Program announcement

DEPARTMENT OF WAR (DoW)

APEX Accelerator Program

Open Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: DOW2027APEXACCELERATORCLOSED

Assistance Listing Number: 12.002

Anticipated Funding Purpose: Business and Commerce

Key Dates: This announcement will be open to receive applications for cooperative agreement awards until 5:00PM Eastern Time, 4 July 2027. APEX Accelerators with a FY26 agreement submit your application 118 calendar days before your FY26 period of performance end date. Extensions requested by email may be granted for no more than 30 calendar days on a case-by-case basis.

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1) Program Description

Short Description of Funding Opportunity

The Department of War (DoW) seeks applications from eligible entities to serve as APEX Accelerators. Applications should include documentation described in Part IV of this document.

Background

The Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) was established by section 1241 of the Department of War (DoW) Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1985 (Public Law 98-525) to expand the number of businesses capable of participating in government contracts, to foster innovation for the defense industrial base, and to strengthen and expand the defense industrial base. Under this announcement, the Department of War will award cost sharing cooperative agreements to eligible program participants who will maintain APEX Accelerators. The APEX Accelerators serve as a resource for businesses to obtain information and training related to contracting opportunities with DoW, other federal agencies, state and local governments and with government prime contractors. Procurement professionals at the APEX Accelerators provide critical assistance to businesses seeking to participate in government contracts and most of the assistance they provide is free.

Program Description/Objective

Award recipients must maintain an APEX Accelerator with physical location(s) to serve as a resource for business entities to obtain procurement technical assistance. Procurement technical assistance means professional, specialized assistance provided to clients that enables them to identify potential contractual opportunities and obtain or perform under contracts, innovation and technology grants, and other DoW-funded instruments, with DoW, other Federal agencies, State and/or local governments, and with Federal, State and/or local government contractors. Clients may include any business pursuing or performing these types of contracts or subcontracts at any tier. As used in this part, the terms “State” and “local government” have the meanings provided in 10 U.S.C. 4951. Innovation and technology grants refer to awards issued pursuant to the Small Business Innovation Research and/or Small Business Technology Transfer programs. You must collaborate with the DoW and other Federal agencies and work cooperatively with them to accomplish the work under this award.

Authorization

The authorization to make awards under this funding opportunity may be found via the Assistance Listing (CFDA) Number 12.002 on Sam.gov.

Legal Requirements

Each cooperative agreement awarded under this announcement will be governed by the general terms and conditions in effect at the time of the award that conform to DoW’s implementation of OMB guidance applicable to financial assistance in 2 CFR 200,

“Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards,” as implemented by 2 CFR 1104. This is generally 2 CFR 1126 – 1140 Subchapter D—Administrative Requirements Terms and Conditions for Cost-Type Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Nonprofit and Governmental Entities. APEX Award Specific Terms and Conditions Version 6.4 and APEX Accelerator General Terms and Conditions Version 4.0, which are located at Grants.gov, are incorporated by reference in this announcement.

2) Federal Award Information

The following information applies to awards issued under this announcement: We expect to award approximately 88 cost sharing cooperative agreements as a result of this announcement, totaling an amount authorized by Congress; however, we are not obligated to make any awards and reserve the right to revise or cancel this announcement. This is a closed Notice of Funding Opportunity and only APEX Accelerators with a current award issued by ACC-APG may apply. The awards will be for 3 years total including one twelve-month base period and two (2) twelve-month option periods. Options may or may not be exercised. If exercised, options will be award by a bilateral cooperative agreement and no funding for the option years will be obligated unless and until each option is exercised and bilaterally agreed upon and are subject to funding limitations. Cooperative agreements differ from grants in that substantial involvement is expected between the recipient and the Federal agency when carrying out the award. Should you receive an award, we expect you to collaborate with DoW and other Federal agencies to accomplish the work set out in the APEX General and Award-Specific Terms and Conditions. DoW will be involved in shaping the strategy used by the applicant to ensure relevant, high-quality service to businesses at a reasonable cost and applicants should expect negotiations where part or all proposed costs are included in the awards. Applicants should propose a 12-month period of performance beginning on the day after their fiscal year 2026 agreement ends. Applicants may include subrecipients/subawards in their application and may propose direct and indirect costs. The Federal funding limitations per year, as listed in 10 USC 4955(a), are listed below:

- $750,000 in the case of an entity that operates an APEX Accelerator providing less than statewide coverage;
- $1,500,000 in the case of an entity that operates an APEX Accelerator providing statewide coverage;
- $1,500,000 in the case of an entity that operates an APEX Accelerator wholly within more than one service area of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). This means an APEX Accelerator that provides procurement technical assistance to all the federally recognized Indian tribes or Alaska Native entities in one of the BIA regions and at least half of the tribes or Alaska Native entities in a second BIA region; or
- $450,000 in the case of an entity that operates an APEX Accelerator wholly within one service area of the BIA. This means an APEX Accelerator that provides procurement technical assistance to federally recognized Indian tribes

and/or Alaska Native entities but does not meet the standard for an entity that operates an APEX Accelerator wholly within more than one service area of the BIA as described above.

3) Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

Only those entities listed in this section and hold a current APEX Accelerator award issued by ACC-APG are eligible to apply. Individuals are not eligible. Disclosures of current and pending support made in this application may render an applicant ineligible for funding. Prior to award and throughout the period of performance, the DoW may continue to request updated continuing and pending support information, which will be reviewed and may result in discontinuation of funding. Religious organizations are entitled to compete on equal footing with secular organizations for Federal financial assistance as described in E.O. 13798, “Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty.”

States. State means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, a territory or possession of the United States, an agency or instrumentality of a State, and a multi-State, regional, or interstate entity having governmental duties and powers (refer to 10 U.S.C. 4951(4)).

