



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Research and Education Program for

Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions (HBCU/MI)

Research

Fiscal Year 2024

**Funding Opportunity Announcement
W911NF-23-S-0015**



**Issued by the U.S. Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground
Research Triangle Park Division
on behalf the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Command Army Research
Laboratory and
the
Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
(Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Science and Technology)**

Issued: August 2023

Application Inquiries and Questions (Deadline): October 13, 2023

Applications Due: October 30, 2023

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I. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

A. Required Overview Content

1. Federal Agency Name(s)

This Department of Defense (DoD) program is funded by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)), and administered through the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Command Army Research Laboratory (ARL), the Office of Naval Research (ONR), and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR).

2. Funding Opportunity Title

Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 DoD Research and Education Program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions (HBCU/MI) – Research

3. Announcement Type

This is the initial announcement.

4. Funding Opportunity Number

W911NF-23-S-0015

5. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number

12.630, Basic, Applied, and Advanced Research in Science and Engineering

6. Key Dates

Applications must be received by 4:00 PM Eastern Time, October 30, 2023.

B. Additional Overview Information

Under the authority of 10 U.S.C. § 4144 and pending the availability of funds for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, the Department of Defense (DoD) announces this funding opportunity for research to be conducted at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions (HBCU/MI).

The program is executed under policy and guidance of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)) and is administered by ARL, ONR, and AFOSR, hereafter called “the Agencies.”

This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) aims to (a) enhance research programs and capabilities in scientific and engineering disciplines critical to the national security functions of DoD; (b) enhance the capacity of HBCU/MI to participate in DoD research programs and activities; and (c) increase the number of graduates, including underrepresented minorities, in fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) important to the defense mission.

Applications for basic research projects are requested in research areas of interest to the Agencies as presented in their respective Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs), which are available as follows:

Army Research Laboratory combined Broad Agency Announcement is available at: <https://www.arl.army.mil/collaborate-with-us/opportunity/arl-baa/>. This BAA may also be found on Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov>) by entering the BAA number, W911NF-23-S-0001, in the “Search Grants” keyword box.

Office of Naval Research: <https://www.onr.navy.mil/> Select “Work With Us,” then “Funding Opportunities,” and then “BAAs, FOAs and Special Program Announcements” to see the FY23 Long Range Broad Agency Announcement for Navy and Marine Corps Science and Technology, BAA N00014-23-S-B001. This BAA may also be found on Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov>) by entering the BAA number in the “Search Grants” keyword box.

Air Force Office of Scientific Research Broad Agency Announcement is available at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=345653>.

In addition to providing details about the Agencies’ research interests, the above documents include names and contact information of technical program managers. Principal Investigators (PIs) are encouraged to peruse the research interests of each Agency and to contact the respective program managers to discuss mutual research interests. Applications with relevance to the interests of multiple Agencies may receive multiple reviews.

NOTE: Use the above-referenced documents **only** to identify research areas of interest to the Agencies. Disregard instructions contained therein regarding application preparation, content, and submission requirements. Instead, **follow the instructions in this FOA.**

II. DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

A. Program Description

Projects proposed for funding under this FOA must be for basic research. As defined by DoD, “basic research” is systematic study directed toward greater knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications toward processes or products in mind. It includes all scientific study and experimentation directed toward increasing fundamental knowledge and understanding in those fields of the physical, engineering, environmental, life sciences, and information sciences related to long-term national security needs.

Principal Investigators (PIs) are encouraged to consider innovative approaches for their research projects with a view toward enhancing the ability of their institution to develop stronger science and engineering programs that will enable the institution to participate more competitively in a variety of defense research programs, attract and retain good students by exposing them to state-of-the-art research, and encourage them to pursue careers in STEM disciplines.

Methods through which these goals can be achieved are varied. Factors such as research capabilities, facilities, and equipment are unique to each institution. Therefore, DoD will not prescribe the approach for a research project; instead, it expects applications to reflect the unique needs and capabilities of the applicant institution.

