

DFOP0018149 - Export Controls and Investment Screening for Critical Minerals Supply Chain

1. Would this and similar opportunities be a single award to just one organization and, as a result, the applying organization would require a proposal with a larger scope?
 - a. Yes, there will be one award per announcement, but as noted we strongly encourage the use of subawards and subrecipients.
2. Can EXBS please confirm that for-profit entities are eligible to apply for all of the above awards, recognizing that no fee or profit is allowed and work must be at-cost?
 - a. For-profit entities are eligible to apply at no fee/indirect cost nor profit.
3. Related, can EXBS please confirm that for-profit entities are exempt from the requirement to submit a financial audit, and that this requirement pertains to non-profit and academic entities.
 - a. For-profit entities are not required to submit a financial audit.
4. Can EXBS please confirm exactly how to submit proposals? Should it be via email or a portal?
 - a. As stated in Section 7 of the NOFO, all proposals must be submitted through the MyGrants portal.
5. Could you please clarify what is meant by selecting at least one or more ACN/EXBS Maturity Model capabilities for the proposal?
 - a. This question is not applicable to this NOFO as this content is not in this NOFO.
6. Confirming that proposal should use 15-point Open Sans font?
 - a. Correct.
7. Would DOS EXBS allow 10-point font for tables and graphics?
 - a. The use of 10-point for tables and graphics is permitted.
8. Are activities for all LOEs be within the 15 page 15-point font proposal narrative?
 - a. Per line of effort.
9. In the Introduction to the Organization you mention that the applicant need to include “information on all previous grants from the State Department

and/or U.S. government agencies. Could we just choose a shortlist of projects that are most relevant to the LOEs under the NOFO?

a. Yes.

10. In the Project Methods and Design section of the proposal narrative, is the Logic Model part of the 15 pages limit?

a. Yes.

11. Under the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan section of the proposal narrative, would you want us to describe the how we plan to monitor and measure progress against the indicators? Or would you want us to also include a Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for all three LOEs?

a. In the submitted Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the award, include proposed indicators and how the applicant intends to monitor and measure them. Applicants do not need to submit separate M&E Plans for each LOE.

12. Can we include the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan as an attachment?

a. Yes.

13. Is there a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan template to follow?

a. No.

14. Is there a specific template for the Risk Assessment?

a. No.

15. Under section 4. Risk Assessment it mentions that the proposal should include a participatory needs assessment which is not part of the scope of the activities under each of the LOEs. Is this a separate in-depth assessment or just project kick-off engagements?

a. To clarify, the proposal should address that recipient needs will be identified with participation from the target audiences; great detail is not required in the proposal but compelling and innovating approaches should be considered.

b. During the period of performance and for each of the LOEs, the implementer will need to perform some degree of assessment of facts and circumstances to determine ideally tailored assistance activities to execute during the period of performance; a complete and candid version should be available to EXBS. In an appropriate manner,

identified needs should be discussed with the target audience in a participatory fashion to increase buy-in and likelihood of self-sustained progress.

16. Under the SOW section, it is noted that “SOWs that contain quantitative estimates of expected outputs, outcomes and indicators of success for each component will be considered more competitive”. How is this different than the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan?

- a. As the SOW summarizes content from the full proposal, it should clearly tie together the activities and the expected outputs, outcomes, and indicators of success.

17. Do you have any templates to use for the SOW?

- a. Yes, one will be attached with the supporting documents.

18. Strategic Objective 1.2 references providing equipment and subscriptions. Is this a requirement as it was not mentioned in the proposed scope? Are there caps or restrictions on equipment/subscription costs within the single ceiling?

- a. The EXBS Strategic Objectives categorize the types of activities that EXBS conducts. Each LOE identifies the required activities the implementer should be prepared to perform. There are no caps or restrictions on equipment/subscription costs if you wish to propose equipment/subscriptions.

19. Section D: The NOFO instructs applicants to use a single-spaced, 15-point, Open Sans font. Open Sans font is not available as a native font on Microsoft Word. To allow for a more details submission, may applicants apply a 12-point Times New Roman font instead?

- a. If Open Sans is not available then 15-point Times New Roman is permitted.

20. Section D.2, Summary Page: Please confirm whether the Summary Page is to be included as a non-counting page in the Proposal Section D.3 or as a separate attachment.

- a. The optional summary page (D.2) does not count toward the 15-page limit of the proposal (D.3).

21. Section D.2: Please confirm that applicants may modify the optional Summary Page to add items such as organization/company logos and confidentiality statements.

- a. Yes you may include these additional items in the summary page.

22. Please confirm that applicants may include a table of acronyms and abbreviations and a table of contents in the Proposal Narrative that will be excluded from the page count for the Project Proposal.
- a. This content will be excluded from the 15-page limit.
23. Please confirm that applicants may include tables, charts, textboxes, and figures in a smaller font than the main text of the Project Proposal.
- a. Please see the answer to question 7.
24. To provide DOS/EXBS with additional details on the capabilities and experience of key personnel, please confirm that CVs can be provided as an additional attachment to the submission (not included in the page limit).
- a. CVs should be provided as a separate supplemental attachment.
25. Section D. Application Contents and Format, Subsection 7 Attachments indicates that an A-133 audit (if applicable) is required for Attachment I. Section E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines, Subsection 4. Audits indicates “include a copy of your organization’s most recent audit (single or program audit if applicable), an annual external audit or audited financial statements when an audit has not been conducted.” Please confirm that an annual external audit or audited financial statements can be submitted in lieu of the Single Audit. If yes, can the audit be from the last fiscal year? Further, if organizations have a current NICRA, could DOS please confirm that the requirement to submit audit materials is waived.
- a. If an U.S. non-profit organization expended more than \$1,000,000 in Federal financial assistance in the prior FY then an audit is required, no matter the status of their NICRA. If an audit has not been conducted then audited financial statements can be submitted in lieu of a single, program or external audit.
 - b. This does not apply to U.S. for-profit organizations, however, the Grants Officer can request audited financial statements.
 - c. If a foreign non-profit organization expended more than \$1,000,000 in Federal financial assistance in the prior FY then they must undergo recipient-contracted single or program-specific audit annually.
 - d. These audit requirements do not apply to Public International Organizations nor Foreign Public Entities, however they may submit as part of due diligence.
26. Please confirm that the scope of Strategic Objective 3.1 is limited to the enhancement of skills development for the inspection and detection of critical minerals supply chains and rare earths.
- a. The scope of Strategic Objective 3.1 may include “system upgrades” that are integrated with skills development.

27. Can DOS/EXBS provide details on the number of countries that are anticipated to be included under the provided budget for this NOFO?

- a. The number of countries to be engaged will be determined during the period of performance based on policy imperatives and other factors governing feasibility, budget included. Applicants should propose what they consider the most compelling approach.