

DOE-EM MSIPP FOA Q&A's

The Webinar was held as scheduled on May 10, 2023. Please use the below weblink to view.

https://www.emcbc.doe.gov/docs/DOE%20EM%20MSIPP%20FOA%20Webinar-20230510_115741-Meeting%20Recording.mp4

Q1: Does the lead applicant need to be a university?

A1: The lead applicant would need to be an "MSI, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Other Minority Institutions (HBCUs/OMIs) as educational entities recognized by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, and identified on the OCR's Department of Education U.S. accredited postsecondary minorities' institution list. See <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html>." (see pgs. 12-13 of the FOA). Also, please note that non-MSI subawards are limited to 20% of the total grant award value.

Q2: Is DOE-EM going to facilitate partnership among interested MSI parties?

A2: Although the DOE-EM MSIPP program promotes partnerships for this FOA, we will not be facilitating partnerships.

Q3: Are FOAs (DE-FOA-0002820) and (2023-BSRA-MSIPP) the same? If not, can proposals be submitted to both FOAs?

A3: They are not the same FOA. 2023-BSRA-MSIPP is a "Sources Sought" request for a different program/requirement. A response may be submitted to both separately if interested.

Q4: Is there a limitation on the first stage, the expression of interest emails from a single institution?

A4: An MSI can only submit one concept paper per topic area, or one concept paper that covers multiple topic areas. The expression of interest email (or

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emails) should align with the concept paper(s) that are planned to be submitted.

Q5: To appropriately plan and budget for the DOE Field Sites and National laboratory visits and tours for students and faculty members, should each of the labs be contacted individually?

A5: Since the Concept Paper only requires a basic cost ROM, contacting the National Laboratories is not recommended at this time. A rough estimate of potential travel can be included, and more detail can be provided if selected for step-2 of the FOA.

Q6: Who can submit a concept paper, the PI or must it be the university's Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)?

A6: The PI would need to follow their standard college/university process for submitting papers. Any resulting successful Concept Paper that makes it to step two, and that may receive a grant award, will be made to the MSI.

Q7: Does the reference to "U.S. MSI's" include U.S. territories?

A7: Yes, the list of accredited MSI's includes the U.S. and U.S. territories.

Q8: Can someone be part of two concept papers led by two different MSIs? One as PI and the other as Co-PI/Site-PI?

A8: Yes, as long as there is no conflict of interest or duplication of work and effort.

Q9: How do you want to see the distribution of funds between research, educational, and infrastructure development?

A9: This FOA is focused on allowable funds distribution and may include, but is not limited to: personnel costs, program/course improvements, equipment enhancements, costs for travel to/from DOE cleanup sites/National Laboratories and DOE EM workshops, and student scholarships in relevant fields of study that align with DOE career fields etc. The applicant can determine the distribution of funding that will allow for most successful completion of the grant objectives.

Q10: Can a DOE National Lab be funded with the lead MSI?

A10: No funding can pass from the MSI to the National Lab itself. Funds will need to be utilized by MSI and MSI team members under the grant. Planned collaboration is allowable, but funding from the grant should not flow to any government agency or site.

Q11: An MSI for only one concept paper? Should be one PI?

A11: An MSI may submit multiple concept papers so long as there is no duplication of topic coverage. The PI may be listed on the Concept Paper.

Q12: Is the email requested by May 12th mandatory?

A12: No, it is preferred but not mandatory.

Q13: Is there a requirement for participants to be U.S. Citizens or Permanent residents?

A13: There is no requirement for participants to be a U.S. Citizen or Permanent resident, but it is recommended. Having a non-U.S. Citizen on the effort may add additional steps and time to allow DOE to complete the security review process.

Q14: Can members of national labs be partners or participants (funded or unfunded) in the proposals?

A14: Members of the national labs may be partners or participants, but they would be unfunded.

Q15: I am in the state of Texas. Can I apply for this proposal to the field site in the state of Washington?

A15: Yes. The MSI does not have to be in the same state as a DOE-EM field site.

Q16: Does this program encourage MSI collaboration with high schools?

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A16: This FOA is primarily focused on post-secondary education. Collaboration with high schools does not fall within the scope of the FOA.

Q17: Is there an expectation that all sub areas be covered in the proposal. For Instance, Soil and Groundwater Remediation has five sub areas.

A17: No, there is no expectation to cover all sub areas.

Q18: Is DOE National Lab membership required for this proposal?

A18: No.

Q19: Is there a limit on the number of institution partnerships? Let's say three institutes with 60-20-20 split in the budget or only 20% can go to the other institution(s)?