B. Award Information

Through this competition, DoD intends to award approximately \$50 million, subject to the availability of funds. Awards will be in the form of project grants, and all awards will be made by the U.S. Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground Research Triangle Park (ACC-APG-RTP) Division on behalf of the ARL and the DoD. Each grant will be fully funded for a performance period of 48 months in an amount up to \$1 million (total of direct and indirect [facilities and administration] costs). The proposed budget should divide the amount requested as evenly as possible across the four years of the project unless a different allocation is fully explained in the budget justification.

The DoD expects projects to be completed within the four-year performance period. Requests for no-cost extensions will not be automatically granted. Any such request must be fully justified and submitted sufficiently in advance of the end of the performance period for DoD to give it due consideration and determine whether to approve or deny the request. Applications for renewal or supplemental awards will not be considered under this FOA.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

As provided in 10 U.S.C. § 4144, eligibility for this competition is open only to “covered educational institutions,” which are defined as:

- a. institutions of higher education eligible for assistance under Title III or Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1051 et seq.); or
- b. accredited post-secondary minority institutions.

Eligible applicants include community colleges and other two-year degree granting institutions meeting the definition of a “covered educational institution.”

Enrollments, accreditation, and other factors may affect an institution’s eligibility in any given year. With the exception of HBCUs and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), an institution must apply annually to the Department of Education (DoEd) for Title III or Title V eligibility in order to meet the eligibility criterion above. Other than HBCUs and TCUs, a copy of the DoEd letter certifying eligibility for Title III or Title V assistance **in the year of the application to this FOA** must be included with each application submitted under this FOA. The eligibility letter will not be included in the page limitation of the application (see Section II.D.5. below).

If the DoEd eligibility letter is required, but not submitted with the application, the applicant will be deemed ineligible, and the application will not be considered for funding.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required under this FOA and is not an evaluation factor.

3. Other

- a. An institution may submit no more than three (3) applications under this FOA. If a given HBCU/MI submits more than three applications, the institution will be required to withdraw applications that exceed this limit.
- b. Awards will be for a research project at the applicant HBCU/MI. Faculty and post-doctoral associates at the applicant institution may participate in the project and assist the PI as co-PI or in another capacity. Applications should not request HBCU/MI program funds to support collaborations. Collaborations, if desired, are restricted to other degree-granting Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and must be supported by resources other than HBCU/MI program funds. Such arrangements should be fully explained in the narrative and in the budget justification.
- c. DoD will not accept applications with a budget that exceeds \$1 million.
- d. Funding restrictions are described in Section II.D.7. below.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

Please read the following completely and carefully follow instructions.

DoD is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. For this funding opportunity, DoD requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov. This funding opportunity may be found on Grants.gov by going to the Grants.gov Search Grants screen and entering the funding opportunity number for this FOA, W911NF-23-S-0015, in the Funding Opportunity search box. You can also search for the CFDA Number 12.630 - Basic, Applied, and Advanced Research in Science and Engineering.

2. **How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov**

- a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for DoD funds. Applicants should follow the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration and Grants.gov account to apply for grants.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but SAM registrations may take additional time. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete instructions for organization registration can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

1) *Register with SAM*: All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and will receive a unique entity identifier (UEI) number. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. Detailed instructions for registering with SAM are available at

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

2) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions at

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

3) *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 go to

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

4) *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 Authorized Organization Representative (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. Detailed instructions are available at

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

5) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, go to

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

- b. *Electronic Signature*: 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.

