

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission University Nuclear Leadership Program (UNLP)



Research and Development Grant, (FY) 2025.

NOTICE OF GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT (NOFO) NUMBER: 31310025K0001

Assistance Listings: 77.008

Announcement Type: New

Nuclear Regulatory Commission (<http://www.nrc.gov>)

NOFO Issue Date	November 27, 2024
Submission Deadline for Applications	February 14, 2025
Estimated Award Date	September 30, 2025

Applications must be successfully received by Grants.gov no later than 5:00 p.m., ET on 02/14/2025. If the recipient needs information on alternate means of submitting its application, see [Section IV.C.](#)

Hearing Impaired

Telecommunications for the hearing impaired are available at: TDD: 301-415-5575.

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Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Agency Contacts

We encourage inquiries concerning this NOFO and welcome the opportunity to answer questions from potential applicants. All inquiries should be directed to the following:

NRC Financial Contact

M'Lita Carr

Grants Officer

Phone: 301-415-6869

Email: MLita.Carr@nrc.gov

NRC Program Contact

Sarah Shaffer

Sr. Grants Admin. Specialist

Phone: 301-415-2031

Email: Sarah.Shaffer@nrc.gov

Applicants interested in responding to this NOFO are encouraged to promptly review it in its entirety and bring to the Government's attention any discrepancies, inconsistencies, or ambiguities identified in the NOFO or the attachments. All NOFO related questions shall be submitted via FedConnect by 4:00 p.m. on January 3, 2025 (Eastern Time).

The Government may elect to respond to questions received after the deadline. The closing date will not be extended for the purpose of responding to questions received after the established deadline.

The NOFO will be amended to post the questions submitted by interested applicants and their respective responses. Institutions are responsible for ensuring the questions submitted are general in nature and do not include any proprietary information, nor Personally Identifiable Information (PII). The Government may elect to not provide a response to questions received that do not adhere to these instructions.

B. Executive Summary

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is an independent agency, established by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, tasked with licensing, and regulating the Nation's civilian use of byproduct, source, and special nuclear material to ensure adequate protection of public health and safety, to promote the common defense and security, and to protect the environment.

The program provides funding to support research and development (R&D) for nuclear science, engineering, technology, and related disciplines to develop a workforce capable of supporting the design, construction, operation, and regulation of nuclear facilities and the safe handling of nuclear materials. University R&D activities provide an opportunity to complement current, ongoing NRC-led research. More specifically, the program shall be used to provide financial assistance for R&D projects relevant to the programmatic mission of the NRC referenced above, with an emphasis on providing federal financial assistance with respect to research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of new and advanced nuclear technologies. Social science research will be considered under this announcement (for example, projects that would foster the development of innovative community engagement strategies, including incorporation of principles of equity and environmental justice).

The NRC invites R&D projects that complement its current research portfolio and that help the NRC prepare for upcoming challenges. A summary of NRC research activities can be found at [NRC Research Activities](#) in the FY22-24 Research Prospectus. The NRC seeks projects that provide a variety of direct and indirect, near- and long-term outcomes. These outcomes include:

- Identification and closure of potentially important technical gaps ahead of regulatory needs,
- Heightened awareness and knowledge of key advanced technology developments being pursued outside of NRC, and
- Improved foundational knowledge on key topics of future regulatory interest.

D. Areas of Interest

Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Application of wireless communications, drones, robotics for the purpose of remote monitoring, and autonomous/remote control in operations and maintenance activities;
- Digital instrumentation/controls (I&C), data analytics, and advanced sensors/instrumentation, at nuclear facilities;
- Cybersecurity associated with digital instrumentation and controls, remote monitoring/control, wireless communications at high-consequence facilities;
- Evaluation of methods, approaches and major uncertainties in assessing risk for operating, new and advanced reactors and other type of licensed nuclear facilities or medical applications (e.g., modeling of complex dependencies, advanced calculation techniques, multi-unit and multi-moule risk, application of risk techniques to radiological consequence analysis, development of improved risk metrics);
- Human and organizational factors and human reliability analysis for advanced nuclear applications, (e.g., improved models for dependency, consideration of organizational factors, dynamic methods, human-system integration and risk analysis);
- Characterization of fire hazards in new reactor designs (e.g., sodium, molten salt reactors (MSRs), high-temperature gas-cooled reactors (HTGRs), lead-cooled fast reactor (LFR)) and post-fire safe shutdown capability;
- Characterization of natural hazards including but not limited to flooding, high winds, hurricanes, wildfires, climate change;
- Analysis models and methods for fuel and cladding performance;
- Advanced technology approaches (e.g., data and text analytics, data visualization techniques, and artificial intelligence) and applications (e.g., data mining, autonomous control) in nuclear power-related applications;
- Evaluation of the radiological releases and offsite consequences for fusion reactor accidents;
- Application of innovative and advanced technologies for space nuclear launches;
- Application of innovative and advanced technologies for decommissioning and remediation of radiologically contaminated sites;

