

**NOFO Questions and Answers**

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*Updated 24 FEB 2025*

1	It mentions that it should involve a team of 5-7 researchers. Can they be in several institutions? If so, is it expected that one should have most members of the team belong to a single institution?	The uCoEs can have researchers from different institutions, but this is not a requirement. Additionally, there does not need to be 5-7 institutions for 5-7 researchers.
2	I am writing to inquire about whether an independent research institute with 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, is eligible to apply for the new Center of Excellence on Compositional Optimization, Dynamical Systems and Control (CODAC).	Per page 17 of the NOFO, nonprofit institutions dedicated to improving science, mathematics and engineering education are eligible. If that is true for your institution (as well as any other eligibility requirements in the NOFO), then you may apply.
3	I am reaching out to inquire if it is possible to know who the PM for this call is.	The PM was not specified in the NOFO as there should be no direct contact with the PM. This would be a violation of the acquisition process for this opportunity.
4	Should the white paper include any budgetary and biographical information, and in case, does it count toward the four pages?  Should the white paper include references, and in case, do they count toward the four pages.	The white paper should not include any budget information. Biographical information and references should be included with the white paper but will not count toward the page count. Please see pages 27-28 of the NOFO for white paper requirements and ensure that the white papers reflect the evaluation criteria.
5	I see "proposing university" or something akin to this in several places in the CODAC announcement. Are you looking for single university teams, i.e. in the sense that all investigators and other personal or co-located at the same university? Or, can a university have a sub-contract with other universities, etc? I do see "team of universities" as well, but I want to make sure before I start contacting my colleagues across the country. Furthermore, if preference is given one way or another, vis a vis number of universities, this information would be greatly appreciated.	The uCoEs can have researchers from different institutions, but this is not a requirement. Additionally, there does not need to be 5-7 institutions for 5-7 researchers. Subcontracting will be determined by the primary university. Researchers from multiple disciplines may be necessary to meet the needs of the uCoE, and offerors should explain why team members will be part of the team.
6	Is this a call for individual white paper pre-proposals of the type of individual research grants that support many of us in the systems and control community? Or is it a call for group or center proposals?	Per page 18 of the NOFO, individuals are ineligible to apply. Per page 17, you are eligible to submit an application if you are a qualified and responsible educational institution in the United States. Educational institution means a local educational agency, college, university, or any other nonprofit institution dedicated to improving science, mathematics, and engineering education. The uCoEs can have researchers from different institutions, but this is not a requirement. There does not need to be 5-7 institutions for 5-7 researchers.

7	Are H-1B worker visa holders eligible to serve as PI or co-PI of the project?	Per page 18 of the NOFO, students and post-docs working under the uCoE must be able to collaborate with AFRL personnel at AFRL laboratories and facilities, where access is restricted to U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Therefore, PIs and co-PIs must also be U.S. citizens or permanent residents in order to properly collaborate at AFRL laboratories and facilities.
8	Is there a limit to how many universities may comprise one team?	No, there is not a limit to how many universities may comprise one team.
9	We have been collaborating with AFRL researchers over the past years. To what extent can we involve individual researchers or a research team at AFRL in our white paper proposal?	Employees of federal agencies are not allowed to be part of proposing teams per page 18 of the NOFO. Further, government personnel cannot directly contribute to whitepapers/proposals or provide guidance in any way aside from the guidance provided publicly through the NOFO and the Q&As. Please note that page 15 of the NOFO states, "Proposals should highlight any history of collaboration with AFRL or other government research labs."
10	Do you have requirements or specifications for the algorithm solvers (e.g., time and space complexity, memory usage, target hardware (CPU, GPU, microcontroller), etc.)?	The NOFO, section A.III, provides guidance on computational considerations. We will repeat the relevant sections here for convenience: "...formalisms should be developed with computational tractability in mind." "In addition to traditional challenges posed by large scale optimization problems such as the need for approximation and heuristic algorithms, distributed solving, [and] leveraging high performance computing, we face a challenge of being modeler friendly. A proposed formalism should help not only to facilitate the exploitation of problem structure and properties for faster solving, but also aid modelers in the construction of composite problems." "We seek a formulation that enables context dependent employment of different solvers and models."
11	Are University Affiliated Research Center (UARC)s researchers eligible to participate as primary or subaward recipients under this announcement?	Yes, UARCs are eligible to apply for this opportunity.