3. How to Submit an Application to DoD via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different

webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace. Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

- a. *Create a Workspace:* Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- b. *Complete a Workspace:* Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the status of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

1) *Mandatory Fields in Forms:* In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

2) *Complete SF-424 Fields First:* The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and UEI Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

a. *Submit a Workspace:* An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

b. *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and by email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for. If you

are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the DoD with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

Online Submission. All applications must be received by 4:00 PM Eastern Time, October 30 2023. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov to acknowledge the successful transmission of their application. The applicant's AOR will also receive the official date/time stamp and the Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When DoD successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application via email to the applicant's AOR. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by DoD.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

5. Content and Form of Application Submission

Applicants must complete all mandatory forms and any optional forms (e.g., SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) in accordance with the instructions on the forms and the additional instructions below. The required fields should be completed in accordance with the "pop-up" instructions on the forms. To activate the instructions, turn on the "Help Mode" (icon with the pointer and question mark at the top of the form). All attachments to Grants.gov forms must be in PDF format (Adobe Portable Document Format). **Please ensure that your attachments are not password protected.**

The following formatting rules apply for the file attachments, except as indicated below:

- Paper size when printed – 8.5 x 11-inch paper, one-sided
- Margins – 1 inch
- Spacing – single
- Font – No smaller than Times New Roman, 12-point font (excluding mandatory forms, which may have other font requirements)
- Number of pages – 25: The 25-page limit applies to the technical portion of the application, consisting of the **Project Summary/Abstract and Project Narrative**.

Pages exceeding this limit will not be considered in the application evaluation. Letters of support should not be submitted.

The following SF-424 (R&R) forms and, as applicable, attachments are required for all applications:

FORM: SF-424 (R&R) (Mandatory) - The SF-424 (R&R) form is to be used as the cover page. Complete this form first to populate data in other forms. By submitting an application through Grants.gov, the AOR (identified by username and password) is providing an “electronic signature.” By “signing” the SF-424 (R&R), an applicant is providing the certification required by 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying as contained in Section II.F.2 of this FOA, and the representations on tax delinquency and felony convictions and prohibition on using funds under grants and cooperative agreements with entities that require certain internal confidentiality agreements (see below regarding “Other Attachments,” Field 12). If you encounter problems, contact customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or at support@grants.gov.

FORM: SF-424 Research & Related Other Project Information (Mandatory)

Complete questions 1 through 6 and attach a file for items 7, 8, and, as applicable, item 12. Under this FOA, applicants are not required to provide attachments for items 9, 10, and 11. The files **must** comply with the following instructions:

Project Summary/Abstract (Field 7 on the form) (Mandatory)

The Project Summary/ Abstract must be no longer than a single page and **must be marked to indicate that it is publicly releasable**, as abstracts for all awarded applications will be placed on a DoD website(s) searchable by the public. The abstract should provide a concise description of the proposed research, using terminology the public can understand, and the research/research-related education that it will support. The header of the abstract should identify the PI, the institution, and the project/application title.

To attach a project summary/abstract, click “Add Attachment.”

Project Narrative (Field 8 on the form)

At the beginning of the project narrative, i.e., preceding the full text of the narrative, indicate the DoD Agency(ies) and research area(s) to which the proposed project is relevant, and provide suggested Agency assignment(s) information in the following format:

- DoD Agency to evaluate the application: ARL, ONR, and/or AFOSR, or all three.
- Scientific Division(s) or Directorate(s), if known, and
- Technical Area(s)/Program Manager(s), if known.

The project narrative must clearly describe the following to enable technical evaluation of the project:

- a. The research to be undertaken in a level of detail that defines the objectives of the project, the approaches to be used, and the relationship of the project to the state of knowledge in the field at the applicant institution or elsewhere.
- b. The anticipated results and how the project aligns with the research interests of the Agency(ies).

- c. The facilities and equipment available for performing the proposed research.
- d. The involvement of undergraduate and/or graduate students in the research project. Although the HBCU/MI program funds will not support students' tuition, stipends, or fees, the involvement of students, both undergraduates and graduates, in the research project is critical to achieving program objectives. Students must be supported by other resources and the funding source(s) must be identified in the budget.