- Evaluation of the technical gaps and uncertainties in licensing new veterinary and medical uses of byproduct materials;
- Analytical approaches that combine probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) risk quantification methods with reactor systems sensitivity or uncertainty analysis methods to quantify the risk significance of safety analysis errors or uncertainties;
- Performance-based, technology-neutral safety assurance;
- Evaluation of technical gaps and major uncertainties in assessing risk for decommissioning and waste management;
- Comparative analysis, consistencies, and harmonization in application of dosimetry and dose coefficients by the NRC and national and international regulatory agencies;
- Activities in the areas of neutronics, thermal hydraulics, and severe accident analysis that will help validate the NRC's scientific computer codes;
- Additive (advanced) manufacturing for nuclear technologies;
- Evaluation of environmental justice in context of nuclear facilities;
- Analytical approaches to determine a rational risk premium for high-consequence, low-probability events for use in cost-benefit analyses;
- Performance-based regulatory review: developing technical criteria for consistent evaluation.

Your application must emphasize the technical area(s) proposed if listed above.

Section II – Award Information

A. Type of Award

NRC anticipates awarding grants under this NOFO.

B. Availability of Funds

Award of these grants is contingent upon the availability of funds. The estimated budget for this program is \$9 - \$10 million.

C. Budget and Project Period

This is a three (3)-year grant program. Research and development funds may be requested up to \$500,000.00 total costs (direct costs and facilities and administrative costs) for the project period.

D. Expected Number of Awards

It is anticipated that this NOFO will result in the award of multiple grants.

The number of awards will depend on the number, quality, duration, costs, and merit of the applications received.

Section III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Institutions

Institutional representatives may submit an application(s) if the institution is a regionally accredited U.S. public or private institution of higher education, as defined in [Section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 \(20 USC 1002\)](#). Non-domestic (non-U.S.) Entities (Foreign Institutions) are not eligible to apply or receive federal financial assistance under this announcement.

Institutions of Higher Education that are part of a statewide university system but have a unique Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) may submit applications.

The NRC is fully committed to broadening the inclusion and contribution of communities that have been historically underserved. Eligible minority serving institutions (MSIs, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), or institutions located in overburdened and underserved communities are highly encouraged to apply to this NOFO.

- Public/State Controlled Institutions of Higher Education
- Private Institutions of Higher Education
- Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs)
- Tribal Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCUs)
- Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTI)
- Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (ANNHIs),
- Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs).

Under this announcement, Federal agencies, national laboratories, and Federally funded research and development centers are not eligible to apply for these Federal assistance grants.

Affiliates that manage externally funded programs for Institutions of Higher Education are eligible to submit applications for this NOFO on behalf of the institution; however, award funds are only provided to the institution itself.

B. Eligibility Requirements

B.1. Eligible Principal Investigators

Any individual(s) with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research as the PI is invited to work with their organization to develop an application for support. The application may also include Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs), who are individuals with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to make a significant contribution to the project. Individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups as well as individuals with disabilities are always encouraged to apply for NRC support.

More than one PI (i.e., multiple PIs), may be designated on the application for projects that require a “team science” approach and therefore clearly do not fit the single-PI model.

The decision of whether to apply for a grant with a single-PI or multiple PIs is the responsibility of the investigators and applicant organizations and should be determined by the scientific goals of the project. Applications for grants with multiple PIs will require additional information. When considering the multiple PI option, please be aware that the structure and governance of the PI leadership team as well as the knowledge, skills and experience of the individual PIs will be factored into the assessment of the overall scientific merit of the application. Multiple PIs on a project share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the project, intellectually and logistically. Each PI is responsible and accountable to the grantee organization for the proper conduct of the project or program, including the submission of required reports and documents.

