

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS for 2017-NIST-MEP-EMUSA-02

Applicants are strongly urged to use Grants.gov's Download Submitted Applications option for checking that their application's required attachments (see pages 2 through 11 of this document, and Section IV.2.a. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document) were contained in their submission.

After submitting the application, follow the directions found in the Grants.gov Online Users Guide (<http://go.usa.gov/cjaEh>). Click first on Applicants; then click on Applicant Actions; go then to the "Check My Application Status" option, and choose Download Submitted Applications.

If any, or all, of the required attachments are absent from the submission, follow the attachment directions found on page 14 of this document and in Section IV.2.b. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document, resubmit the application, and check again for the presence of the required attachments.

This document consists of seven important sections:

1. Overview;
2. Required Application Forms and Documents;
3. Application Format;
4. 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 certified through www.grants.gov by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

SF-424, Item 12, should list the NOFO number as 2017-NIST-MEP-EMUSA-02.

SF-424, Item 18, should list the total budget information for the full duration of the project.

The list of certifications and assurances referenced in Item 21 of the SF-424 is contained in the SF-424B.

- (2) SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs.** The budget should reflect anticipated expenses for each year of the project, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustments. The budget should also include staff, travel and other costs associated with the Award Kick-off Meeting and the NIST/MEP National Network meetings for the MEP Center and the primary Manufacturing USA Institute as described in Sections II.4. and II.5., respectively, of the Full Announcement/NOFO document.

The applicant should reflect each year of the project, up to two (2) years, on the **SF-424A form**. Please carefully follow the directions found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html> when filling out this form.

These sections of the SF-424A should reflect funds for the first year of the award: Section A; Section B; Section C; and Section D. The budget estimate for the second year of the award should be entered in Section E, field 16, column (b).

The Grant Program Function or Activity on Line 1 under Column (a) should be entered as "Manufacturing Extension Partnership". The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number in on Line 1 under Column (b) should be entered as "11.611".

- (3) **SF-424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs.**
- (4) **CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying.** For the Award Number, enter "2017-NIST-MEP-EMUSA-02". In the Project Name filed, use the "Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project" from field 15 of the SF-424, or an abbreviation thereof.
- (5) **SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.** (if applicable)
- (6) **Technical Proposal.** The Technical Proposal, with a period of performance of up to two (2) years, is a word-processed document not exceeding 25 pages that is responsive to the program description (see Section I. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document) and the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document). The following is a suggested format that applicants may use for the technical proposal.
 - a) **Table of Contents.** (Does not count toward the page limit).
 - b) **Executive Summary.** The executive summary should briefly (usually no longer than two pages) describe the proposed project, consistent with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document).

Please note, if an applicant's proposal is selected for funding, NIST may use all or a portion of the Executive Summary as part of a press release issued by NIST, or for other public information and outreach purposes. Applicants are advised not to incorporate information that concerns business trade secrets or other confidential commercial or financial information as part of the Executive Summary. See also 15 C.F.R. § 4.9(c) concerning the designation of business information by the applicant. (Does not count towards page limit).

c) Project Narrative. This section should provide a description of the proposed approach, sufficient to permit evaluation of the proposal, in accordance with details included in the proposal Evaluation Criteria (see Section V.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document).

The project narrative must identify the one (1) primary Manufacturing USA Institute identified in Section I. and III.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document with which the applicant has established a collaborative partnership. For purposes of this NOFO, the primary institute is the one in which the MEP Center plans to embed personnel at a level of at least one (1) FTE. While the MEP Center may have personnel embedded at more than one (1) Manufacturing USA Institute, the MEP Center must have at least one (1) FTE at the primary Manufacturing USA Institute. All proposed pilot projects must involve the embedding of MEP Center personnel operating in residence (as defined in the Full Announcement/NOFO document in Section I. and Section IV.2.a.(6).(d). at one (1) or more of the Manufacturing USA Institutes identified in Section I. and III.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document. Such personnel embedding must involve the placement of MEP Center representatives from one or more MEP Centers within residence on at least a one (1) FTE cumulative basis and at least a 0.5 FTE basis for any single embedded Center employee at the primary Manufacturing USA Institute for the entirety of the federal award period, which may not exceed two (2) years. In this connection, if an applicant proposes the embedding of MEP Center personnel in more than one (1) Manufacturing USA Institute identified in Section I. and III.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document, the application must clearly designate the primary Manufacturing USA Institute **and** the applicant must meet the one (1) FTE minimum annual embedding requirement by embedding at least one (1) MEP Center personnel FTE at the designated primary Manufacturing USA Institute.

