Notice of Intent No.: DE-FOA-0003076

DISCLAIMER: The "Notice of Intent to Issue" is for informational purposes only; the Department of Energy is not seeking comments on the information in this notice and applications are not being accepted at this time. Any information contained in this notice is subject to change.

This is a Notice of Intent to issue
Funding Opportunity Announcement No.: DE-FOA-0003077
Title: "Regional Scale Collaboration to Facilitate a Domestic Critical Minerals Future: Carbon Ore, Rare Earth, and Critical Minerals (CORE-CM) Initiative"

The Department of Energy (DOE) National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) on behalf of the Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM). The FOA is anticipated to be issued near the middle of the first quarter of calendar year 2024.

BACKGROUND

In 2020, NETL issued the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) DE-FOA-0002364 for the first phase of the Carbon Ore, Rare Earth, and Critical Minerals (CORE-CM) Initiative for United States (U.S.) Basins to advance the use of unconventional and secondary feedstocks to produce rare earth elements (REEs), critical minerals (CMs), and novel, high-value, nonfuel, carbon-based products (CBPs) as part of the next generation of domestic U.S. materials. Realizing the CM potential in these feedstocks would enable the U.S. to reduce its dependence on REE and CM imports and establish and advance a domestic critical minerals and materials (CMM) supply chain. The purpose of the anticipated FOA DE-FOA-0003077 is to continue the work of the CORE-CM Initiative basinal assessment and development of critical mineral supply chains from unconventional and secondary feedstocks. This anticipated FOA (DE-FOA-0003077) will expand the focus from the basin scale to a larger, regional scale with the goal of nationwide coverage. Projects will consider environmental justice, the ongoing energy transformation, and impacts on communities. Successful applicants do not have to be current or past awardees under DE-FOA-0002364. Collaboration is strongly encouraged both within the Applicant team and with neighboring regions.

The vision of the Carbon Ore, Rare Earth, and Critical Minerals (CORE-CM) Initiative is to catalyze regional economic growth and job creation by realizing the full potential value of natural resources, such as coal, across the U.S. It has been designed to address the upstream and midstream CMM supply chain and the downstream manufacturing of valuable, nonfuel, carbon-based products, to accelerate the realization of full potential for unconventional and secondary sources of CMM and carbon ore across the U.S. Feedstocks that could be considered for domestic production to enhance national and economic security of CMM include fossil fuel energy waste streams, such as coal waste and by-products, oil and gas produced waters, mineral mines tailings, and brines produced as part of carbon sequestration efforts. They can also be used as sources of carbon for production of high-value, nonfuel, CBP.

The primary objective of this anticipated FOA is to competitively award research and development projects to coalition teams that consist of partners such as private industry; university; local, state, and federal government; local communities; and Indian Tribes who will develop and implement strategies that enable each specific U.S. region to realize its full economic potential for producing CMM and high-value, nonfuel, carbon-based products by:

1. Completing CORE-CM regional assessments to understand CMM resource potential.

2. Formulate and implement strategies to integrate and leverage regional infrastructure, industries, and businesses to spur economic growth by utilizing the regions' CMM and carbon ore resources and waste streams. This includes formulating strategies that address regional infrastructure-needs, economic challenges, and supply chain gaps.
3. Formulate and implement research strategies to incorporate CORE-CM data to fill technology gaps, including leveraging existing state of the art extraction and separations technologies.
4. Develop and implement plans for stakeholder outreach and education that are necessary to support CORE-CM economic development activities across a given region, with particular focus on community and environmental justice and meaningful tribal engagement.
5. Prepare and start implementing a workforce development plan for the training of the next generation of technicians, skilled workers, and STEM professions for securing domestic CMM and component production.
6. Develop and start implementing plans for technology innovation centers that will be operated by regional-specific public-private partnerships to provide a centralized and consistent platform to develop and validate CORE-CM technologies.
7. Collaborate on working groups and with adjacent regions which may have similar CMM, access to technologies, transportation, and infrastructure.
8. Contribute to a U.S. nationwide prospectus on critical minerals from unconventional resources.

Geographical areas of interest include regions across the nation: 1) Eastern Coastal (including Puerto Rico), 2) Appalachian Mountain, 3) Upper Midwest and Illinois Basin, 4) Great Plains and Interior Highlands, 5) Gulf Coast, Texas, and Permian Basin, 6) Rocky Mountain, 7) Pacific Coast and Basin and Range (including Hawaii), and 8) Alaska and Pacific Northwest.

Figure 1. Map of U.S. showing CORE-CM regions for DE-FOA-0003077.

Guidance on specific application and reporting requirements will be included in the FOA, if issued.

DOE will **not** accept questions at this time regarding issuance of the FOA. Details on how to submit questions and comments will be provided in the FOA, if issued.

SUBMISSION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL APPLICATION (IF FOA IS

RELEASED)

If the FOA is released, it will be posted at Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov) and at FedConnect (http://www.fedconnect.net). Entities interested in applying for awards under the FOA are strongly encouraged to register at these sites to receive notification of announcements regarding the FOA. If DOE decides to issue the FOA, applications can only be submitted through Grants.gov.

If a FOA is released, there are several one-time actions that must be completed before submitting an application (e.g., obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), register with the System for Award Management (SAM), register with Grants.gov, and register with FedConnect.net to submit questions). It is vital that applicants address these items as soon as possible. Some may take several weeks, and failure to complete them could interfere with an applicant's ability to apply to a FOA. Applicants who are not registered should allow up to **44 days at a minimum to complete these requirements.**

- **UEI** - Applicants must obtain a UEI from the SAM to uniquely identify the entity. The UEI is already available in the SAM entity registration record.

  NOTE: Subawardees/subrecipients at all tiers must also obtain a UEI and provide the UEI to the Prime Recipient before the subaward can be issued.

- **SAM** - Applicants must register with the SAM at https://www.sam.gov/ prior to submitting an application in response to this FOA. Designating an Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) and obtaining a special password called an MPIN are important steps in SAM registration. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. The applicant must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration. More information about SAM registration for applicants can be found at: https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=gsafsd_kb_articles&sys_id=650d493e1bab7c105465eaccac4bcbcb.

  NOTE: If clicking the SAM links does not work, please copy and paste the link into your browser.

- **Grants.gov** - Applicants must register with Grants.gov and set up your WorkSpace. An application cannot be submitted through Grants.gov unless the Applicant is registered. Please read the registration requirements carefully and initiate the process as soon as possible.

  1. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must register at: https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/OrcRegister
  2. An email is sent to the E-Business (E-Biz) POC listed in SAM. The E-Biz POC must approve the AOR registration using their MPIN from their SAM registration.

  More information about the registration steps for Grants.gov is provided at: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html

In addition:

- Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI Number for the organization in the UEI field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html

- *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles*: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role.

  NOTE: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

  For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html

  To track your role request, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html

Questions relating to the **registration process**, **system requirements, or how an application form works** must be directed to Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or **support@grants.gov**.

- **FedConnect.net** - Applicants must register with FedConnect to submit questions. FedConnect website: www.fedconnect.net.

DISCLAIMER

This Notice of Intent (NOI) is issued so that interested parties are aware of DOE's intention to issue a FOA in the near term. Any and/or all information contained in this NOI is subject to change.

Applications are not being accepted at this time.

DOE may issue a FOA as described in the NOI; may issue a FOA that is significantly different than the FOA described in the NOI; or may not issue a FOA at all.