NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Stimulate (RAMPS)
Cybersecurity Education and Workforce Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce (DoC)

- **Funding Opportunity Title:** Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Stimulate (RAMPS) Cybersecurity Education and Workforce Development

- **Announcement Type:** Initial

- **Funding Opportunity Number**: 2024-NIST-RAMPS-01

- **Assistance Listing (CFDA Number):** 11.620: Science, Technology, Business and/or Education Outreach

- **Dates:** Full Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, May 24, 2024. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered.

  NIST expects to complete its review, selection of successful applicants, and award processing by July 2024. NIST expects the earliest start date for awards under this NOFO to be August 2024.

- **Application Submission Address:** Applications must be submitted using grants.gov. Paper applications and applications submitted through electronic mail will not be accepted.

- **Funding Opportunity Description:** The NIST National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) is seeking applications from eligible applicants for activities to establish community-based partnerships to develop cybersecurity career pathways that address local workforce needs. Effective multistakeholder workforce partnerships will organize multiple employers with skill shortages in specific occupations to focus on developing the skilled workforce to meet industry needs within the local or regional economy.

- **Anticipated Amounts:** In Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), NIST anticipates funding up to 15 awards for up to $200,000 in federal funding per award and with a project period of performance of up to 2 years.

- **Funding Instrument:** Cooperative Agreement

- **Eligibility:** Eligibility for the program listed in this NOFO is open to all non-Federal entities. Eligible applicants include accredited institutions of higher education; non-profit organizations; for-profit organizations incorporated in the United States; State, local, Territorial, and Indian Tribal governments; foreign public entities; and foreign organizations. Please note that individuals and unincorporated sole proprietors are not considered "non-Federal entities" and are not eligible to apply under this NOFO. Although Federal entities are not eligible to receive funding under this NOFO, they may participate as unfunded collaborators.

  Applicants must also demonstrate, through commitment letters from project partners, that at least one of each of the following types of organizations is committed to being part of the proposed multistakeholder workforce partnership:

  - at least one institution of higher education or nonprofit training organization, and
  - at least one local employer or owner or operator of critical infrastructure.

  Participation from academic institutions in the Federal Cyber Scholarships for Service Program, the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity Program, or Advanced Technological Education programs, as well as elementary and secondary schools, training and certification providers, State and local governments, economic development organizations, or other community organizations is encouraged.

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Non-federal cost share IS required. Specifically, non-federal cost share, including in-kind contributions, in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the Federal funds provided, is required for awards issued pursuant to this NOFO.

- **Public Website, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs**): NIST has a public website (https://www.nist.gov/NICE) that provides a "Frequently Asked Questions" page and other information pertaining to this NOFO.

- **Webinar Information Session:** NIST will host a webinar on April 8, 2024 to provide general information regarding this NOFO, offer general guidance on preparing applications, and answer questions. Please reference https://www.nist.gov/NICE for the most up to date information, including scheduling details about the webinar. Proprietary technical discussions about specific project ideas will not be permitted during the webinar and NIST staff will not critique or provide feedback on specific project ideas while they are being developed by an applicant, brought forth during the webinar, or at any time before the deadline for all applications. However, questions about the funding

opportunity, eligibility requirements, evaluation and award criteria, selection process, and the general characteristics of a competitive application will be addressed at the webinar and by e-mail to nice@nist.gov. There is no cost to attend the webinar, but participants must register in advance. Participation in the webinar is not required and will not be considered in the review and selection process.

Table of Contents

I. Program Description 3
II. Federal Award Information 8
III. Eligibility Information 9
IV. Application and Submission Information 10
V. Application Review Information 22
VI. Federal Award Administration Information 25
VII. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts 29
VIII. Other Information 29

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Program Description

The statutory authority for the NIST NICE Program and the Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Stimulate (RAMPS) Cybersecurity Education and Workforce Development is 15 U.S.C. § 272(b)(4), Title IV of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-274 (2014), Section 9401 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2021, Pub. L. 116-283 (2021), as codified in 15 U.S.C. § 7443.

Program Description

The Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Stimulate (RAMPS) Cybersecurity Education and Workforce Development (RAMPS) Program seeks to build multistakeholder workforce partnerships of employers, schools and institutions of higher education, and other community organizations. Effective multistakeholder workforce partnerships will organize multiple employers with skill shortages in specific occupations to focus on developing the skilled workforce to meet industry needs within the local or regional economy.

1) Background Information

In our connected society almost every organization in the United States uses the Internet for commerce, communication, or service provision. Cybersecurity has therefore, emerged as one of our nation's top priorities for both national and economic security. Increasing our security of cyberspace requires a skilled

workforce to design secure products and services and to protect businesses, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and governments at all levels in order to minimize enterprise risks.

NICE, led by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the U.S. Department of Commerce (DoC), is a partnership between Federal agencies, industry, educational institutions, and other organizations to coordinate a national cybersecurity awareness and education program. The mission of NICE is to energize, promote, and coordinate a robust community working together to advance an integrated ecosystem of cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development. NICE fulfills this mission by coordinating with government, academic, and industry partners to build on existing successful programs, facilitate change and innovation, and bring leadership and vision to increase the number of skilled cybersecurity practitioners helping to keep our Nation secure.