Local governments. Local government means a unit of government in a State, a local public authority, a special district, an intrastate district, a council of governments, a sponsor group representative organization, an interstate entity, or another instrumentality of a local government (refer to 10 U.S.C. 4951(4)).

Nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organization means an entity which is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code, and no part of its earnings inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, and no substantial part of its activities is carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation or participating in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office (refer to 10 U.S.C. 4951(1)(C)).

Economic enterprises. Economic enterprise means any Indian-owned (as defined by the Secretary of the Interior) commercial, industrial, or business activity established or organized for profit purposes or for nonprofit purposes. Provided, that such Indian ownership constitutes not less than 51 percent of the enterprise (refer to 10 U.S.C. 4951(1)(D)).

Tribal organizations. Tribal organization means the recognized governing body of any Indian tribe; any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body, or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities. Provided, that in any case where a cooperative agreement is made to an organization to perform services benefiting more than one Indian tribe, the approval of each such Indian

tribe shall be a prerequisite to the making of such cooperative agreement (refer to 10 U.S.C. 4951(1)(D).

Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing requirements. All the awards we make as a result of this announcement require you to provide cost sharing, without which your application is ineligible for an award. Allowable contributions towards cost sharing requirements are discussed in the "Financial and Program Management" part of the APEX General Terms and Conditions. You are required to submit documentation to verify that you have the necessary commitments to meet cost sharing requirements and, if applicable, that your proposed service area is a distressed area.

Cost share ratio. Our share of costs is limited to no more than 65 percent unless you provide procurement technical assistance in a distressed area, in which case our share is limited to no more than 85 percent. You are required to share the cost of operating your APEX Accelerator and match our funds accordingly. In accordance with 48 USC 1469a, the US Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are entitled by statute to waiver of cost matching funds up to $199,999.

Distressed area. Distressed area means an area of local government (i.e., usually a city or county) that has a per capita income of 80 percent or less of that State's average or an unemployment rate that is one percent greater than the national average for the most recent 24- month period for which statistics are available. In addition, Reservations listed in BIA regions are distressed areas.

Conflict of Interest

General Requirement for Disclosure

You and your organization must disclose any potential or actual conflict of interest(s) to us. You must also disclose any potential or actual conflict(s) of interest for any identified sub recipient you include in your application. We may have to ask you more questions if we need more information. At our discretion, we may ask you for a conflict-of-interest mitigation plan after you submit your application. Your plan is subject to our approval.

Other

Licensure, Certifications, Representations, and Assurances

To apply for grants and other funding opportunities the applicant entity must have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). Applications will not be accepted through Grants.gov or other methods unless the entity is registered in SAM. Registration in SAM now includes the acceptance of Certifications and Assurances. See https://grants.gov/grantors/grantor-standard-language for details on how to register in SAM, and Grants.gov.

The Federal Assistance Certifications Report is an attestation that the entity will abide by the requirements of the various laws and regulations; therefore, as applicable, you are still required to submit any documentation, including the SF- LLL Disclosure of

Lobbying Activities (if applicable), and informing DoW of unpaid delinquent tax liability or a felony conviction under any Federal law.

When you check “I Agree” on the SF-424 Block 21 you certify compliance with the following DoW requirements:

- As the duly authorized agent for my organization I certify that said organization does not require any of its employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting those employees, contractors, subrecipients from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information;
- As the duly authorized agent for my organization, I certify that all key personnel have disclosed the amount, type, and source of all current and pending support received by, or expected to be received by, the individual as of the time of the disclosure;
- As the duly authorized agent for my organization, I certify that the disclosure is current, accurate, complete;
- As the duly authorized agent for my organization, I agree to update such disclosure at the request of the agency prior to the award of support and at any subsequent time the agency determines appropriate during the term of the award;
- As the duly authorized agent for my organization, I agree to update such disclosure at the request of the Department of War prior to the award of support and at any subsequent time the Department determines appropriate during the term of the award; and
- As the duly authorized agent for my organization, I certify that any entity applying for such award has been made aware of the certification requirements above.

4) Application and Submission Information

Submission Date and Time

DoW will only accept applications submitted on or before, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) using the following schedule and the last APEX Accelerator cooperative agreement award issued by Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground (ACC-APG):

APEX Accelerators with a FY26 agreement must submit your application 118 calendar days before your FY26 period of performance end date.

An annual continuation package to exercise options 1 and 2 will then be due 90 calendar days prior to the expiration FY27 and FY28 period of performance.

Extensions requested by email may be granted for no more than 30 calendar days on a case-by-case basis.

Read the instructions in https://grants.gov/grantors/grantor- standard-language about registering to apply for DoW funds. If you experience difficulties with your submission,

Grants.gov provides support via the toll-free number 1- 800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. This ticket number will allow DoW to verify your issue if it cannot be resolved by the application date. For questions related specifically to this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO), contact the number for the program or grants office identified in this announcement.

Address to Request Application Package

The application package for Notice of Funding Opportunity is available on Grants.gov.

Application Procedures and Requirements

Organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants and other assistance awards. Please see https://grants.gov/grantors/grantor-standard-language for details on how to go through this process.

Full application packages must be submitted electronically to Grants.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the date specified in this announcement. Applicants are responsible for submitting their applications in sufficient time to allow them to reach Grants.gov by the date and time specified in this announcement. It is strongly recommended that applications be uploaded at least 2 days before the closing date and time. This will help avoid problems caused by high system usage or any potential technical and/or input problems involving the applicant's own equipment. It will also allow any application errors detected by Grants.gov to be corrected in time for the application to be resubmitted. If the application is received by Grants.gov after the exact time and date specified as the deadline for receipt, it will be considered "late" and may not be considered for review.

