

FIRST ROUND Q&A's

1. **Would you be able to tell me whether it is open to entities worldwide or only those based in the US?**

Answer: The Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is open to entities worldwide as long as they are eligible per Eligibility requirements under FOA Section II.C.1. However, please note that *performance* is limited to the United States, Puerto Rico as well as DoD Education Activity (DoDEA) locations around the world per FOA Section I.B.4.

2. **Is there a limit to the number of applications you will accept from a single institution as Lead? In other words, should we coordinate an internal selection process to ensure that only one application goes forward?**

Answer: There is no limit to the number of applications we will accept from a single institution as a Lead Organization (LO). However, please note that this FOA is expected to result in the award of a single (1) Cooperative Agreement.

3. **We estimate each project will be funded somewhere between \$4 to \$6 million depending on the actual number of projects funded. Can you please confirm this amount as we are trying to understand the scope of what to propose on a per project basis?**

Answer: If by “projects funded” refers to Fundamental Element 5: Strategic Outreach Initiatives, then “At least 80% of funding allocation should fund the abovementioned Fundamental Element 5. The budget should clearly show this allocation. Although there are no set minimums for fundamental elements 1-4, the proposal must clearly articulate the level of effort and costs associated with these Fundamental Elements. These will be subject to change in the annual program plan in coordination with the Government, CAM, and DoD priorities.

4. **Would you please be so kind as to introduce us to the technical supervisor of this opportunity?**

Answer: Dr. Syed Shah; Deputy Director, Defense Laboratories Office; email: syed.a.shah2.civ@mail.mil

5. **At Connecticut, we envision initiating a regional "Maker Alliance" focused on manufacturing education. Manufacturing education is a priority for the defense contractors in our state and region, and shortfalls in manufacturing engineering workforce have been identified as a key limiter of current and future defense production capacity. Would it be best to submit a proposal directly to the DSEC Cooperative Agreement announcement? Or are there avenues available to pursue a manufacturing engineering education program by joining a larger consortium under this call?**

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Answer: The FOA does not prohibit any projects in manufacturing education. However, if the interest is primarily in manufacturing education, then the Navy solicited proposals previously in manufacturing engineering education. Expectation is that there will be a future solicitation focused on manufacturing education in the near future.

- 6. I am wondering if you are expecting the successful awardee to manage all DOD STEM education activities, similarly to what e.g. Battelle does for AEOP. I have also tried to identify who the current COA awardee is, but was not successful. Is it possible to know who that is, so to understand the size and capabilities of the organization?**

Answer: The successful awardee will not manage all DoD STEM education activities. The effort is currently being performed under Agreement Number FA7000-16-2-0019. The current Recipient is Building Engineering and Science Talent, Inc., 1531 Grant Avenue Suite D, San Marcos, CA 92078-2463. Current award has reached its contract ceiling.

- 7. Per 10 USC §2192(b)(3) (A), “The term “eligible entity” includes a department or agency of the Federal Government, a State, a political subdivision of a State, an individual, and a not-for-profit or other organization in the private sector. With this definition, would the Government please verify that the term "other organization in the private sector" would allow a “for profit” company to bid on this opportunity?**

Answer: For profit companies are allowed to bid/apply on this FOA. However, please note that profit/fee is not allowed for the recipient or the subaward per the FOA (see Section I.B.3.).

- 8. Is there only 1 Cooperative Agreement expected to be awarded for this program?**

Answer: Yes, this FOA will result in the award of a single (1) Cooperative Agreement.

- 9. My question about this Grant Opportunity concerns eligibility under the “Additional Information on Eligibility”. According to the section of the USC listed a State, a political subdivision of a State, an individual and a not-for-profit or organization in the private sector are all eligible to submit on the project. What does “organization in the private sector” mean? Does a small business in the private sector fall within this somewhat vague category?**

Answer: Yes, small businesses are eligible to submit/apply under this FOA. However, please note that profit/fee is not allowed for the recipient or the subaward per the FOA (see Section I.B.3.).

- 10. Is there anywhere where I can find information on the current consortium?**

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Answer: There is currently no consortium. The current award is to one organization and not a consortium. See answer to Question 6.