NICE was initially established to meet the cybersecurity training, education, and awareness priorities expressed in Section II. of the 2009 Cyberspace Policy Review, Building Capacity for a Digital Nation. It expanded upon the 2008 Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative (CNCI) number 8: Expand Cyber Education, which acknowledged that in order to effectively ensure our continued technical advantage and future cybersecurity, we must develop a technologically- skilled and cyber-savvy workforce and an effective pipeline of future employees."

To guide NICE's efforts, a strategic plan has been established and is updated every five years. The current NICE Strategic Plan (available at https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/about/strategic-plan) covers 2021-2025 and has the following goals:

- Goal #1: Promote the Discovery of Cybersecurity Careers and Multiple Pathways
- Goal #2: Transform Learning to Build and Sustain a Diverse and Skilled Workforce
- Goal #3: Modernize the Talent Management Process to Address Cybersecurity Skills Gaps
- Goal #4: Expand Use of the Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity (NICE Framework)
- Goal #5: Drive Research on Effective Practices for Cybersecurity Workforce Development

Additionally, NICE seeks to build upon and support existing Federal strategies that provide key elements of effective workforce practices, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, and retention. Alignment with these strategies enable a unified ecosystem for cybersecurity workforce development. NICE

recognizes the following Federal guidance:

a. The Department of Commerce's Strategic Plan (available at https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/DOC-Strategic-Plan-2022–2026.pdf) includes the following strategic objective 2.2: Build sustainable, employer-driven career pathways to meet employers' need for talent and to connect Americans to quality jobs.

b. The Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor's "Good Jobs Principles" (available at https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/principles) that address the following characteristics of a quality job:

- Recruitment and Hiring
- Benefits
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility
- Empowerment and Representation
- Job Security and Working Conditions
- Organizational Culture
- Pay
- Skills and Career Advancement

c. The Department of Commerce's workforce development agenda that is guided by a set of best practices and principles (available at https://www.commerce.gov/issues/workforce-development). Highly effective workforce investments:

- Are **employer-led** to ensure skilled workers are connected to quality job opportunities.
- Are guided by **multiple community partners** such as educational institutions, labor unions, community-based organizations, and economic development organizations.
- Include **wrap-around services** to support the most vulnerable populations.
- Increase educational and workplace diversity, equity, and **inclusion**.
- Prioritize proven **earn and learn models** like Registered Apprenticeships.
- Lead to **stackable, industry-recognized credentials** and ensure that information about credentials is publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability.
- **Measure and evaluate outcomes** such as workers' employment and earnings. Ensure that data is transparent, actionable, and linked back to those executing programs.

- Build **sustainable systems and partnerships** that endure to serve employers and workers beyond the federal investment.
- Connect **workforce development to economic development**.
- Are **coordinated** across the federal government.
- Encourage the **use of other government and private funding**.

Further, the NICE Program Office publishes guidance, reports, use cases, and white papers related to cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development. NICE's signature publication is the Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity (NICE Framework) (available at http://nist.gov/nice/framework/). The NICE Framework defines the cybersecurity workforce and provides a common taxonomy and lexicon by which to classify and categorize workers. The NICE Framework lists Work Roles and Competency Areas of cybersecurity work and provides a description of each. The NICE Framework also identifies common Task, Knowledge, Skill (TKS) statements, also known as building blocks. The NICE Framework is used within the federal government and is available for use by the private, public, and academic sectors for describing cybersecurity work and aligning related education, training, and professional development content.

In 2016, NIST conducted a one-year pilot of the NICE RAMPS program with five organizations dispersed across the country. NIST Interagency Report (NISTIR) 8287: A Roadmap for Successful Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Build the Cybersecurity Workforce was published to provide a summary of the five programs and outline a roadmap for building similar programs based on the best practices found and lessons learned.

2) Program Requirements

Each application for funding pursuant to this NOFO must include a plan to establish a **multistakeholder** education and workforce partnership that includes, at a minimum, one institution of higher education or nonprofit training organization (that is not the applicant), and one local employer or owner or operator of critical infrastructure (that is not the applicant).

Participation from one or more of the following types of organizations is also encouraged: academic institutions in the Federal Cyber Scholarships for Service Program, the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity Program, or Advanced Technological Education programs; elementary and secondary schools; training and certification providers; economic development organizations; and other community organizations.

The applicant's **proposed project must:**

1. Demonstrate how the activity aligns with the Department of Commerce

Strategic Plan, meets the Effective Workforce Investment Criteria, and advances the Good Jobs Principles.