Acceptable evidence to establish the time of receipt by Grants.gov includes documentary evidence of receipt maintained by Grants.gov, and Grants.gov emails to the applicant confirming receipt. These e-mails will indicate 1) the application was received on time, 2) application was rejected due to errors, 3) application was received after the deadline. Note that this Grants.gov response may occur over several e-mails, e.g., one acknowledging on-time receipt, and a later e-mail rejecting errors the system detected. Applicants can also track the status of their applications at https://grants.gov/applicants/grant-applications/track-my-application.

Application Withdrawal

An applicant may withdraw an application at any time before award by email. Notice of withdrawal shall be sent to the grants officer identified in this announcement. Withdrawals are effective upon receipt of notice by the grants officer.

Intergovernmental Review

This opportunity is subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." You are reminded that you may have to contact your state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with your state's process under Executive Order 12372. The names and addresses of SPOCs are listed at The Office of

Justice Program's website, https://www.ojp.gov/IntergovernmentalReviewSPOCList.pdf.

Content and Form Submission

See https://grants.gov/grantors/grantor-standard-language for information on how to complete the application using Workspace on Grants.gov.

- Documentation submitted under this NFO is expected to be unclassified; classified applications are not permitted.
- All documents must be submitted in PDF format except for attachments 6 and 9 which must be in Excel Format.
- All proposals will be evaluated by Government personnel. The names and affiliations of reviewers are not disclosed.
- All submissions will be protected from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with applicable law and DoW regulations. You are expected to appropriately mark each page of your submission that contains proprietary information.

Component-specific requirements

Ensure that you follow grants.gov rules in naming and attaching files because attachments that do not follow the rules may cause the entire application to be rejected or cause issues during processing. Limit file names to 50 or fewer characters and use only the following characters when naming attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore (_), hyphen (-), space and period.

- **Attachment 1 Certification of Cost Matching Funds APEX Program**- Provide information that attests to the commitment of matching funds to your program. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package.

- **Attachment 2 SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance-** Complete the SF 424. It is important that the amount you enter in block 15.a. of SF 424 accurately reflects the amount of DoW funding that you are requesting with your application. By signing SF 424, you are providing the certifications and assurances in the funding opportunity announcement. The UEI listed in 7.c. will be used to retrieve the single or program-specific audit from fac.gov. If the applicant's UEI listed in 7.c. does not match the UEI their single or program-specific audit is listed under in fac.gov, then add the UEI that the single or program specific audit is listed under in fac.gov to block 7.c. so the single or program-specific audit can be retrieved from fac.gov. Therefore, two UEIs should be listed in block 7.c. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package.

- **Attachment 3 Letter of Commitment**- Provide information to support any proposed third- party in-kind contributions, if applicable. You shall use the third-party- in-kind contribution form template that is available on the Notice of Funding Opportunity posting, ensure the third-party donor completes and signs the form. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package to support any prosed third-party in-kind contributions, if applicable.

- **Attachment 4 Program Execution Strategy**- Applicants with no changes to

the individual occupying the Program Manager position or their availability, and the program execution strategy do not need to submit Attachment 4. The Program Execution Strategy referenced in the previous fiscal year award will be referenced in the award resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity for applicants with no changes as described in this paragraph.

- For all other applicants, describe how you will comply with the "Program Requirements" section of the APEX Accelerator Award Specific Terms and Conditions. Include all information necessary for us to conduct an evaluation of your application. Ensure the information below is specifically addressed in the description.
    - Background on the individual program
    - Discussion on service area/demographics and facilities, trends in the service area
    - Discussion on how you will reach your goals using various types of outreach and technical assistance
    - Describe the process of technical assistance/counseling
    - Describe how you intend to manage and coordinate the effort under a cooperative agreement, including planning, assigning responsibility, controlling personnel, controlling utilization of resources, tracking deliverables, monitoring performance, obtaining feedback from your clients, your procedures for monitoring and controlling costs, your procedures for identifying problems, resolving them and ensuring that they do not reoccur, and any proposed subrecipients and/or subcontractors that the degree to which you will use them
    - Your facilities (include address, square footage, and cost per square foot) and other details such as accessibility to the public, office hours, and Americans with Disabilities Act compliance
- Note: This attachment will be required in the annual continuation package if the Program Execution Strategy has changed from the previous year.

- **Attachment 5 Personnel Costs Support-** Provide support for Personnel Costs. Support should include at least one of the following: *Note- For any subawards greater than 20% of the total program cost, provide justification for the Personnel Costs proposed in accordance with the above instructions.*
    - Published Salary Data, with information mapping to position title in proposal.
    - Payroll records and/or paystubs showing rate of pay and referenced to the specific personnel or position title in the proposal.

- Salary Survey data, which shall include, at a minimum, the following:
  - Source of data;
  - Job title and description;
  - Geographic location; and
  - Range of salary amounts with reference to applicability of amounts This attachment is required in the annual continuation package.

- **Attachment 6 Budget-** ***Your FY27 federal share cannot exceed your FY26 federal share plus 2.9% or the statutory limit, whichever is less. Your FY28 federal share cannot exceed your FY27 federal share plus 2.9% or the statutory limit, whichever is less. Your FY29 federal share cannot exceed your FY28 federal share plus 2.9% or the statutory limit, whichever is less. Your FY27, FY28, and FY29 federal share is based on your initial award with a 12-month period of performance and will not be averaged to include additional months of performance that may be a result of a no-cost extension or deobligation.***

  Sample Calculation:
  FY26 Federal Share $625,000 * 0.029 = $18,125 + $625,000 = $643,125 FY27 Federal Share

  FY27 Federal Share $643,125 * 0.029 = $18,650.63 + $643,125 = $661,775.63 FY28 Federal Share

  FY28 Federal Share $661,775.63 * 0.029 = $19,191.49 + $661,775.63 = $680,967.12 FY29 Federal Share