To attach the project narrative, click "Add Attachment."

Bibliography & References Cited (Field 9 on the form) – Include a bibliography and list of literature citations, if applicable. To attach a bibliography, click "Add Attachment."

Facilities and Other Resources (Field 10 on the form) – Include a list of existing facilities and other resources including equipment to be used in the project. To attach facilities information, click "Add Attachment."

Equipment (Field 11 on the form) – Not applicable.

Other Attachments (Field 12 on the form) – To include other relevant attachments, all of which must be in PDF format, click "Add Attachment." This must include completed representations on tax delinquency and felony convictions (included as part of the application package for this FOA).

FORM: (R&R) Research & Related Budget – Complete Sections A through H and attach a budget justification in Section L. The budget justification should provide additional data by element of cost for entries included in Sections A through H sufficient to meet the guidance provided below and ensure meaningful evaluation. Note that Section J should not be completed, as no fee will be paid to a recipient under these awards.

Project costs, i.e., the amount requested from DoD under this FOA, must be shown in total as well as broken down by cost element for each year of the performance period. Assume a proposed start date of August 1, 2024. Additional budget periods may be added to the Research & Related Budget form by clicking on the "Add Period" button at the end of the first budget period. The cumulative Research & Related Budget is automatically calculated on the last page of the budget form and will reflect the total costs for all budget periods.

Additional guidance:

Salary Costs: For all employees/labor categories, indicate the amount of time to be charged to the proposed project (e.g., number of months) and show resulting costs based on current or projected salary and fringe benefits.

Equipment/Instrumentation: Not applicable. This FOA does not support the purchase of equipment/instrumentation.

Travel: Identify any travel requirements for the PI/Co-PI, key personnel, or students associated with the proposed research and define the relationship of such travel to the project. For other than local travel, list proposed destinations, cost estimate, and basis of cost estimate. Funds under this FOA may not be used for foreign travel.

Domestic travel must not exceed \$2,500 per year/per person for the PI/Co-PI. Travel for individuals other than the PI may be budgeted if such travel is to a DoD facility, a professional technical meeting, or other venue that may enhance achievement of the research and educational objectives of the project. Travel allowance for individuals other than the PI is limited to \$1,500 per year/per person.

Student/Trainee Support Costs: Funds awarded under this FOA may not be used for student support. However, the involvement of undergraduate and graduate students in research and research education is critical to achieving program objectives. Support for students (tuition, stipends, fees, and other expenses) must be covered by other resources and the funding source(s) must be identified in the budget.

Other Direct Costs:

Materials and Supplies: Estimate costs of materials and supplies, and provide basis for cost estimates (e.g., vendor quotes or vendor websites).

Publication Costs: Estimate the costs of publishing and reporting research results.

Consultants: Funds under this FOA may not be used for consultants.

Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs: Funds awarded under this FOA may not be used for research collaborations. Collaborations, if desired, are restricted to other degree-granting Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and must be supported by resources other than HBCU/MI program funds. Such arrangements should be fully explained in the narrative and in the budget justification.

Equipment or Facility Rental/User Fees: Funds awarded under this FOA may not be used to purchase equipment/instrumentation (*i.e., items with an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year*). Equipment or facility rental/user fees may be requested only if such equipment/facility belongs to the applicant institution.

Alterations and Renovations: Funds awarded under this FOA may not be used for alterations or renovations of facilities.

Indirect Costs (Facilities and Administration (F&A)): If an F&A rate has been negotiated by a federal agency, provide the period covered by the rate, the name of the cognizant agency, and a copy of the current F&A agreement. If an institution does not have a current F&A rate, it should submit an F&A indirect cost rate proposal with the application package to be approved by the Federal awarding agency head or delegate. An institution may elect to use the *de minimis* rate only if it has never had a federally negotiated F&A (indirect cost) rate.

Total Direct and Indirect Costs: Provide the total costs, year by year, and a cost summary for the entire proposed period.