2. Prioritize Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility as an essential requirement in strategies intended to diversify the cybersecurity workforce and reach underserved and underrepresented communities. Inclusion of programs that seek to include veterans, Indian Tribes, and underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, persons from rural and underserved areas, and persons with disabilities is encouraged.
    - NIST's mission is to drive innovation and industrial competitiveness through measurement science and standards by cultivating a culture of belonging that integrates diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in all ways of working.
    - Additionally, a value in the NICE Strategic Plan is to "Model Inclusion, advocating and enabling engagement of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and with varying viewpoints". Executive Order No.13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government 86 FR 7009, (2021) defines "underserved communities." The report from the National Science foundation titled *Diversity in Stem: Women, Minorities and People with Disabilities* (2023) defines "underrepresented."
3. Ensure that the partnership is employer-led, community-focused, learner-centered, standards-based, and outcomes-driven.
4. Describe planned initiatives that align to the goals and objectives of the NICE Strategic Plan or help support the strategies of the NICE Implementation Plan.
5. Advance uses of the NICE Framework, including through demonstration of how the stakeholders intend to use the NICE Framework.
6. Identify the workforce needs of the local economy and assess such workforce in accordance with the NICE Framework, including ideas for how the multistakeholder organization would leverage the CyberSeek job heat map and career pathways (see https://cyberseek.org).[1]
    a. CyberSeek is a free online tool that provides data on the supply and demand of cybersecurity talent.
    b. CyberSeek's interactive map shows a snapshot of open jobs across the United States. Additionally, the career pathway provides insight on the progression of a cybersecurity career.
7. Identify opportunities available and recruit employers to support paid internships, externships, apprenticeships, or cooperative education programs in conjunction with education and training providers in the local community. Inclusion Identify how it would collaborate with one or more Federal CyberCorps Scholarship for Service (SFS) (https://sfs.opm.gov/), Center of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity (CAE)

[1] CyberSeek is supported by NIST through NICE, under financial assistance award # 60NANB22D100.

(http://www.caecommunity.org), or Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program (http://www.nsf.gov/ate) institutions located in the region.
    a. The SFS Program, coordinated by the National Science Foundation, includes over 100 institutions of higher education aimed at improving the national capacity for the education of cybersecurity professionals.
    b. Additionally, the CAE program, coordinated by the National Security Agency, and the ATE program, coordinated by the National Science Foundation, each have designated regional centers for advancing cybersecurity education.
    c. It is critical that RAMPS coordinate with the applicable regional centers and institutions to decrease duplication of efforts and to build on existing successful approaches.
8. Define metrics that will be used to measure the success of their efforts. Metrics should include but not be limited to the number of SFS, CAE, and ATE programs that participate in the program, outcomes of workforce demand and supply assessment, increases in diversity and inclusion, outcomes of recruitment activities, timeliness of milestones reached, etc.

A successful project will create the local conditions (*e.g.*, infrastructure for education providers, employers, and others to develop the cybersecurity education capabilities) to create an ecosystem equipped to fill a critical skill gap for the economy.

In accordance with 15 U.S.C. § 7443(f)(5), all recipients (regardless of organizational type) of a NICE award issued pursuant to this NOFO are subject to the audit requirements under 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart F.

II. Federal Award Information

1. **Funding Instrument.** The funding instrument that will be used is a Cooperative Agreement. Where cooperative agreements are used, the nature of NIST's "substantial involvement" will generally include collaboration with the recipient organization in developing and implementing the approved scope of work, consistent with the definition of cooperative agreement in 2 CFR § 200.1.

2. **Multi-Year Funding Policy.** When a proposal for a multi-year award is approved, funding will usually be provided for only the first year of the program. If a project is selected for funding, NIST has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the sole discretion of NIST. Continued funding will be contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the mission and priorities of NIST's Information Technology Laboratory, and the availability of funds.

3. Funding Availability.
In FY24, NIST anticipates funding up to 15 awards for up to $200,000 in federal funding per award and with a project performance period of up to 2 years.

4. Indirect (F&A) Costs. NIST will reimburse applicants for proposed indirect (F&A) costs in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.414. Applicants proposing indirect (F&A) costs must follow the application requirements set forth in Section IV of this NOFO.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants
Eligibility for the program listed in this NOFO is open to all non-Federal entities. Eligible applicants include accredited institutions of higher education; non-profit organizations; for-profit organizations incorporated in the United States; state, local, territorial, and Indian tribal governments; foreign public entities; and foreign organizations. Please note that individuals and unincorporated sole proprietors are not considered "non-Federal entities" and are not eligible to apply under this NOFO. Although Federal entities are not eligible to receive funding under this NOFO, they may participate as unfunded collaborators.

Applicants must also demonstrate, through commitment letters from project partners, that at least one of each of the following types of organizations is committed to being part of the proposed multistakeholder workforce partnership:

- at least one institution of higher education or nonprofit training organization, and
- at least one local employer or owner or operator of critical infrastructure.

The minimum two required letters must come from entities that are not the applicant.

Participation from academic institutions in the Federal Cyber Scholarships for Service Program, the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity Program, or advanced technological education programs, as well as elementary and secondary schools, training and certification providers, State and local governments, economic development organizations, or other community organizations is encouraged.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds
Non-federal cost share is required. Specifically, non-federal cost share contributions, including in-kind contributions, in an amount not less than 50 percent of the Federal funds provided, is required for awards under the award

issued pursuant to this NOFO. Non-federal cost sharing is that portion of the project costs not borne by the Federal Government. The applicant's share of expenses may include cash, services, and third-party in-kind contributions, as described at 2 CFR §200.306. The source and detailed rationale of the cost share, including cash, full- and part-time personnel, and in-kind donations, must be documented in the Budget Narrative and Justification submitted with the application and will be considered as part of the review under the evaluation criterion found in Section V of this NOFO. As with the Federal share, any proposed costs included as non-Federal cost sharing must be an allowable/eligible cost under this program and under the Federal cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E.