  Attach a budget breakdown in Microsoft Excel format, that shows the individual line items of cost that constitute the higher-level budget that you included in SF 424. You must use the Microsoft Excel template available on the Notice of Funding Opportunity posting on Grants.gov, which provides an example of the information that we need in this attachment. Ensure that it is clear how you calculated the total amount of indirect costs (F&A) included in your budget by providing a description on the Budget tab. Use additional pages to show indirect cost calculations, if necessary. Program Income rolled over into the proposed award from the prior year annual award must be included in the budget. A budget breakdown must be provided for each subaward. The subaward budget breakdown must be provided as a separate tab on the applicant's budget breakdown worksheet. The total program cost for each subaward must match the line item for the sub-award found in the contractual section of the Applicant's budget breakdown. If you are proposing two separate budgets for providing services in both distressed and non-distressed areas, explain and justify the methodology that you used to separate the distressed and non-distressed portions of your budget. When preparing this information, ensure that your methodology is clearly and sufficiently explained on where costs have been allocated, in proportions, that reasonably approximate the costs necessary to serve the distressed and non- distressed portions of your service area. The

federal share of cost is limited to no more than 65 percent of the total program cost unless you provide procurement technical assistance in a distressed area, in which case our share is limited to no more than 85 percent. See Appendix 1 for a detailed description of each line item.

- Tab Subrecipient Budget: Attach budgets for subawards in Microsoft Excel format, if you plan to make any. This tab may need to be duplicated to add multiple subrecipients. If you have subrecipients, your budget must show the total amount of each subaward within your budget's contractual cost category, where you must summarize the total amount of the subaward as a single line item.
- Tab Proposed Service Area Listing- Answer the questions and follow the instructions on this tab to identify the state or BIA region you propose to service. This tab does not need to be filled out if you are servicing the same area listed in your previous agreement and you are serving non-distressed areas only or Bureau of Indian Affairs areas.
- Tab Other Ratings- This is for Government use only.

This attachment is required in the annual continuation package if the option year budget differs from what was submitted with the previous year proposal or previous annual continuation package.

- **Attachment 7 Fringe-** Provide information to describe and provide a basis for fringe benefit amounts included in your budget. Simply stating what the rate is (e.g., 30%) does not adequately fulfill this requirement. Where fringe benefit rates have been approved in conjunction with an indirect cost rate, the negotiated rate memorandum shall be provided, and no further explanation is necessary. *If the negotiated rate memorandum is the same copy provided in the previous year proposal, then do not attach. Note: For any subawards greater than 20% of the total program cost, provide justification for the fringe benefit costs proposed in accordance with the above instructions. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package. The negotiated rate memorandum shall be submitted with the annual continuation package if it was not received in the previous year proposal or previous annual continuation package.*

- **Attachment 8 Indirect Costs:** If indirect costs are included in the budget, attach a current copy of a negotiated rate memorandum from the cognizant federal agency. *If the negotiated rate memorandum is the same copy provided in the previous year proposal, then do not attach.* Cite the de minimis rate described in 2 CFR 200.414(f) if it applies. If a negotiated rate memorandum is not provided or the de minimis rate is not utilized, then the applicant shall provide information to the government demonstrating why the proposed rate is reasonable and realistic. The applicant shall include forecasted pools and bases for the current year. Additionally, the applicant shall support these rates with three (3) years historical actual pools and bases information that validates the calculations. Below is a sample, formats and dates may vary: *(Note- For any subawards greater than 20% of the total program cost, provide justification for the Indirect Costs proposed in accordance with the above instructions.) This attachment is*

required in the annual continuation package. The negotiated rate memorandum shall be submitted with the annual continuation package if it was not received in the previous year proposal or previous annual continuation package.

	Historical			Current
	2024	2025	2026	2027
Pool	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Base	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Rate	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

- **Attachment 9 Cover Page & Goals-** On the cover page, provide organization name, period of performance, name of individual submitting the proposed goals, and date. Provide proposed goals against each metric for the APEX Accelerator Program. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package, and it may be updated later. If this attachment is updated later, it will be distributed via email.
- **Attachment 10 Analyses-** Attach an analysis verifying that your proposed service area meets the definition of a distressed area and place your results on the Proposed Service Area Listing tab under "Per Capita Personal Income" and/or "Unemployment Rate". Distressed area means an area of local government (i.e., usually a city or county) that has a per capita income of 80 percent or less of that State's average or an unemployment rate that is one percent greater than the national average for the most recent 24-month period for which statistics are available. Refer to the document titled "Guidelines how to conduct distressed area analysis" for guidance in conducting your analysis. You do not need to provide an analysis if your proposed service area is designated as a reservation as defined in section 3(d) of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–262; 25 U.S.C. 1452(d)) by the Bureau of Indian Affairs' regions because these are automatically considered distressed areas. Refer to the guidance provided on the Notice of Funding Opportunity posting on Grants.gov for additional assistance conducting your analysis.
    - Using per capita income. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) data must be used. In conducting your analysis, compare state and local area "per capita personal income" for the most recent year available; or
    - Using unemployment rates. The US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data must be used. In comparing national and local area unemployment rates, use the average taken over the most recent 24-month period for which both national and local area statistics are available (use "not seasonally adjusted" data). Use the latest final data available, i.e., do not use "preliminary" data published by BLS.

Statewide means an APEX Accelerator that provides procurement technical assistance in at least one- half of a state's counties or equivalent coverage (e.g., parishes, boroughs, etc.) and serves at least three-fourths of the state's labor force. If you propose a statewide program but will cover less than the entire state, attach documentation to verify that your service area meets the definition of

statewide coverage and fill in the “Labor Force” column on the “Proposed Service Area Listing”. Refer to the document titled “Guidelines how to conduct a Statewide Coverage Analysis” for guidance in conducting your analysis. Use the most recent, annual labor force statistics available from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package.