To attach the budget justification at Section L, click “Add Attachment.”

Note: Be sure that the total amount requested in the budget agrees with the amount entered in Block #15 of the Cover Page (Form SF 424 (R&R))

To evaluate compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. A§ 1681 Et. Seq.), the Department of Defense is collecting demographic and career information to be able to assess the success rates of women who are proposed for key roles in applications in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics disciplines. To enable this assessment, each application must include the following two forms completed as indicated.

FORM: SF-424 Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

(Mandatory) – The Degree Type and Degree Year fields on the Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) form will be used by DoD as the source for career information. In addition to the required fields on the form, applicants must complete these two fields for all individuals who are identified as Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) or Co-Project Director/Principal Investigator (Co-PD/Co-PI). Additional senior/key persons can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button.

Biographical sketches are required for the PD/PI and for other key personnel (not to exceed three (3) pages each). These will not be included in the page count. Be sure to include education information and the year in which each degree was received.

To attach biographical sketches, click “Add Attachment.”

FORM: SF-424 (R&R) Personal Data (Mandatory) - This form will be used by DoD as the source of demographic information, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and disability information for the PD/PI and all other persons identified as Co-PD/Co-PIs. Each application must include this form with the name fields completed for the PD/PI and any Co-PD/Co-PIs; however, provision of the demographic information in the form is voluntary. If completing the form for multiple individuals, each Co-PD/Co-PI can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button. The demographic information, if provided, will be used for statistical purposes only and will not be made available to merit reviewers. Applicants who do not wish to provide some or all of the information should check or select the “Do not wish to provide” option.

FORM: SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Optional) - This form is applicable if any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the application for a grant under this FOA. If the applicant has lobbying activity to disclose, complete this form and include it with the other Grants.gov forms in the application package.

6. Submission Date and Time

Applications must be received by 4:00 PM Eastern Time on October 30, 2023. Applicants are responsible for submitting applications in sufficient time to allow them to reach Grants.gov by the specified time. To minimize the possibility of a late submission due to unexpected network or equipment issues, DoD recommends that applications be submitted at least two days prior to the date and time indicated above. 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 will 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. If an emergency or unanticipated event interrupts normal federal government processes that prevent applications

from being received by Grants.gov by the exact time specified in this FOA, and the situation precludes amendment of the FOA closing date, the time specified for receipt of applications will be deemed to be extended to the same time of day specified in this FOA on the first work day on which normal federal government processes resume.

Application Receipt Notices - As indicated in II.D.4. above, Grants.gov will provide a series of emails to the applicant confirming submission and receipt of the application. Applicants can track the status of their applications at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/track-my-application.html>.

7. Funding Restrictions

Funds awarded under this FOA will not support the following:

- a. Student support (tuition, stipends, fees)
- b. Purchase of equipment/instrumentation (*Federal definition – items with an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year.*)
- c. Foreign travel
- d. Rental of equipment or user fees for facilities. (*Equipment or facility rental/user fees may be requested only if such equipment/facility belongs to the applicant institution.*)
- e. Consultants
- f. Subawards
- g. Alteration or renovation of facilities.

8. Prohibition on contracting with entities using certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment

Section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 (Public Law 115-232) prohibits the head of an executive agency from obligating or expending loan or grant funds to procure or obtain, extend, or renew a contract to procure or obtain, or enter into a contract (or extend or renew a contract) to procure or obtain the equipment, services, or systems prohibited systems as identified in section 889 of the NDAA for FY 2019.

1. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.216 and 200.471, all awards that are issued on or after August 13, 2020, recipients and subrecipients are prohibited from obligating or expending loan or grant funds to:

- (1) Procure or obtain;
- (2) Extend or renew a contract to procure or obtain; or
- (3) Enter into a contract (or extend or renew a contract) to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. As described in Public Law 115-232, section 889, covered telecommunications equipment is telecommunications equipment produced by

Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

(i) For the purpose of public safety, security of government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

(ii) Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment.