Non-federal cost sharing incorporated into the budget of an approved financial assistance award is subject to audit in the same general manner as Federal award funds. See 2 CFR part 200, Subpart F.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

The application package is available at Grants.gov under Funding Opportunity Number 2024-NIST-RAMPS-01.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

Set forth below are the required content and form of applications submitted pursuant to this NOFO.

a. Required 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.

For SF-424, Item 8.d. Zip/Postal Code field, should reflect the Zip code + 4 (#####-####) format.

For SF-424, Item 12, should list the NOFO number 2024-NIST-RAMPS-01.

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

The list of certifications and assurances referenced in Item 21 of the SF-424 is contained in the Federal Financial Assistance Certifications and Representations (Certs and Reps) as part of the SAM.gov entity registration.

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

a) The applicant should reflect each year of the project on the SF-424A form that appears as part of the mandatory forms in the Grants.gov application package. Submission details are found in Section IV.2.a.(9). of this NOFO.

b) In Section A, the Grant Program Function or Activity on Line 1 under Column (a) should be entered as Science, Technology, Business and/or Education Outreach, CFDA 11.620, or an abbreviation thereof. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number on Line 1 under Column (b) should be entered as "11.620". The total federal budget amount for the term of the award should be listed in Section A, Line 1, Column (e). The total non-federal budget amount for the term of the award should be listed in Section A, Line 1, Column (f).

c) Section B, Column (1) of the SF-424A should reflect the costs for each object class category, to include indirect charges, for the first year of the award. These costs should reflect the total Federal share plus non-Federal cost share for each category. Section B, Column (2) of the SF-424A should reflect the costs for each object class category, to include indirect charges, for the second year of the award. These costs should reflect the total Federal share plus non-Federal cost share for each category.

d) Section C must account for all non-Federal resources / match for the entire project. For Column (b) enter resources provided by the applicant. If not applicable, leave blank. For Column (c), enter resources provided by one or more states. If not applicable, leave blank. For Column (d) enter resources provided by other sources (e.g., in-kind contribution, program income). If not applicable, leave blank.

e) Section D requires a breakdown of the first year's Federal share and non-Federal share of the budget by quarter.

f) Section E requires the budget estimate of Federal funds needed for each year of the project. The budget estimate for the first year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line 16, Column (b). The budget estimate for the second year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line 16, Column (c). The budget estimate for the third year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line

16, Column (d). And the budget estimate for the fourth year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line 16, Column (e).

(3) CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying. Enter "2024-NIST-RAMPS-01" in the Award Number field. Enter the title of the application, or an abbreviation of that title, in the Project Name field.

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

(5) Project Narrative. The Project Narrative is a word-processed document of no more than fifteen (15) pages (double-spaced between lines), which is responsive to the program description and the evaluation criteria.

The page limit includes: *Cover Page; Table of Contents (if included); Project Narrative with all required information, including figures, graphs, tables, images, and pictures).*

The projective narrative should contain the following information:

a. Executive Summary. An executive summary of the proposed project, consistent with the objectives, requirements, and priorities of this program (*see* Section I. of this NOFO). This section must include a listing of the stakeholders planning to participate in the multistakeholder workforce partnership, the organizational structure for that partnership, and an outline of the planned cybersecurity education and workforce development related activities of that partnership. The executive summary should also include information indicating how each evaluation criterion (see Section V.1. of this NOFO) and its sub-factors are addressed. A table can be helpful in providing this information. The executive summary should not exceed two (2) pages.

b. Project Approach and Project Execution Plan. A detailed discussion of the applicant's approach in planning for and in executing the proposed project consistent with the objectives, requirements, and priorities of this program (see Section I. of this NOFO). A description of how employers in the community will be recruited to support internships, externships, apprenticeships, or cooperative education programs in conjunction with providers of education and training. A description of how the proposed project would prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as an essential requirement in strategies intended to diversify the cybersecurity workforce and reach underserved and underrepresented communities. Inclusion of programs that seek to include veterans, Indian Tribes, and underrepresented groups,

including women, minorities, persons from rural and underserved areas, and persons with disabilities is encouraged. This section should also include details on the approach to collaborate with academic institutions in the SFS, CAE, and ATE programs, as well as elementary and secondary schools, training and certification providers, State and local governments, economic development organizations, or other community organizations. Evidence that the applicant already has a strong multistakeholder workforce partnership with demonstrated outcomes is helpful. If the applicant is building on an existing partnership, provide a detailed explanation of the current scope of that partnership, information about outcomes, and supporting evidence of proven effectiveness. The summary should also include a description of how the workforce partnership would identify the workforce needs of the local economy. This section should also provide a description of the proposed project plan and execution strategy sufficient to permit evaluation of the proposal, in accordance with details included in the proposal Evaluation Criteria (see Section V.1.a. of this NOFO).

c. **Project Impacts and Evaluation:** A detailed discussion of the: (i) anticipated impacts of the proposed project; (ii) methodology for identifying and evaluating project outcomes; and (iii) dissemination of project learnings consistent with the objectives, requirements, and priorities of this program. This section should provide a definition of the metrics to be used in determining the success of the efforts of the regional alliance or partnership under the agreement. Explanation of what organizational data related to workforce demand and available supply of skilled workers will be collected, how such data will be collected or analyzed about cybersecurity workforce needs, and the available supply of a skilled cybersecurity workforce from the State and/or local area. This State and/or local cybersecurity workforce assessment will identify gaps and support development of CyberSeek. This section should address the Project Impact, in accordance with details included in the proposal Evaluation Criteria (see section V.1.b. of this NOFO).