- **Attachment 11 Program Income-** If you intend to earn program income, e.g. charge clients a fee for any services rendered or advertising/sponsorship, include a discussion concerning the amount of fees to be charged, how this income will be used to further program objectives, and assert your understanding that you’re required to report the gross program income on the SF grant voucher and SF 425. If you propose to utilize Program Income as part of the applicant cost share, provide a narrative detailing how you will ensure compliance with the Award Specific Terms and Conditions percent cap on the value of program income that may be applied as the cost match. Use Attachment 12 Program Income to provide this information. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package if you intend to earn program income.

- **Attachment 12 SF LLL-** Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying. Appendix A in 32 CFR Part 28 requires you to complete and submit the SF LLL if you engage in certain types of lobbying. Review 32 CFR Part 28, “New Restrictions on Lobbying,” and attach the SF LLL if it is applicable. This attachment is required in the annual continuation package if you engage in certain types of lobbying.

- **Attachment 13 Program Manager Resume-** Provide a resume for the proposed Program Manager, *only if it was not* received with the previous year proposal or not provided during the previous year period of performance. The resume should describe the Program Manager’s qualifications, but not include personal information such as home address, personal telephone number, or ID numbers such as an Employee ID or social security number. Review ii. Technical Approach to determine if this attachment is required. Note: This attachment will be required in the annual continuation package only if it was not received in the previous year proposal or not provided during the previous year period of performance.

Funding Restrictions

Per 2 CFR § 200.216, funds may not be used to procure telecommunications equipment or video surveillance services or equipment produced by:

- Huawei Technologies Company,
- ZTE Corporation Hytera Communications Corporation,
- Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company,
- Dahua Technology Company
- any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities

5) Application Review Information

A. Selection Criteria

Evaluation factors. We will use the factors below to evaluate your application. We will make awards to the applicants whose applications we determine to be the best value, cost and other factors considered. The past performance factor is more important than Program Execution and Cost. The factors of Program Execution and Cost are of equal importance.

- Past Performance
- Program Execution
- Cost

Description of Evaluation Factors.

i. Past Performance

1. The Government will evaluate the Applicant's record of recent and relevant past performance to ascertain the probability of successfully performing the program requirements.
2. The Past Performance Factor considers each Applicant's demonstrated recent and relevant record of performance in supplying products and services related to the program requirements as stated in the APEX Accelerator Terms and Conditions.
3. Relevant: The first aspect of the past performance evaluation is to determine how relevant a recent effort accomplished by the Offeror is to the effort to be performed through the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Relevancy is not separately rated; however, the following criteria will be used to establish what is relevant. Relevant efforts include past performance of eligible entities under an APEX Accelerator cooperative agreement. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4954(c), we will give significant weight to past performance of entities operating APEX Accelerators established by this program and will consider successful past performance under cooperative agreements with us to be more meritorious than other, comparable past performance.

Past Performance Relevancy Ratings	
Rating	**Definition**
Relevant	Past performance effort involved essentially the same scope and magnitude of effort and complexities this NFO requires.
Not Relevant	Past performance effort involved little or none of the scope and magnitude of effort and complexities this NFO requires.

- Recent: Recent is defined as performance that occurred in the most recently completed APEX Accelerator period of performance.

- Quality Assessment: Assess the quality of the Applicant's past performance on those recent efforts that were determined relevant by determining how well the contractor performed on the assistance instruments. Documented results from APEX performance reports, interviews, and other sources form the support and basis for this assessment.

- Past Performance Rating: The final step is for the Government reviewers to arrive at a single consensus past performance assessment for the Applicant, selecting the most appropriate rating from the chart below. Applicants must receive a rating of "Substantial Confidence" or "Neutral Confidence" to be eligible for award.

Rating	
Past Performance Rating	
Rating	**Description**
Substantial Confidence	Based on the offeror's performance record, the Government has a reasonable expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
Neutral Confidence	No recent and relevant performance record is available. The offeror may not be evaluated favorably or unfavorably on the factor of past performance. Applicants who have not held an APEX Accelerator award in the previous fiscal year will receive a rating of "Neutral Confidence".
No Confidence	Based on the offeror's performance record, the Government does not have a reasonable expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.

ii. Technical Approach

1. Applicants with no changes from their previous fiscal year award to the program

manager or their availability and no changes to program management will receive an automatic technical evaluation rating of “Excellent” and no oral presentation is required. Applicants with no changes to the individual occupying the Program Manager position or their availability, and the program execution strategy do not need to submit Attachments 4 or 13. The Program Execution Strategy referenced in the previous fiscal year award will be referenced in the award resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity for applicants with no changes as described in this paragraph.

2. Personnel. Applicants with no changes to the individual occupying the Program Manager position and their availability do not need to submit Attachment 13. Otherwise, program manager qualifications, including relevant experience and education, will be evaluated using Attachment 13. The availability of the proposed program manager will be evaluated using Attachment 6. We will evaluate your application to determine whether your proposed program manager meets program requirements of the Award-Specific Terms and Conditions. Our evaluation will consider qualifications, including relevant experience and education, as well as the availability of the proposed program manager.

3. Program Management. We will evaluate your application using Attachment 4 to ascertain the degree to which the facilities you propose meet program requirements. We will also consider the availability of your facilities such as Americans with Disabilities Act compliant or accessibility to the public. We will evaluate how you intend to manage and coordinate the effort under a cooperative agreement, including planning, assigning responsibility, controlling personnel, controlling utilization of resources, tracking deliverables, monitoring performance, obtaining feedback from your clients, your procedures for monitoring and controlling costs, your procedures for identifying problems, resolving them and ensuring that they do not reoccur, any proposed subrecipients and/or subcontractors and the degree to which you will use them, and your process of technical assistance/counseling. We will evaluate how you will reach your goals using various types of outreach and technical assistance. The Technical Approach will be rated as follows: Applicants with changes to their program manager or their availability, and/or program management will be scheduled for an oral presentation and then assigned a technical evaluation rating. Changes to program management include facility relocation, a significant process change in how to manage and coordinate the APEX Accelerator program, adding a new subrecipient, or revising the program execution strategy. Additionally, your technical approach must demonstrate credibility, realism, and logic in providing procurement technical assistance to businesses and the required deliverables to us under a cooperative agreement. Applicant must receive a rating of “Excellent” or “Fair” to be eligible for award. See Appendix 2 for details on the oral presentation.