11. Please explain the difference between above cooperative agreement and normal proposal.

Answer: If the question being asked is the difference between a Cooperative Agreement and a Contract the answer is found in the Opportunity Day slides.

A Cooperative Agreement is when:

- (1) The principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer a thing of value to the State, local government, or other recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States instead of acquiring (by purchase, lease, or barter) property or services for the direct benefit or use of the United States Government; and
- (2) Substantial involvement is expected between the executive agency and the State, local government, or other recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement.

A Contract is used when the principal purpose is to acquire property or services for the direct benefit or use of the Government.

12. Is the LO required to be a non-profit organization? Can an organization function as the LO and provide programs as part of the consortium?

Answer: The LO is not required to be a non-profit. The LO can provide programs address Fundamental Element 2, Fundamental Element 3, and Fundamental Element 4. The FOA has been amended to reflect this change.

13. If you are a member of the consortium, are you prohibited from doing additional work or applying to future opportunities?

Answer: Consortium membership does NOT prohibit performers from bidding on other DoD programs.

14. Will you post your PPT slides, participation list and FAQs to the grants.gov website?

Answer: Yes, please check www.grants.gov and look under the Funding Opportunity Number: W911NF-18-S-0008 or Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number and Title: 12.560 – “DoD, NDEP, DOTC – STEM Education Outreach Implementation” for above-mentioned information. This information will also be posted to Fed.Biz.Opps.

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15. To what extent does the CAM and other DoD staff expect to support collection of data from existing activities

Answer: The CAM will provide the support needed to ensure that appropriate data is collected from programs within the consortium. The level of support will depend on what is proposed. The DoD STEM Development Office will also work with the consortium to collect data for governmental data calls and reports as well as DoD-wide evaluation efforts.

16. Is the expectation to fund currently funded consortium members or predominantly new members or both?

Answer: There is currently no consortium. This FOA does not carry expectations for the membership of specific partners, whether current or new. A list of the current DoD STEM partner organizations can be found in the Opportunity Day slides.

17. Would the Government consider allowing the LO to manage elements beyond Fundamental Element 1? Is there a concern with the LO managing Elements 3 and 4?

Answer: Yes, the LO can provide programs address Fundamental Element 2, Fundamental Element 3, and Fundamental Element 4. The FOA has been amended to reflect this change.

18. Once you select a Lead, will additional Consortium members be able to join with the selected Organization?

Answer: We are NOT awarding to Individual Organizations. We are awarding to a Consortium with partners and not by organization. During performance, members can be added but the number of participants should be balanced to ensure the streamlined implementation and administration of a well-focused program and to maximize efficiency and minimize the duplication of efforts.

19. For such a large effort, would the Government consider an extension?

Answer: Given the level of interest during the Opportunity Day, we are considering extending the timelines. Please check grants.gov and look under the Funding Opportunity Number: W911NF-18-S-0008 or Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number and Title: 12.560 – “DoD, NDEP, DOTC – STEM Education Outreach Implementation” for the updated timelines to include Final Date for submitting Questions.

20. What companies are allowed to do under the Consortium?

Answer: See Page 9 of the FOA.

21. Do the proposals require projected 5-Year Budgets?

Answer: Yes. Proposals should include potential 5-Year Budget Estimate. However, please note that the Government expects to work with the Consortium on a collaborative basis and may see changes annually based on our pursuit of common objectives.

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22. Can you define negative past performance as it pertains to consortium members?

Answer: Past performance is the least important Factor of the award criteria (see Section II.E.1. of the FOA). The Government will assess the past performance information provided and determine the performance risk based upon similar efforts to promote STEM education and outreach nationwide.

23. What types of data are required to be collected, if any?

Answer: In addition to demographic information, it is expected that the consortium will collect data that can address the near, mid, and long-term outcomes listed on page 13. Additionally, data collection will be coordinated with the Government and STEM Development Office for governmental reports and DoD-wide efforts. (See response to question #15)

24. What are the restrictions on the types of activities which can attend to the FOA activities? (E.g. is a purely technological approach disallowed?)

Answer: Question not clear.