A19: There is no limit on the number of institution partnerships and the grant funding split will be up to the lead and partnering members. Non-MSI partners included for a subaward, or subcontract are limited to 20% or less of the total grant award amount.

Q20: Does the soil and ground remediation topic have to be about uranium and plutonium?

A20: No. There are other radionuclides that DOE-EM is working with.

Q21: When you said, "university" can submit the proposal, does that mean only one proposal from each MSI? Or anyone associated with MSI can submit a proposal?

A21: Yes, MSI refers to a college or university. One MSI cannot submit multiple concept papers on the same topic. Resulting grant awards from this FOA will be made to an accredited MSI. This information is highlighted in the FOA.

Q22: Will the grant fund a temporary coordinator position to manage student recruitment, internship opportunities, data collection, and serve as a liaison between a college and DOE Site?

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A22: Yes, that would be an allowable cost if it is directly related to the grant and helps reach the project objectives and goals of the grant.

Q23: Your preferences slide placed limitations on the structure of the MSI-to-MSI collaboration (in the same state) and in close proximity to the DOE EM field sites. I don't think that these preferences appeared in the FOA. Would a concept paper that does not fully meet these preferences have any chance of being competitive?

A23: It is preferred to have MSIs within the same state as the National Laboratories to facilitate easier interactions and area enhancement. However, if your state does not have a DOE-EM field site, the partnership/interaction with the field site and the strength of the concept paper/application will be considered.

Q24: Is this FOA focusing on applied research?

A24: No, this FOA is not focused on research and development; however, incidental research may be acceptable. The focus of this FOA is enhancing MSI programs, facilities, and laboratory equipment to help result in a future workforce for EM.

Q25: Would community outreach, such as involvement with Native American communities be considered a strength?

A25: Community outreach is allowable but will not necessarily be considered a "strength".

Q26: Can the MSI subcontract consultants for specialized program activities?

A26: Yes, that would be an allowable cost under the grant.

Q27: Is the cybersecurity of industrial control systems within the scope of this FOA?

A27: The focus of the FOA is to enhance Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) programs to help foster a sustainable and diverse DOE EM workforce to assist in the overall DOE EM cleanup mission, including topic areas to facilitate the DOE-

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EM objective of quickly and safely cleaning up the legacy environmental waste.

Q28: Can postdoc funding be included? Can funding be used to fund a postdoctoral program?

A28: Yes, but it must be related to DOE-EM's mission as outlined in the FOA.

Q29: To be clear, any MSI can submit a full proposal - that is, the Concept Paper is not being used as a screen to invite a smaller group to apply to the full proposal.

A29: No, the MSI must first submit a Concept Paper to be considered. A full application/proposal will not be accepted if a Concept Paper is not submitted with the first step.

Q30: Can we include equipment purchase (to enhance the program) in this proposal?

A30: Yes, equipment can be included to enhance the program teaching capabilities.

Q31: The link for PNNL on page 10 of the FOA is not working. Will this be fixed?

A31: The correct link is:

https://www.pnnl.gov/main/publications/external/technical_reports/PNNL-21379.pdf

Q32: Do we need to send separate Expressions of Interest from separate institutions?

A32: The Expression of Interest should be submitted by the lead Minority Serving Institution (MSI) that is planning to submit a Concept Paper. If you are teaming with other MSI's, you should select a lead and have them reference the other MSI's in the "Team Members/subrecipients" portion of the Expression of Interest. See page 16 of the FOA for further information.

Q33: Can we have a collaborating DOE Lab as a subaward for an MSIPP project?

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A33: An MSI can propose to collaborate with a DOE laboratory, but a subaward may not be in place. No funding can be provided from an MSI to DOE Lab/Government entity.

Q34: Are you exclusively seeking proposals related to steel tank solutions, or would it be acceptable to submit a concept paper that involves UHPC technology?

A34: It would be acceptable to submit a concept paper for Ultra-High-Performance Concrete (UHPC) for waste nuclear immobilization as it would fall within the "Radioactive Tank Waste Stabilization, Treatment, and Disposal" topic area of the FOA.

Q35: Is there a video or printed material from the webinar of May 10th?

A35: Yes, the webinar was recorded (see link above). The webinar slideshow and Q&A's have been posted to the Grants.gov FOA page.

Q36: I submitted an expression of interest email before the deadline on May 12, 2023, but missed certain details that were supposed to be in the email. Should I re-submit the expression of interest email or wait to include all the details on the concept paper?

A36: No need to re-submit the EOI e-mail, you can include required details in the Concept Paper, if you choose to submit.