Rating	**Government Use Only**

Technical Evaluation Ratings	
Adjectival Ratings	**Description**
Excellent	The Government has a high expectation that the Applicant will successfully perform the required effort.
Fair	The Government has a reasonable expectation that the Applicant will successfully perform the required effort.
Poor	The Government has a low expectation that the Applicant will successfully perform the required effort.

iii. Cost

1. We will consider the proposed cost to us for the period of performance in conjunction with the other non-cost factors to determine best value to the program. If your proposed costs appear unrealistic, you are cautioned that we may infer a lack of understanding of program requirements, increased risk of performance or your lack of credibility.

    - Cost sharing contributions. We will evaluate the nature and type of commitments you propose to satisfy cooperative agreement cost sharing requirements. We will consider the degree to which your commitments will contribute to the success of your proposed program, the significance of the commitments that you have made and whether those commitments demonstrate that you have taken a meaningful interest in the success of your proposed program.
    - Preference will be given to eligible entities with lower indirect cost rates.

Review and Selection Process

Review of applications. We will review applications conforming to this announcement in accordance with the procedures in this section. We may provide you with the opportunity to cure a flaw resulting from an irregularity in your application or may waive the flaw. We reserve the right to request any additional information we need to evaluate your application and your failure to provide the information in the time frame requested may result in rejection of your application.

Duplicate coverage. Duplicate coverage of service areas exists when the proposed service areas of two or more applicants overlap. We will decide on a case-by-case basis as to the acceptability of duplicate coverage.

Selection process. We contemplate that we will make multiple awards; however, we may not make awards to all acceptable applicants. We will make award decisions to optimize the use of program funds while at the same time maximizing the availability of procurement technical assistance. We will make funding decisions on an agreement-

by-agreement basis and in the best interest of the overall program. The options for FY28 and FY29 listed on the FY27 award as a result of this announcement are non-binding planning estimates and do not create an obligation on behalf of the Government. The award amount may be more or less when the option year (FY28) and option year (FY29) is exercised and awarded. In making selections among otherwise acceptable applicants, we will generally give funding priority to those applicants that are operating established APEX Accelerators and have a successful performance record (refer to 10 U.S.C. 4954(c)).

The reviewers may be ACC-APG or DoW Office of Industrial Base Growth (OIBG) employees or employees of other federal agencies. Applicants are therefore encouraged to design proposals that address the criteria listed above in a clear and concise manner.

The merit reviewers will utilize an adjectival rating structure and cost analysis to evaluate eligible applications to determine the best value for the program. The merit reviewers shall measure each application against the requirements of the Funding Opportunity. The reviewers will submit their final evaluations to the Grants Officer who will take the assessments, along with other information in the possession, and after careful consideration of all information, shall draft individual funding determinations which will include; 1) not to fund the application; 2) fund the application but not at the level requested; or 3) fund the application at the level requested.

On a case-by-case basis, we may request a pre-award credit report, audit, survey or other review to determine if you meet the standards in 32 CFR 22.415. A single or program-specific audit, if required, will be obtained from fac.gov or from the applicant, if requested. We may delay an award decision until all necessary reviews are complete. Based on the results of a review, we may decide not to make an award, make an award subject to additional conditions or may delay the award until after any identified deficiencies are resolved. In addition to the technical/program review, the DoW does a budget review and a risk review as directed by 2 CFR 200.206, including a review of the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS). Applicants may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information entered into that system.

Comments made by applicants will be considered, in addition to other information in examining the applicants' integrity, business ethics, and record of performance. At the time of application, there is no additional material to be submitted for this review.

However, there may be additional requests for clarification as these reviews progress.

Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Decisions are expected to be announced via email. Awards are expected to be issued between December 7, 2026, through September 30, 2027.

Federal Award Administration Information

The notification e-mail regarding a selection is not authorization to commit or expend DoW funds. A DoW grants officer is the only person authorized to obligate and approve the use of Federal funds. This authorization is in the form of a signed Notice of Award.

Applicants whose applications are recommended will be contacted by a DoW grants officer to discuss any additional information required for award. This may include representations and certifications, revised budgets or budget explanations, or other information as applicable to the proposed award. The award start date will be determined at this time.

Post-Award Requirements and Administration

Refer to the "National Policy Requirements", subdivision C of the APEX Accelerator General Terms and Conditions, which is located at Grants.gov, for national policy requirements that will apply to awards. The APEX Accelerator Award Specific Terms and Conditions, which is located at Grants.gov, applies to this award. If the Federal share of any award resulting from this NOFO is more than $500,000 over the period of performance, then the award recipient must follow the post-award reporting requirements reflected in 2 CFR 200 Appendix XII. The APEX Accelerator is required to submit an updated annual continuation package and itemized budget 90 days prior to the expiration of the current period to reconcile variances before exercising the option. If costs rise above initial projections, the recipient must justify this increase, including justifying market rates in their option budget narrative. Bilateral options are anticipated to be exercised within one to thirty calendar days prior to current expiration period.

Reporting Requirements

The terms and conditions of the award will provide the specifics on how to submit the reports and any required sections for those reports.

Report	Requirements/Form	Frequency
Performance Reports	APEX Performance Report and Lynx Allyance (when available)	Quarterly or semi-annually
Financial Report	APEX Financial Report, SF 425, and Lynx Allyance (when available)	Quarterly
Grant Voucher Payment Request	Grant Voucher	May be monthly but must be at least once per quarter with billing period end date matching the SF 425

Awardees must comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR 170: Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information.