The applicant is required to provide a statement of embedded FTE(s) as described in Section IV.2.a.(6).(d). below as part of the Technical Proposal and required to include a letter of commitment from the primary Manufacturing USA Institute and any other partnering Manufacturing USA Institutes as described in Section IV.2.a.(12). below.

The project narrative must identify tasks, measureable milestones, and outcomes resulting from the proposed approach, including the role of the embedding of MEP Center personnel in the participating Manufacturing USA Institutes, for each year of the proposed period of performance (Year 1 and Year 2). If an applicant proposes the embedding of MEP Center personnel in more than one Manufacturing USA Institute, the application must clearly designate one (1) of the five (5) Manufacturing USA institutes

identified in Section I. and Section III.1. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document as the primary Manufacturing USA Institute and the applicant must meet the one (1) FTE minimum annual embedding requirement by embedding at least one (1) MEP Center personnel FTE at the designated primary participating Manufacturing USA Institute.

The project narrative should clearly identify the applicant's approach to developing, testing, and providing assistance for small U.S. manufacturers in the technology focus area(s) of the participating Manufacturing USA Institute(s). The project narrative should clearly indicate the service delivery mechanism(s) and business model(s) being developed and tested relating to MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Institutes working together, and relating to MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Institutes working with small U.S. manufacturers to provide small U.S. manufacturers the assistance they need. The applicant also should clearly explain how the proposed approach will accomplish one or more of the following:

- i. Increase small U.S. manufacturer awareness of Manufacturing USA Institute focus areas and resources;
- ii. Ensure the involvement of small U.S. manufacturers in the processes and activities associated with informing and developing the research agendas of the Manufacturing USA Institutes;
- iii. Increase small U.S. manufacturers' participation in the conduct of Manufacturing USA Institute research; and
- iv. Ensure the transition of Manufacturing USA Institute research results to small U.S. manufacturers for implementation.

The applicant should provide information that clearly indicates how the proposed MEP Center – Manufacturing USA Institute collaboration(s) and embedded personnel will result in increased impacts for small U.S. manufacturers, as well as the rationale for the selection and level of involvement of the particular Manufacturing USA Institute(s) and MEP Center(s) engaged in the proposal.

The business model descriptions proposed should clearly identify the revenue bases of the collaborations and service delivery models, including organizational contributions and how MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Institutes will be able to collaborate on a sustainable basis, including beyond the period of performance of this program's funding awards. The business models should also clearly articulate the effects of the costs to small U.S. manufacturers for receiving services and the anticipated reimbursements from the small U.S. manufacturers for receiving the services.

Applicants should clearly identify and fully explain the elements of their

collaborations intended to reach a broad base of small U.S. manufacturers, including, for example, outreach and assistance activities for very small, start-up, and rural manufacturers in areas such as technology acceleration and workforce training.

The project narrative should clearly indicate how the proposed approach adds capabilities to the MEP Program, and the narrative should detail how the approach solves new or emerging manufacturing problems of small U.S. manufacturers relating to areas such as, but not limited to:

- the transfer of technology from the participating Manufacturing USA Institute(s) to small U.S. manufacturers for manufactured products and manufacturing processes;
- supply chain integration; and
- quality management.

Applicants are encouraged to propose collaborations between Manufacturing USA Institutes and the MEP Center(s) serving the manufacturers in the region where the Manufacturing USA Institutes are located to facilitate regional network building, as well as partnerships between Manufacturing USA Institutes and other MEP Centers located around the nation to facilitate national network building.