(iii) Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of the National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the government of a covered foreign country.

2. In implementing the prohibition under Public Law 115-232, section 889, subsection (f), paragraph (1), heads of executive agencies administering loan, grant, or subsidy programs shall prioritize available funding and technical support to assist affected businesses, institutions and organizations as is reasonably necessary for those affected entities to transition from covered communications equipment and services, to procure replacement equipment and services, and to ensure that communications service to users and customers is sustained.

3. See Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.

COVERED FOREIGN COUNTRY means the People's Republic of China.

9. Other Requirements

An applicant may withdraw an application at any time before award by written notice or by e-mail. The AOR must send the notice of withdrawal to the DoD Grants Officer identified in this FOA. Withdrawals are effective upon receipt of notice by the Grants Officer.

E. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria

Primary evaluation criteria (of equal importance to each other) are:

- a. Scientific and technical merit of the proposed research
- b. Relevance of the proposed research to interests of the Agency(ies) and potential contributions of the proposed research to the DoD mission
- c. Potential of the proposed project to develop new research capabilities or enhance existing research capabilities and to broaden the research base in support of national defense

- d. Qualifications of the PI to achieve the objectives of the project

Secondary evaluation criteria, of less importance than primary criteria but of equal importance to each other, are:

- e. Potential of the project to enhance research capabilities and research education in STEM disciplines relevant to interests of the Agency(ies).
- f. Budgetary realism and cost effectiveness of the application budget.

2. Review and Selection Process

Scientists and engineers of the Agencies will evaluate applications using the above criteria. The most meritorious applications will be recommended for awards commensurate with available funding. Approval of the awards recommendation is the authority of the Research Director of the USD(R&E) Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Science and Technology.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Award decisions are expected to be announced by late May 2024. The PI and AOR will receive a letter via e-mail indicating whether the application was accepted or declined. Grant awards are expected to be issued by late July 2024.

4. Recipient Qualification

In accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance in parts 180 and 200 of Title 2, CFR, it is DoD policy that DoD Components must report and use integrity and performance information in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), or any successor system designated by OMB.

If the total Federal share of a grant (or cooperative agreement) will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000):

- a. The DoD Grants Officer, prior to making an award, will review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- b. An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- c. The DoD Grants Officer will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.205, Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

F. Award Administration Information

1. Federal Award Notices

The notification e-mail, specified in Section II.E.3. above, regarding a successful application must not be regarded as authorization to commit or expend DoD funds. A grant award signed by the DoD Grants Officer is the authorizing document. Applicants whose applications are recommended for negotiation of award will be contacted by a DoD Contract/Grant Specialist 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 actual award start date will be determined at this time.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Each grant awarded under this FOA will be governed by the general terms and conditions in effect at the time of the award that conform to DoD's implementation of OMB guidance applicable to financial assistance in 2 CFR part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards." The DoD Terms and Conditions (latest version, January 2023) are located at <https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/manage-your-award/manage-grant-award/grants-terms-conditions>

These terms and conditions are incorporated by reference in this FOA. Awards must comply with all applicable national policy requirements. The key national policy requirements that may relate to an award under this FOA are included in the terms and conditions specified in paragraph 2.a. above.

By electronically signing the SF-424, the applicant affirms its agreement with the following certification:

Certification Required for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards

The certification at Appendix A to 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying is the only certification required at the time of application submission for a grant or cooperative agreement award. The certification is as follows:

"By signing and submitting an application that may result in the award of a grant exceeding \$100,000, the prospective awardee is certifying, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that:

(1) No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employ of a

Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, and loans, or cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000.00 and not more than \$100,000.00 for each failure.