d. **Qualifications.** A description of the qualifications of the key personnel, the time commitments of the key personnel, and how the project staff qualifications will enable them to complete the project work. This section should address the Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work, in accordance with details included in the proposal Evaluation Criteria (see Section V.1.c. of this NOFO).

e. **Dissemination Plan.** A description of the applicant's approach to broadly disseminate the results of the project to the public. The plan should include an approach to publish results in appropriate literature, and through presentations at public meetings or events. This section should address the Dissemination of Results, in accordance with details included in the proposal Evaluation Criteria (see section V.1.b. of this NOFO).

(6) Resume(s) of Key Personnel. Resumes for all key personnel assigned to the project must be provided. Resumes are limited to two (2) pages per individual.

(7) Budget Narrative and Justification. There is no set format for the Budget Narrative and Justification; however, further explanation must be provided for the specific cost categories and line items that you identified in the SF-424A form as well as any other information you deem necessary for NIST's consideration. The budget narrative and justification must align to the same object class categories and amounts listed on the SF-424A form.

The written justification should include the necessity and the basis for the cost, as described below. 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, which apply to awards in this program.

When cost share is included in the budget, the written justification must also identify the Federal and non-Federal portion of each cost, to include indirect costs, as applicable. (see Cost Sharing section of this NOFO for match requirements).

The Budget Narrative does not count against the fifteen (15) page limit of the Project Narrative.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the Budget Narrative evaluation criteria in section V.1.d. 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.

Information needed for each budget category is as follows:

a) **Personnel**- At a minimum, the budget justification for all personnel should include the following: 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 personnel charges for each

identified position on the proposed project, description of the role of the individual on the proposed project and the work to be performed. The cost of the time required to prepare presentations to report on the progress of the project to the NICE Conference & Expo should also be included in this category.

b) Fringe Benefits– Fringe benefits for each position 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- NIST will require that award recipients report on their projects at the NICE Conference & Expo (see https://niceconference.org/) at the start and conclusion of their projects (i.e., in June 2025 and June 2026) and participate in half-day, pre-conference workshops adjacent to the NICE Conference for sharing information. Therefore, applicants must include travel costs for the NICE Conference & Expo. For all travel costs, the budget justification for travel should include the following: destination; names or 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.

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. 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.

e) Supplies– Supplies are defined as all tangible personal property other than that described as equipment. Provide a list of each supply, 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) **Contractual (i.e. Contracts or Subawards)**– Each contract or subaward should be treated as a separate item. Identify the cost and 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 for the Non-Federal Entity's own use and creates a procurement relationship with the contractor. A subaward is for the purpose of carrying out a portion of a Federal award and creates a Federal assistance relationship with the subrecipient.

g) **Construction**– Not an allowable cost under this NOFO.

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

i) **Indirect Costs**- Commonly referred to as Facilities & Administrative Costs, Indirect Costs are defined as costs incurred by the applicant organization that cannot otherwise be directly assigned or attributed to a specific project. The justification should include a cost calculation that reflects the applicable indirect cost rate. For more details, *see* Section IV.2.a.(8) of this NOFO.

(8) 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 Section B.06 of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, dated November 12, 2020.

Alternatively, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), applicants that do not have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate except for those non-Federal entities described in appendix VII, paragraph D.1.b. of 2 CFR 200 may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC). 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. Please be aware that Foreign applicants will be limited to use of the de minimis rate and will not have the opportunity to negotiate an indirect cost rate with NIST.

(9) 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 Project Narrative. 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 authority to legally bind the organization to its commitment. Letters of Commitment do not count against the page limit of the Project Narrative.

Applications must include commitment letters from at least one of each of the following types of organizations as specified below. Failure to include these Letters of Commitment will result in applications not being reviewed.

- At least one institution of higher education or nonprofit training organization, and
- At least one local employer or owner or operator of critical infrastructure.

While letters of commitment from the applicant may strengthen a proposal, the minimum two required letters must come from entities that are not the applicant.

Inclusion of letters of commitment from additional organizations of the above types as well as training and certification providers, economic development organizations and other community organizations may further strengthen the application. Applicants with strong existing regional partnerships should indicate this in the letters.

(11) Current and Pending Support Form. Any application that includes investigators, researchers, and key personnel must identify all sources of current and potential funding, including this proposal. Any current project support (e.g., Federal, state, local, public, or private foundations, etc.) must be listed on this form. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, and key personnel must be included, even if no salary support is received. The total award amount for the entire award period covered, including indirect costs, must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of the source of support. Similar information must be provided for all proposals already submitted or that are being submitted concurrently to other potential funders.

Applicants must complete the Current and Pending Support Form, using multiple forms as necessary to account for all activity for each individual

identified in the PI, co-PI and key personnel roles. A separate form should be used for each identified individual.