Applicants should clearly articulate:

- The nature of the network structure that's being developed or enhanced;
- Who the participants are;
- The roles, responsibilities and relationships to each other of all participating Manufacturing USA Institutes and MEP Centers (to include the lead MEP Center) and any other participating organizations; and
- The geographic scale of the proposed network activities, such as state, regional, or national scope.

Applicants should also provide details about approaches for sharing lessons learned and best practices resulting from the conduct of the project. This should include plans for sharing with the national network of MEP Centers, the national network of Manufacturing USA Institutes, and other organizations and entities involved with U.S. manufacturing, including but not limited to NIST, the other federal agencies providing funding for the Manufacturing USA Institutes, U.S. manufacturers, manufacturing trade associations, economic development organizations, and others.

It is anticipated that embedded personnel operating in residence at the

Manufacturing USA Institutes will become national resources for the Manufacturing USA Institute and MEP Center Networks, and the plan by which this will occur should be clearly articulated in the proposal. Applicants should clearly indicate how the embedding of MEP Center personnel in residence at the Manufacturing USA Institute(s) will contribute to the proposed network building activities.

The applicant should clearly articulate how the proposed approach will enhance the impact of the efforts of the participating MEP Center(s) and Manufacturing USA Institute(s) for the benefit of small U.S. manufacturers in terms of measures such as, but not limited to job creation, employee training, technology transfer and commercialization, and improved manufacturer and supply chain competitiveness.

The specific embedding of personnel that will occur between the MEP Center(s) and Manufacturing USA Institute(s) should be fully set forth in the Project Narrative section. Appropriate relationships with the identified Manufacturing USA Institute(s) must be in place at the time of application and demonstrated with letters of commitment included in the application package. **The applicant is required to provide a statement of embedded FTE(s) as described in Section IV.2.a.(6).(d). below as part of the Technical Proposal and required to include a letter of commitment from the primary Manufacturing USA Institute and all other participating Manufacturing USA Institutes as described in Section IV.2.a.(12). below.**

Applicants should provide details about the ability of the key personnel and the applicant's proposed management structure, as described in Section V.1.d., to successfully conduct the project being proposed. Applicants should clearly articulate how proposed organizational structures and participating personnel from the MEP Center(s) and Manufacturing USA Institute(s) will be in position and ready to begin project operations upon receipt of funding award.

(d) Statement of Embedded FTE(s). It is required that the embedded MEP Center personnel must operate in residence at the participating primary Manufacturing USA Institute. For purposes of this NOFO, MEP Center personnel being embedded in residence at a Manufacturing USA Institute means the MEP embedded personnel are physically based at the Manufacturing USA Institute commensurate with the commitment identified in the project narrative and budget, utilizing Institute office space and interacting with Institute staff and members. **This must be clearly stated and evidenced in the proposal, and the applicant must include a statement that there will be at least one or the equivalent of one (1) FTE in**

residence at the designated primary Manufacturing USA Institute and provide salary information in their proposal that is consistent with this statement in the proposed budget. Being embedded in residence also means that the embedded personnel are wholly focused on project tasking included in the proposed approach during the time while they're embedded at the Institute – versus being focused on customary MEP Center duties.

Applicants may also propose approaches that involve the participation of multiple Manufacturing USA Institutes, as well as multiple MEP Centers. Any proposal, however, must include participation from at least one (1) of the five (5) Manufacturing USA Institutes identified in the Full Announcement/NOFO document.

The proposals must articulate the details of the administrative, financial, and other business parameters associated with the embedding of personnel from the participating MEP Centers in the participating Manufacturing USA Institutes.

(e) Budget Tables and Budget Narratives. In addition to the SF-424A form (see Section IV.2.a.(2). of the Full Announcement/NOFO document), applicants must provide a detailed budget table and budget narrative for the proposed period of performance, fully explaining and justifying all proposed project funding (both revenue and expenses) in accordance with applicable federal cost principles. The budget information submitted by an applicant will be evaluated in accordance with the Budget evaluation sub-criteria (see Section V.1.e.(i). and Section V.1.e.(ii). of the Full Announcement/NOFO document).