Federal Contacts

Questions regarding program policy, program content, administrative problems, grant administration or technical issues should be directed to:

DoW APEX Accelerator Program Office: osd.pentagon.ousd-a-s.mbx.apex-accelerator-pmo@mail.mil.

Questions regarding Grants.gov should be directed to the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov.

Other Information

APEX Accelerators website: https://www.apexaccelerators.us/#/

The Federal government is not obligated to make any Federal awards as a result of the announcement. Only grants officers can bind the Federal government to the expenditure of funds.

Applicants are advised to monitor Grants.gov for potential amendments to this Notice of Funding Opportunity. You can also elect to be automatically notified by Grants.gov whenever there is a change to the opportunity.

Applications must not include any information that has been identified as classified national security information under authorities established in Executive Order 12958, Classified National Security Information.

Appendix 1

Each fiscal year budget shall show the separate items of cost included in your proposal and determine overall reasonableness. Provide detailed descriptions of costs to include how estimates were derived and the basis of your estimates. Ensure that there is no ambiguity as to whether a particular cost is necessary for the efficient operation of an APEX Accelerator. Guidance is provided below on describing costs and including them in the appropriate cost category. Similar to how you describe costs, if your proposal includes third-party in-kind contributions, they must be described, and their values included in the appropriate cost category.

1. Personnel

List all your personnel positions included in the budget. Subrecipient personnel costs must be included in contractual costs, and not in the personnel section.

For each position, describe the percentage of time working on the program in terms of the time employed by you. For example, show a staff member who dedicates all of his or her time to the APEX Accelerator while employed as a 100% contributor, regardless of whether that person is a full or part-time employee. Less than 100% contributors are

those personnel that share time between the APEX Accelerator and other programs in the course of their employment with you. Describe the position, location, and include the name of the employee occupying filled positions.

2. Fringe Benefits

Show fringe benefit costs for each position you include in the budget. Subrecipient fringe benefits costs should usually not be included here, but instead as contractual costs.

3. Travel

Separate and describe the purpose of each travel item. Provide an estimate that includes, as applicable, the number of travelers, names and positions of travelers, number of days lodging, airfare, meal allowance, rental car, conference registration fees, mileage and mileage rate, etc. Provide the basis for your estimates.

(a) Local travel.

Provide the purpose, mileage and mileage rate for any local travel. A summary entry may be made for recurring routine trips. Describe the basis for estimated amounts such as an estimated number of miles per year.

(b) Training.

Identify the course to include name, source and duration. Consider free online training through the Warfighting Acquisition University (WarU)especially in the areas of Contracting (CON) and Small Business Programs (SBP). Professional development costs may not be approved.

(c) Registration Fees.

Registration fees. Registration fees related to travel should be listed with the related travel expense. Include conference, seminar, workshop and event fees.

4. Equipment

Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by you for financial statement purposes, or $10,000. Individual items cost less (e.g., most computers and printers) are supplies rather than equipment.

Describe the purpose of any equipment and the basis for your estimated amounts. Where equipment is being replaced, provide the age of the equipment needing replacement and justify the need for its replacement. Note there is a federal interest in any equipment that you acquire or improve under an award. Refer to the Part 5, “Property Administration,” in the APEX General Terms and Conditions.

5. Supplies

General office supplies may be summarized monthly, showing the monthly amount x 12

and the estimated total. Individual supply items more than $1,000 per month or $12,000 per year should usually be shown separately. Items such as computers costing less than $10,000 should normally be shown as supplies.

6. Contractual

Itemize consultant and contractor costs (usually may not exceed 10% of total program cost). Include a description of the purchase and an explanation as to why it is necessary.

Explain how costs were derived and include the basis for estimates (e.g., number of hours and the cost per hour). Show the cost of subawards under contractual, which can usually be summarized in a single line item.

7. Other

Items may include, but are not limited to, computer software, copying, postage, printing, publications, subscriptions and telephone. Itemize disparate items separately and describe the basis for their cost. Do not include generic, all-inclusive, items such as “event costs” or “utilities” without providing details.

a. Events.

Provide costs for events hosted by you the applicant. A series of events can be proposed as one line item, providing justification is given.

b. Rental expenses.

Show costs for rental of office space and other facilities. Include the address of the property and describe how it is priced such as an annual cost per square foot or a monthly or daily rental rate.

c. Facilities and utilities.

If it is not part of indirect cost, include cost related to facilities and itemize different components such as electrical, telephone and internet access.

d. Publications and subscriptions.

Itemize costs for each individual publication or subscription.

e. Memberships.

Itemize membership costs for business, technical and professional organizations. Note that the costs of individual memberships are not allowable costs (e.g., personal memberships for your staff).

8. Indirect Costs

Show your indirect cost base, rate and amount of indirect charges. Ensure calculations are clear, especially if you use more than one rate (for example, if you use on- and off-campus rates or different rates for separate locations). Do not include applicable subrecipient or subcontractor indirect costs, which should instead be included with the corresponding line item under contractual.

9. Program Income Earned on the Prior Year Award

If applicable, show the amount of program income rolled over from the prior year award and anticipated to be used to fund the proposed award.