Applicants must download the Current and Pending Support Form from the NIST website at https://www.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division/current-and-pending-support and reference the guidance provided as it contains information to assist with accurately completing the form.

b. Attachment of Required Documents

Items IV.2.a.(1) through IV.2.a.(4) above are part of the standard application package in Grants.gov and can be completed through the download application process.

Items IV.2.a.(5) through IV.2.a.(10) should be attached to field 15 of the SF-424 form by clicking on "Add Attachment".

Following these directions will create zip files which permit 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 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.

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, check the status of your application here: CHECK APPLICATION STATUS. 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 on the Grants.gov Online Help page 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.

Applicants can track their submission in the Grants.gov system by following the procedures at the Grants.gov Track My Application page. 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 Agency Tracking Numbers.

c. Application Format

(1) Paper, Email, 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 displayed in landscape orientation. Any figures, graphs, images, or pictures will count toward the page limits for the Project Narrative.

(3) Font. Easy to read font (10-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.

(4) Page Limit. The Project Narrative is limited to fifteen (15) pages double-spaced, noting the limit of two (2) pages for the Executive Summary. Resumes are not included in the page count of the Project Narrative. However, if resumes are included, resumes must be a maximum of two (2) pages each.

(5) Page Limit Exclusions:

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance;
SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs;
CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying;
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable);
Resumes;
Budget Narrative and Justification;
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement;
Letters of Commitment;
Current and Pending Support Form.

(6) Page Layout. The Proposal must be in portrait orientation.

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

(8) Page numbering. Number pages sequentially.

(9) Application language. All documents must be in English, including but not limited to the initial application, any additional documents submitted in response to a NIST request, all reports, and any correspondence with NIST.

(10) Typed document. All applications, including forms, must be typed; handwritten forms will not be accepted.

d. Application Replacement Pages. Applicants may not submit replacement pages and/or missing documents once an application has been submitted. Any revisions must be made by submission of a new application that must be received by NIST by the submission deadline.

e. Pre-Applications. Pre-applications will not be accepted under this NOFO.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM). Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. part 25, applicants and recipients are required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency, unless otherwise excepted from these requirements pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 25.110. NIST will not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time that NIST is ready to make a Federal award pursuant to this NOFO, NIST 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.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, May 24, 2024. 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 or applications sent via electronic mail will not be accepted.

Applicants should be aware, and factor in their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system closes periodically for routine maintenance. Applicants should visit Grants.gov for information on any scheduled closures.

When developing the submission timeline, please keep in mind that: (1) all applicants are required to have current registrations in the electronic System for

Award Management (SAM.gov) and Grants.gov; (2) the free annual registration process in the SAM.gov generally takes between three and five business days but can take more than three weeks; and applicants will receive e-mail notifications over a period of up to two business days as the application moves through intermediate systems before the applicant learns via a validation or rejection notification whether NIST has received the application. (See Grants.gov for full information on application and notification through Grants.gov.) 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.

5. **Intergovernmental Review**
   Applications submitted by State and local governments are subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," pursuant to which each State designates an entity to coordinate, and review proposed federal financial assistance and direct federal development. All other applicants should consult the Intergovernmental Review State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to determine whether the application is subject to State review pursuant to E.O. 12372. The current SPOC List may be found here: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf

6. **Funding Restrictions**
   Construction activities are not an allowable cost under this program. In addition, a recipient or a subrecipient may not charge profits, fees or other increments above cost to an award issued pursuant to this NOFO. Applications for product development and/or commercialization are not considered responsive to this NOFO.

7. **Other Submission Requirements**

   a. **Applications must be submitted at Grants.gov. Paper applications will not be accepted.**

      (1) 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 2024-NIST-RAMPS-01 announcement, contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at 800-518-4726.

   b. **Amendments.** Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up on Grants.gov to receive amendments by e-mail or may request copies by e-mail from nice@nist.gov.

V. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications and their assigned weights are as follows:

a. Project Approach. The rationality, innovation, and creativity of the project approach including planning and executing the proposed project objectives, requirements, and priorities of this program (see Section I.2. of this NOFO). Including the perceived existing strength or potential strength of regional, multistakeholder partnerships and the extent to which the project(s) align to and support NICE, NIST, DoC, and other strategies as outlined in Section I.1. of this NOFO. **(35 points)**

b. Project Impact and Dissemination of Results. The potential effectiveness of the proposed activity, and the likelihood and potential impact of the applicant's approach to strengthen and enhance the mission of the RAMPS Program. The approach to publish results in appropriate literature, and through presentations to the public. **(35 points).**

c. Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work. The quality of the facilities and experience of the staff in achieving the objective of the proposed activity. The extent of the key personnel's experience and education relevant to the project(s) proposed. **(15 points)**

d. Match of Budget to Proposed Work. Assessment of the suitability and focus of the applicant's budget against the proposed activities to ascertain whether the budget projections are reasonable and appropriate for the scale of effort to be undertaken by the applicant. **(15 points)**

2. Selection Factors

a. The Selection Factors for this competition are:

(1) Priority consideration shall be given to a regional alliance or partnership that includes one or more institution of higher education that is designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity, Advanced Technological Education program, or which received an award under the Federal CyberCorps Scholarship for Service program located in the State or region of the regional alliance or partnership.

(2) The availability of funding.

(3) Whether the project duplicates other projects funded by NIST or other Federal agencies.