In the budget narrative, the Recipient should provide adequate information to support the costs identified in each category of the budget table. At a minimum, applicants must provide: the annual salary and the percentage of time dedicated to the project by personnel to demonstrate the total cost of that individual; the airfare, lodging, per diem, number of days and number of travelers for each proposed trip; and anticipated subaward/contract amounts and the related subawardees/contractors, to the extent known at the time of application, and a detailed description of the purpose of each subaward/contract. Applicants must also include for the applicant MEP Center and the primary Manufacturing USA Institute staff, travel and related expenses for travel to and participation in the required Award Kick-Off and National Network meetings described in Sections II.4. and II.5. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document in the budget tables and budget narratives. In the event that travel and related costs for the MEP Center representative are already accounted for under another MEP award, the applicant should note this in the budget narrative and should not include travel and related costs in the budget. A suggested budget table and budget narrative template are available on the MEP website, www.nist.gov/mep/embedding-mep-manufacturing-usa-

When preparing project budgets, applicants must be cognizant of the prohibition on double-billing costs against multiple federal awards and on the prohibition on using federal funding as non-federal cost share on any other federal award. See Section III.3. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document.

- (7) **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 available at: <http://go.usa.gov/hKbj>. This does not count toward the page limit.

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 MEP 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 portion of the application.

- (8) **Table of Abbreviations and Acronyms.** (This does not contribute to the total number of pages.) An alphabetical list of all abbreviations and acronyms, and their meaning, should be included.
- (9) **Table of Funded Project Participants and Unfunded Collaborators.** (This does not contribute to the total number of pages.) Provide a table that identifies all organizations that will participate in and contribute to the project, if funded, known at the time of the application submission. The table should consist of an alphabetically ordered list, by organization, of all Funded Project Participants and all Unfunded Collaborators. The table should include the organization's name, address, administrative role, scope of work (funded participants only) and proposed funding amount (funded participants only). Administrative roles are: applicant, subrecipient, or contractor for funded participants; and third party contributor or collaborator if they will not receive funding.
- (10) **Bibliographic List of References.** (This does not contribute to the total number of pages.) A complete bibliographic listing of all references used within the application should be included.

(11) Resumes of Key Personnel. (These do not contribute to the total number of pages). One-page resumes of no more than five key personnel from each participant organization may be included; these do not count toward the page limit. Key personnel resumes should include resumes for any personnel from MEP Centers who will be embedded at the Manufacturing USA Institutes. Any information beyond one page for each resume and any additional resumes submitted will not be considered.

(12) Required Letters of Commitment. (These do not contribute to the total number of pages). Letters that commit specific resources (not funding) to the project in the event that the application is funded are required from all of the following that apply:

- a) Each application must include a Letter of Commitment from an authorized representative of: (i) the MEP Center applicant; (ii) each Manufacturing USA Institute that will be participating in the project; and from (iii) other MEP Centers that will be participating in the project. Each letter should describe the submitting organization's commitment to and activities in support of the proposed project.
- b) If the application includes subawards, contracts or other payments to known third parties, including Manufacturing USA Institutes and other MEP Centers, a draft copy of each subaward, contract or other funding vehicle must be included. The reviewers will consider the scope of each agreement and its relevance to the proposed project, but will not review the agreement for legal sufficiency or for the allowability of the proposed budget.
- c) Letters of Commitment should not be letters submitted by non-proposing entities wishing to vouch for the applicant's (or entities associated with the applicant) knowledge, skills, and abilities or entities to conduct the proposed work. These should be in the form of a Letter of Interest (see Section IV.3.a.(13). of the Full Announcement/NOFO document).

(13) Letters of Interest. (These do not contribute to the total number of pages.) Optional letters may be included with an application that indicate willingness from any third party to help accelerate establishment of a new or strengthening of an existing industry-driven technology consortium and/or consortium project results. This may include letters from unfunded collaborators who will participate as unfunded team members, potential organizations involved across stages of the value chain, or strategic partners who can aid in any element of the plan to realize impact. Letters of Interest should outline the nature and importance of the collaboration or involvement

being offered. Letters of Interest may also be from non-proposing entities wishing to vouch for the applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities or entities to conduct the proposed work. All letters of interest must be included with the application and not sent separately to NIST.