10. Supporting Documentation for In-Kind Contributions

Third-party in-kind contributions are non-cash contributions (i.e., property or services) that a third party furnishes to you or your subrecipients that are to be counted towards meeting the award's cost sharing requirements. Refer to FMS Article VI, "Cost sharing or matching," in the APEX General Terms and Conditions for more information on the valuation of cost sharing or matching contributions. Provide the information below to support each third-party in-kind contribution that you propose to use. Note that FMS Article VI requires that you obtain our prior approval before you use any third-party in-kind contribution that was not included in your budget.

a) Describe your need for the contribution so that there is no ambiguity as to whether it is necessary for the efficient operation of the APEX Accelerator.
b) Show the value that you derived based on the principles in 2 CFR 200.306 (or in 32 CFR 34.13 if you are a for-profit entity).
c) Cite the paragraph in 2 CFR 200.306 or 32 CFR 34.13 that applies.

d) Describe how you determined that the value that you propose to use is fair and reasonable. Please do not submit the evidence supporting your valuation unless requested by the Grants Officer. Examples of price analysis techniques include, but are not limited to:
    a. Comparison of the value with proposed prices you received in response to a solicitation for the purchase of the same or similar items.
    b. Comparison with previous contract prices for the same or similar items, if both the validity of the comparison and the reasonableness of the previous price(s) can be established.
    c. Comparison with published price lists or published market prices.
    d. Comparison with rates you paid for similar work; and
    e. Comparison to an independent appraisal or estimate (see the specific requirement below for donated space).
e) The value of donated space must not exceed the fair rental value of comparable space as established by an independent appraisal (refer to 2 CFR 200.306(i)(3) or 32 CFR 34.13(b)(4)). Upon request by the Grants Officer, provide a copy of an independent appraisal to support your valuation if the third-party in-kind contribution is donated space.

11. Budget Development

When part, but not all, of your service area meets the definition of a distressed area you may, but are not required to, propose a separate budget for your service to the distressed portion of your total service area so that you can utilize the higher federal cost share that we are authorized to provide for service to distressed areas. If you decide to do this, you must include both a distressed area budget and a non- distressed area budget in your application. In preparing your application, you must reasonably estimate the cost of serving the distressed and non-distressed portions of the service area and describe how you did this when determining the cost sharing ratio “Distressed and non-distressed area budgets” section in the “Program Requirements” part of the APEX General Terms and Conditions for additional requirements that apply if you structure your program this way.

Appendix 2

Oral Presentations

The applicant's oral presentation shall provide the Government an understanding of the applicant's proposed solution to providing procurement technical assistance and establishing goals for the program year. The oral presentation shall address the solution and resources necessary to operate an APEX Accelerator program and how goals are set and achieved. The applicant shall detail:

- Program Manager Qualifications: Experience and education
- Program Management: How you intend to manage and coordinate the effort under a cooperative agreement, including planning, assigning responsibility, controlling personnel, controlling utilization of resources, tracking deliverables, monitoring performance and obtaining feedback from your clients. How you will reach your goals using various types of outreach and technical assistance.
    - Your procedures for monitoring and controlling costs
    - Your procedures for identifying problems, resolving them and ensuring they do not recur
    - Any proposed subrecipients and/or subcontractors and the degree to which you will use them
    - Your facilities (include address, square footage, and cost per square foot) and other details such as accessibility to the public, office hours, and American with Disabilities Act compliance.
    - Process of technical assistance/counseling

Applicants will display Attachment 6,4, and 13 during their oral presentations. No additional tabs may be added to Attachment 6 Tab Budget unless it is a duplication of the subrecipient budget tabs. The oral presentation is subject to a time limit. Please consider how the program manager qualifications and program management can be adequately covered within that time limit.

Exchanges during Oral Presentation: The Government intends for the oral presentation to be an interactive dialogue between the applicant and the Government.

Location: Oral presentations will be held on Microsoft Teams. Applicants will be contacted by the Government to schedule an oral presentation, if it is needed according to the Notice of Funding Opportunity. The presentation will be recorded by the Government. The recording is source selection sensitive and will be handled accordingly. Applicants can request a copy of the recording by sending an email to the Grants Officer. The applicant retains full responsibility for ensuring its participants can gain access to the oral presentation location.

Applicant Participants: The applicant's participants in the oral presentations shall be limited to the Program Manager proposed by the Applicant in the proposal, as well as the responsible host officials or authorized representative. The authorized representative must have the authority to bind the organization into any agreement. No more than three (3) total Applicant Participants shall attend the oral presentation.

Within two (2) calendar days of the applicant signing up to participate in an oral presentation, the Applicant shall email the Grants Officer with the name, host, and emails of the Applicant Participants for the oral presentation.

Format for Oral Presentation:

The oral presentation schedule is as follows:

Oral Presentation Portion	Oral Presentation Component	Total Time Allotment
1	Introductions and Rules of Engagement	Not specified
2	The Applicant shall present the solution and resources necessary, as detailed above, to operate an APEX Accelerator program.	15-30 minutes
3	The Government will caucus prior to interactive dialogue.	15 minutes
4	The Government and Applicant will participate in an interactive dialogue related to the information presented by the Applicant during the oral presentation.	15-20 minutes
5	The Applicant departs.	Not specified
6	The Government completes technical evaluation.	15 minutes

Rules of Engagement for Oral Presentations:

1. The proposed Program Manager and up to two other people identified as the host official or authorized representative shall attend oral presentations. The team is expected to be able to answer any questions.
2. The Applicant will be responsible for their own computer, internet connectivity, and any other IT devices required to display their screen in Microsoft Teams during the oral presentation.
3. The Applicant participants shall not reach back, by telephone, email or any other means, to any other personnel or persons for assistance during the oral presentation.
4. The Government will not ask questions that will invite or allow the Applicant to change its proposal.

5. The Applicant shall not volunteer any information that might be construed as changing its offer.
6. The Government does not intend to ask questions about information contained in the proposal.
7. The Applicant may not generally ask questions during the oral presentation, except for questions. Any questions must be directed at the Grants Officer and should only deal with logistics and conduct of the oral presentation.
8. The Applicant shall not record the presentation.
9. The Applicant shall enable video so that the Government may see and interact with the attendees.
10. The Applicant attendees shall mute their microphones when not speaking.
11. If the applicant does not attend their scheduled oral presentation, then the Government may evaluate and assign a rating based on the information in the proposal or requested or reschedule the oral presentation. Failing to participate in an oral presentation may delay or cancel an award.