(4) Regional diversity.

(5) Diversity of the proposed project topics relative to the overall portfolio of activities funded under this NOFO.
(6) Diversity of the portfolio of NICE projects.
(7) The institutional diversity of project participants, which may include the extent of active project participation of small- and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises, and career and technical education schools, community colleges, and universities.

3. Review and Selection Process

Proposals, reports, documents, and other information related to applications submitted to NIST and/or relating to financial assistance awards issued by NIST will be reviewed and considered by Federal employees, or non-Federal personnel who have entered into conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering such information, when applicable.

a. Initial Administrative Review of Applications.
Applications received by the deadline will be reviewed to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to this NOFO and to the scope of the stated program objectives. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or nonresponsive may be eliminated from further review. However, NIST, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for an application that is missing non-substantive information, the absence of which may easily be rectified during the review process.

b. Full Review of Eligible, Complete, and Responsive Applications.
Applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection process below:

(1) Merit Review. At least three (3) independent, objective reviewers, who may be Federal employees or non-Federal personnel, with appropriate professional and technical expertise relating to the topics covered in this NOFO, will evaluate, and score each eligible, complete, and responsive application based on the evaluation criteria. While every application will have at least three (3) reviewers, applications may have more than three (3) reviewers if specialized expertise is needed to evaluate an application. During the review process, the reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not a consensus. Based on the numerical average of the reviewers' scores, a rank order will be prepared and provided to the Evaluation Panel for further consideration.

(2) Evaluation Panel. Following the merit review, an evaluation panel consisting of NIST staff and/or other Federal employees with the appropriate technical expertise will conduct a panel review of the ranked applications. The evaluation panel may contact applicants via electronic-mail to clarify contents of an application. The evaluation panel will provide a final adjectival rating and written evaluation of the applications to the Selecting Official for further deliberation, considering:

- All application materials;
- Results of the merit reviewers' evaluations, including scores and written assessments;
- Any relevant publicly available information; and
- Any clarifying information obtained from the applicants.

The adjectival ratings are:

- Outstanding;
- Very Good;
- Average; and
- Deficient

For decision-making purposes, applications receiving the same adjectival rating will be considered to have an equivalent ranking, although their review scores may not necessarily be the same.

(3) Selection. The Selecting Official, the Director of NICE or designee, will make final award recommendations to the NIST Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall generally select and recommend the most meritorious application[s] for an award based upon the final adjectival rating prepared by the Evaluation Panel. The Selecting Official, however, retains the discretion to select and recommend an application out of rank order based on one or more of the Selection Factors set forth in Section V.2. of this NOFO, which will be appropriately documented by the Selecting Official.

NIST reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with any applicant selected to receive an award, which may include requesting that the applicant removes certain costs. Additionally, NIST may request that successful applicants modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to award. NIST also reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the responsibility of the applicant. NIST may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any application. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NIST

Grants Officer. The award decisions of the NIST Grants Officer are final.

c. **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.** After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the NIST Grants Management Division (GMD) performs pre-award risk assessments in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.206, which may include a review of the financial stability of an applicant, the quality of the applicant's management systems, the history of performance, and/or the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

4. **Anticipated Announcement and Award Date**
Review of applications, selection of successful applicants, and award processing is expected to be completed by July 2024. The earliest start date for awards under this NOFO is expected to be August 2024.

5. **Additional Information**

a. **Safety**. Safety is a top priority at NIST. Employees and affiliates of award recipients who conduct project work at NIST will be expected to be safety-conscious, to attend NIST safety training, and to comply with all NIST safety policies and procedures, and with all applicable terms of their guest research agreement.

b. **Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants.** Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail and will have the opportunity to receive a debriefing after the opportunity is officially closed. Applicants must request within 10 business days of the email notification to receive a debrief from the program office. The program office will then work with the unsuccessful applicant in arranging a date and time of the debrief.

c. **Retention of Unsuccessful Applications.** Unsuccessful applications will be retained in accordance with the General Record Schedule 1.2/021.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

1. **Federal Award Notices.** Successful applicants will receive an award package from the NIST Grants Officer.

2. **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

a. **Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements.** Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost

Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program.

b. **Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.** The Department of Commerce will apply to each award in this program, the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions in effect on the date of award. The current version, dated November 12, 2020, is accessible at Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules and Regulations, if you need more information.

c. **Pre-Award Notification Requirements.** The Department of Commerce will apply the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements dated December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390. Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules and Regulations, for more information.

d. **Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability.** Funding for the program listed in this NOFO is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. NIST or the Department of Commerce will not be responsible for application preparation costs, including but not limited to if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of agency priorities. Publication of this NOFO does not oblige NIST or the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

e. **Collaborations with NIST Employees.**
All applications should include a description of any work proposed to be performed by an entity other than the applicant, and the cost of such work should ordinarily be included in the budget. If an applicant proposes collaboration with NIST, the statement of work should include a statement of this intention, a description of the collaboration, and prominently identify the NIST employee(s) involved, if known. Any collaboration by a NIST employee must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will verify the approval of the proposed collaboration. Any unapproved collaboration will be stricken from the application prior to the merit review. Any collaboration with an identified NIST employee that is approved by appropriate NIST management will not make an application more or less favorable in the competitive process. NIST's costs should not be included in the application.

f. **Use of Federal Government-Owned Intellectual Property.** If the applicant anticipates using any Federal Government-owned intellectual

property, in the custody of NIST or another Federal agency, to carry out the work proposed, the applicant should clearly identify such intellectual property in the proposal. This information will be used to ensure that no Federal employee involved in the development of the intellectual property will participate in the review process for that competition. In addition, if the applicant intends to use the Federal Government-owned intellectual property, the applicant must comply with all statutes and regulations governing the licensing of Federal government patents and inventions, described in 35 U.S.C. §§ 200-212, 37 C.F.R. Part 401, 2 C.F.R. §200.315, and in Section C.03 of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, dated November 12, 2020. Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Chief Counsel for NIST, (301) 975-2803, nistcounsel@nist.gov.

