Research*, applicants must include a Data Management Plan (DMP).

The DMP is a supplementary document of not more than two pages that must include, at a minimum, a summary of proposed activities that are expected to generate data, a summary of the types of data expected to be generated by the identified activities, a plan for storage and maintenance of the data expected to be generated by the identified activities, and a plan describing whether and how data generated by the identified activities will be reviewed and made available to the public. As long as the DMP meets these NIST requirements, it may take the form specified by the applicant's institution or some other entity (e.g., the National Science Foundation[3] or the National Institutes of Health[4]).
All applications for activities that will generate scientific data using NIST funding are required to adhere to a DMP or explain why data sharing and preservation are not within the scope of the project.
For the purposes of the DMP, NIST adopted the definition of "research data" at 2 C.F.R. § 200.315(e)(3) (available at http://go.usa.gov/3sZvQ).
Reasonable costs for data preservation and access may be included in the application.

The sufficiency of the DMP will be considered as part of the administrative review (*see* Section V.3.a. of this NOFO); however, the DMP will not be evaluated against any evaluation criteria.

Please pay close attention to the guidance in Section 5) of this document, "Attachment of Required Documents".

3) Application Format

(1) Paper, E-mail and Facsimile (fax) Submissions. Will not be accepted.

(2) Figures, Graphs, Images, and Pictures. Should be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation. Any figures, graphs, images, or pictures will count toward the fifteen (15) page limit for the Project Description.

[1] http://www.nist.gov/data/upload/Final-P-5700.pdf
[2] http://www.nist.gov/data/upload/Final-O-5701_0.pdf
[3] http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp
[4] http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/data_sharing_guidance.htm

(3) Font. Easy to read font (12-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible**.**

(4) Page Limits. See the table below:

Section	Page Limit
Technical Proposal Project Description	15
Technical Proposal Project Execution	5
Technical Proposal Qualifications	5
Quad Chart	1
Data Management Plan	2

Page Limit Excludes: SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs; SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs; CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying; SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities; Resumes of key personnel; Budget Narrative; Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; and Letters of Commitment.

(5) Page size. 21.6 centimeters by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ inches by 11 inches).

(6) Application language. English.

4) Grants.gov Application Submission Process

(1) Applications must be submitted via Grants.gov at grants.gov.

(a) Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions to ensure that all attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicating an application is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received. For further information or questions regarding applying electronically for the 2018-NIST-PSIAP-MCVQOE announcement, contact Christopher Hunton by phone at 301-975-5718 or by e-mail at grants@nist.gov.

(b) Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not wait until the approaching due date before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through Grants.gov. The Grants.gov registration process must be completed before a new registrant can apply electronically. If all goes well, the registration process takes three to five business days. If problems are encountered, the registration process can take up to two weeks

or more. Applicants must have a valid unique entity identifier number and must maintain a current registration in the Federal government's primary registrant database, the System for Award Management (https://www.sam.gov/), as explained on the Grants.gov Web site (also *see* Section IV.4. of this NOFO). After registering, it may take several days or longer from the initial log-on before a new Grants.gov system user can submit an application. Only individuals authorized as organization representatives will be able to submit the application, and the system may need time to process a submitted application. Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (a) print any error message received and (b) call Grants.gov directly for immediate assistance. If calling from within the United States or from a U.S. territory, please call 800-518-4726. If calling from a place other than the United States or a U.S. territory, please call 606-545-5035. Assistance from the Grants.gov Help Desk will be available around the clock every day, except for Federal holidays. Help Desk service will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays. For assistance using Grants.gov, the applicant may also contact support@grants.gov.

(c) To find instructions for submitting an application on Grants.gov, Applicants should refer to the "Applicants" tab in the banner just below the top of the www.grants.gov home page. Clicking on the "Applicants" tab produces two exceptionally useful sources of information, Applicant Actions and Applicant Resources, which applicants are advised to review.

Applicants will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency's electronic system has received its application. Closely following the detailed information in these subcategories will increase the likelihood of acceptance of the application by the Federal agency's electronic system.

Applicants should pay close attention to the guidance under "Applicant FAQs," as it contains information important to successful submission on Grants.gov, including essential details on the naming conventions for attachments to Grants.gov applications.

All applicants should be aware that adequate time must be factored into applicants' schedules for delivery of their application. Applicants are advised that volume on Grants.gov may be extremely heavy leading up to the deadline date.

The application must be both received and validated by Grants.gov. The application is "received" when Grants.gov provides the applicant a confirmation of receipt and an application tracking number. If an applicant does not see this confirmation and tracking number, the application has not been received. After the application has been received, it must still be validated. During this process, it may be "validated" or "rejected with errors". To know whether the application was rejected with errors and the reasons why, the applicant must log in to Grants.gov, select "Applicants" from the top navigation, and select "Track my application" from the drop-down list. If the

status is “rejected with errors,” the applicant may still seek to correct the errors and resubmit the application before the deadline. If the applicant does not correct the errors, the application will not be forwarded to NIST by Grants.gov.
Refer to important information in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times, to help ensure the application is received on time.

5) Attachment of Required Documents

Items (1) through (5) in Section 2) above, **Required Application Forms and Documents,** are part of the standard application package in Grants.gov and can be completed through the download application process.

Items (6) through (12) in Section 2) above, **Required Application Forms and Documents,** must be completed and attached by clicking on “Add Attachments” found in item 15 of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. This will create a zip file that allows for transmittal of the documents electronically via Grants.gov.

Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions at www.grants.gov to ensure the attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. ***A receipt from Grants.gov indicates only that an application was transferred to a system. It does not provide details concerning whether all attachments (or how many attachments) transferred successfully.*** Applicants using Grants.gov will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency’s electronic system has received its application.

6) Verifying the Submission and Tracking the Application

The Grants.gov Online Users Guide available at the Grants.gov site (http://go.usa.gov/cjaEh) provides vital information on application process.

Applicants are strongly advised to use Grants.gov’s “Download Submitted Forms and Applications” option to check that their application’s required attachments were contained in their submission.

After submitting the application, follow the directions found at this link, https://go.usa.gov/xQqeh in the Grants.gov Online Users Guide.

If any, or all, of the required attachments are absent from the submission, follow the attachment directions found above, resubmit the application, and check again for the presence of the required attachments.

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should be addressed to support@grants.gov. Assistance from the Grants.gov Help Desk will be available around the clock every day, with the exception of Federal holidays. Help Desk service will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays.

Applicants can track their submission in the Grants.gov system by following the procedures at the Grants.gov site (http://go.usa.gov/cjamz). It can take up to two business days for an application to fully move through the Grants.gov system to NIST.

NIST uses the Tracking Numbers assigned by Grants.gov, and does not issue its own Agency Tracking Numbers.

7) Submission Date and Time

Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, Friday, August 3, 2018. NIST will consider the date and time recorded by Grants.gov as the official submission time. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Applicants should be aware, and factor in their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system is expected to be closed for routine maintenance from 12:01 a.m. Eastern Time, Saturday, June 16, 2018 until Monday, June 18, 2018 at 6:00 a.m. Eastern Time; and from 12:01 a.m. Eastern Time, Saturday, July 21, 2018 until Monday, July 23, 2018 at 6:00 a.m. Eastern Time.

Applications cannot be submitted when Grants.gov is closed.