- (14) Data Management Plan.** Consistent with the 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 should 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 Foundation³ or the National Institutes of Health⁴).

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 inclusion of the DMP will be considered as part of the administrative review (see Section V.2.a. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document); 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) E-mail submissions.** Will not be accepted

¹<https://www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/documents/data/Final-P-5700.pdf>

²https://www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/documents/data/Final-O-5701_0.pdf

³<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>

⁴http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/data_sharing_guidance.htm

- (2) **Facsimile submissions (fax).** Will not be accepted.
- (3) **Figures, graphs, images, and pictures.** Should be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
- (4) **Font.** Easy to read font (11-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
- (5) **Line spacing.** Single.
- (6) **Margins.** One (1) inch top, bottom, left, and right.
- (7) **Paper copies.** Will not be accepted. All submissions must be made via www.grants.gov.
- (8) **Page layout.** Portrait orientation only (except figures, graphs, and pictures (see Section IV.2.c.(3)).
- (9) **Page Limit.** Twenty-five (25) pages.
 - a) **Page limit includes:** Cover page, Technical Proposal (with the exception of the Executive Summary), figures, graphs, tables, images, pictures, and all other pages of an application, with the exception of the page limit exclusions listed below.
 - b) **Page limit excludes:** Table of Contents, Executive Summary, SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; the SF-424A, Budget Information – Non- Construction Programs form; SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs; SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities; CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying; Budget Tables and Budget Narratives; Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; Table of Abbreviations and Acronyms; Table of Funded Project Participants and Unfunded Informal Collaborators; Bibliographic List of References; Resumes of Key Personnel; Required Letters of Commitment; Letters of Interest; and the Data Management Plan.
- (10) **Page numbering.** Number pages sequentially.
- (11) **Paper size.** 21.6 centimeters by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ inches by 11 inches).
- (12) **Application language.** English.
- (13) **Typed document.** All applications, including forms, must be typed.

4) Application Submission Process

- (1) Electronic applications must be submitted via Grants.gov at www.grants.gov, under announcement 2017-NIST-MEP-EMUSA-02.
- a) Submitters of electronic applications should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions to ensure the 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 2017-NIST-MEP-EMUSA-02 announcement, contact Christopher Hutton 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 (3) to five (5) business days. If problems are encountered, the registration process can take up to two (2) 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. See *also* Section IV.3. of the Full Announcement/NOFO document. 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, with the exception of Federal holidays. Help Desk service will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays. For assistance using Grants.gov, you may also contact support@grants.gov.
 - c) To find instructions on 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 on 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 your 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, of the Full Announcement/NOFO document to help ensure your application is received on time.

5) Attachment of Required Documents

Items (1) through (5) in section 2) of this document, 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 (14) in section 2) of this document, 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. See especially the "Check My Application Status" option, found by clicking first on Applicants, and then by clicking on Applicant Actions. Use this feature to verify that all required attachments were present in the submission.

After submitting the application, follow the directions found in the Grants.gov Online Users Guide (<http://go.usa.gov/cjaEh>). Click first on Applicants; then click on Applicant Actions; go then to the "Check My Application Status" option, and choose Download Submitted Applications. Follow the directions found there. Remember, in order for this to work, don't just visit Grants.gov. Log in. And remember to click on the record found on the Check My Application Status screen in order to see the List of Forms and Files Received screen.

If any, or all, of the required attachments are absent from the submission, follow the attachment directions found in the Full Announcement/NOFO document, resubmit the application, and check again for the presence of the required attachments.

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 in response to the Full Announcement/NOFO document must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, June 2, 2017. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered. The approximate start date for awards under the Full Announcement/NOFO document is expected to be in August 2017.

Applicants should be aware, and factor into their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system is expected to be closed for routine maintenance from 12:01 Eastern Time, Saturday, April 15, 2017 until Monday, April 17, 2017 at 6:00 a.m. Eastern Time, and again from 12:01 Eastern Time, Saturday, May 20, 2017 until Monday, May 22, 2017 at 6:00 a.m. Eastern Time. Applications cannot be submitted when Grants.gov is closed.