Any use of Federal Government-owned intellectual property by a recipient of an award under this announcement is at the sole discretion of the Federal Government and will need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis by the recipient and the Federal agency having custody of the intellectual property if a project is deemed meritorious. The applicant should indicate within the statement of work whether it already has a license to use such intellectual property or whether it intends to seek a license from the applicable Federal agency.
If any inventions made in whole or in part by a NIST employee arise in the course of an award made pursuant to this NOFO, the United States Government may retain its ownership rights in any such invention. Licensing or other disposition of the Federal Government's rights in such inventions will be determined solely by the Federal Government, through NIST as custodian of such inventions, and include the possibility of the Federal Government putting the intellectual property into the public domain.

3. Reporting

a. Reporting Requirements. The following reporting requirements described in Sections A.01, Reporting Requirements, of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions dated November 12, 2020, apply to awards in this program:

(1) Financial Reports. Each award recipient will be required to submit an SF-425, Federal Financial Report on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. A final financial report is due within 120 days after the end of the project period.

(2) Performance (Technical) Reports. Each award recipient will be required to submit a technical progress report on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. Technical progress reports shall contain information as prescribed in 2 C.F.R. § 200.329 and in the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions dated November 12, 2020, Section A.01. A final technical progress report is due within 120 days after the end of the project period. In addition to the information prescribed in 2 C.F.R. § 200.329, the final performance report shall include:

- An assessment of efforts made by the regional alliance or partnership to carry out the project.
- The metrics used by the regional alliance or partnership to measure the success of the efforts of the regional alliance or partnership under the cooperative agreement.

(3) Patent and Property Reports. From time to time, and in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements and other terms and conditions governing the award, the recipient may need to submit property and patent reports.

(4) Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters. In accordance with section 872 of Public Law 110-417 (as amended; see 41 U.S.C. 2313), if the total value of a recipient's currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of an award made under this NOFO, then the recipient shall be subject to the requirements specified in Appendix XII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, for maintaining the currency of information reported to SAM that is made available in FAPIIS about certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings involving the recipient.

b. Audit Requirements. In accordance with 15 U.S.C. § 7443(f)(5), all recipients (regardless of organizational type) of a NICE award issued pursuant to this NOFO are subject to the audit requirements under 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart F. Applicants are reminded that NIST, the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General, or another authorized Federal agency may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

c. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 170, all recipients of a Federal award made on or after October 1, 2010, are required to comply with reporting requirements under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Public Law No. 109-282). In general, all recipients are responsible for

reporting sub-awards of $25,000 or more. In addition, recipients that meet certain criteria are responsible for reporting executive compensation. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive funding. Also see the Federal Register notice published September 14, 2010, at 75 FR 55663.

VII. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

Questions should be directed to the following:

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Programmatic and Technical Questions	Danielle Santos Phone: 202-308-3909 E-mail: Danielle.Santos@nist.gov with '2024-NIST-RAMPS-01' in subject line
Technical Assistance with Grants.gov Submissions	grants.gov Phone: 800-518-4726 E-mail: support@grants.gov
Grant Rules and Regulations	Nuria Martinez Phone: 301-975-6215 E-mail: nuria.martinez@nist.gov

VIII. Other Information

1. **Personal and Business Information**
   The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed, and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

In addition, Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. If an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

2. **Public Website, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):**

NIST's NICE Program Office has a public website, https://www.nist.gov/nice, that provides information pertaining to this Funding Opportunity[2]. Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov.

Applicants must submit all questions pertaining to this funding opportunity in writing to nice@nist.gov with 2024-NIST-RAMPS-01 in the subject line.

3. **Webinar Information Session:**

NIST's NICE Program Office will host a webinar information session for applicants that are interested in learning about this funding opportunity. This webinar will provide general information regarding 2024-NIST-RAMPS-01 and offer general guidance on preparing proposals. Please reference https://www.nist.gov/nice, for the most up to date information, including scheduling details about the webinar. Proprietary technical questions about specific proposal ideas will not be permitted, and NIST will not critique or provide feedback on any proposal ideas during the webinar or at any time before the deadline for all applications. However, questions about the funding opportunity, eligibility requirements, evaluation and award criteria, selection process, and the general characteristics of a competitive application will be addressed at the webinar and by e-mail to nice@nist.gov. There is no cost to attend the webinar, but participants must register in advance. Participation in the webinar is not required and will not be considered in the review and selection process.

[2] Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Programmatic and Technical Questions if more information is needed.