3. Representations Required for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards

Appropriations Provisions on Tax Delinquency and Felony Convictions

Check either "is" or "is not" for each of these two representations, as appropriate for the proposing institution, include the AOR signature and point of contact information, and attach the representation page to Field 12 of the SF-424 Research & Related Other Project Information form. The page for these representations is provided with the application materials that are available for download at Grants.gov.

Representations:

The applicant is () is not () a "Corporation" meaning any entity, including any institution of higher education, other nonprofit organization, or for-profit entity that has filed articles of incorporation. If the applicant is a "Corporation" please complete the following representations:

(1) The applicant represents that it is () or is not () a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

(2) The applicant represents that it is () is not () a corporation that was convicted of a criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months.

NOTE: If an applicant responds in the affirmative to either of the above representations, the applicant is ineligible to receive an award unless the agency suspension and debarment official (SDO) has considered suspension or debarment and determined that further action is not required to protect the Government's interests. The applicant therefore should provide information about its tax liability or conviction to the agency's SDO as soon as it can do so, to facilitate completion of the required considerations before award decisions are made.

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0704-0494

OMB EXPIRATION DATE: 11/30/2019

AGENCY DISCLOSURE NOTICE

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average five minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Executive Services Directorate, Directives Division, 4800 Mark Center Drive, East Tower, Suite 02G09, Alexandria, VA 22350-3100 [0704-0494]. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

Prohibition on Contracting with Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements

Agreement with the representation below will be affirmed by checking the “I agree” box in block 17 of the SF424 (R&R) as part of the electronic proposal submitted via Grants.gov. The representation reads as follows:

By submission of its proposal or application, the applicant represents that it 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.

Note that: (1) the basis for this representation is a prohibition in Section 743 of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2015, Pub. L. 113-235) on provision of funds through grants and cooperative agreements to entities with certain internal confidentiality agreements or statements; and (2) Section 743 states that it does not contravene requirements applicable to Standard Form 312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

4. Reporting Requirements

Recipients must submit periodic reports as indicated below, details of which will be provided upon grant award.

- a. Annual reports and final financial reports using the Standard Form (SF) 425;
- b. Annual performance progress reports using the Research Performance Progress Report to indicate the progress of the project and other information as specified in the award; and
- c. Final technical report.
- d. If the total Federal share of the award exceeds \$500,000, the reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII to Part 200 of Title 2 CFR will be included in the terms and conditions of the award.

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

An institution applying to this FOA is required to (a) be registered in SAM prior to submitting its application; (b) provide a valid UEI number in its application; and (c) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

ACC-APG-RTP Division on behalf of the ARL, as the awarding office for awards under this FOA, will not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time ACC-APG-RTP Division is ready to make an award, the evaluation panel will determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

G. Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions concerning programmatic content, applicants are advised to contact the Agencies' program managers identified in the documents (BAAs, FOAs) listed in Section 1.B. above. For help with administrative questions or problems, points of contact are as follows:

Questions regarding program policy should be directed to:

Evelyn Kent
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
[Evelyn W. Kent.civ@mail.mil](mailto:Evelyn.W.Kent.civ@mail.mil)

Questions regarding program execution and administration should be directed to:

Patrice D. Collins
Army Research Laboratory
Patrice.d.collins.civ@army.mil

OR

Monique N. Wright
Army Research Laboratory
Monique.n.wright.civ@army.mil

Anthony C. Smith, Sr.
Office of Naval Research
anthony.c.smith9.civ@us.navy.mil

Edward Lee
Air Force Office of Scientific Research
Edward.lee@us.af.mil

DoD Grants Officer:
William A. Creech
US Army Contracting Command, Aberdeen Proving Ground
Research Triangle Park Division
William.a.creech3.civ@army.mil

H. Other Information

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.

Applicants are advised that employees of commercial firms under contract to the government may be used to administratively process applications. By submitting an application, an applicant consents to allowing access to its application(s) by support contractors. These support contracts include nondisclosure agreements prohibiting their contractor employees from disclosing any information submitted by applicants.