If a proposed PI or Co-PI has a professional relationship with a non-educational entity (e.g., a national lab, an NRC licensee, or a corporation), then the PI/Co-PI must clearly state this relationship on their resume. [[Refer to Section IV.B.10](#) “Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCOI) Disclosures”.]

B.2. Number of Applications

An institution may submit no more than three (3) applications in response to this announcement.

Although the Primary Investigator (PI)s prepare the grant application and are responsible for conducting and supervising the research, the actual applicant is the educational institution. The same PIs may not be on more than one application. A PI may not be a Co-PI on another application in response to this announcement.

An application in response to this announcement may include more than one Co-PI. However, an individual can only be proposed as a Co-PI within one (1) application in response to this announcement.

B.3. Citizenship Requirement

For the duration of the grant period, all undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, PIs, Co-PIs, and other participants supported under or participating in the grant must meet the following citizenship requirements:

- (1) Be a United States citizen, or
- (2) Be a noncitizen national of the United States,* or
- (3) Have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (i.e., in possession of a currently valid permanent residence Green Card). Individuals on temporary visas, as well as refugees and asylees, are not eligible.

*Noncitizen nationals are persons born in outlying possessions of the United States (i.e., American Samoa and Swains Island).

B.4. Eligible Partnership Arrangements

Applicants may partner for subaward solely with other U.S. institutions of higher education. The NRC encourages the diversification of its grants by offering an incentive to those U.S. educational institutions that include in their application an effective cooperative or partnership arrangements with U.S. institutions that are designated as Minority Serving Institutions (MSI). Applications must describe any proposed partnerships in detail.

B.5. Eligible Participants in the Grant

Non-U.S. institutions may not participate in the grant, including foreign institutions offering to do so at no charge.

Optional Participation by Domestic (U.S.) Entities that Are Not Institutions of Higher Education.

Participation or collaboration (e.g., collaborative discussions or experiments) by Federal laboratories is permissible subject to an organizational conflict of interest review by the NRC. Proposed collaborative discussions, exchange/use of materials, equipment, and facilities during the grant research with any other organization(s) are subject to an organizational conflict of interest review by the NRC. [\[Refer to Section IV.B.10 “Organizational Conflict of Interest \(OCOI\) Disclosures”.\]](#)

Peer-to-peer academic exchanges are permissible with both non-U.S. and U.S. educational institutions.

C. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost-sharing or matching funds is not required and is not a scored review criterion.

For purposes of this announcement, cost sharing or matching means additional contributions (either financial or in-kind) that enhance the overall goals of the research grant program. Cost-sharing or matching may be used to build infrastructure in nuclear and related disciplines and may include a variety of areas ranging from support of students to facility improvements or expansion. A written agreement or letter within the last 12 months, with a cost-sharing or matching commitment is required at the time the application is submitted. See [2 CFR § 200.306](#) for additional information. If providing cost-sharing or matching funds, institutions must include the type and value of support and describe how the contribution will enhance the program.

Section IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Application Forms

The institution may download an SF-424 Grant Application Package and instructions for this announcement by going to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and following the directions provided on that Web site. Institutions must complete a one-time registration at [Grants.gov/applicant registration](https://www.grants.gov/applicant-registration).

If the institution has questions regarding Grants.gov registration, refer to:

Grants.gov

- Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726
Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on Federal holidays ([see Office of Personnel Management Federal Holidays](#)).
- Email Support: Support@grants.gov

The institution prepares its application using the SF-424 application form.

The SF-424 application has several components. An institution's application is complete only if it includes the following components:

Required Components:

- SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance - CFDA Number: 77.008
- SF-424A: Budget Information - complete Sections A, B¹, C, D, E and F
- Certificate Regarding Lobbying Form
- SF-LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable

[Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will acknowledge receipt of applications. The submitting Authorized Organizational Representative receives the Grants.gov acknowledgments. Applicants can track the recipients' applications at: [Grants.gov/track-my-application](https://www.grants.gov/track-my-application).

B. Application Content

Applications must include all required elements to be considered for award. Incomplete applications will be considered non-compliant and/or nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered for an award.

Required Elements for Applications

- Executive Summary
- Project Description
- References
- Approval documentation of the MSI Partnership and implementation plan (if applicable)
- Budget and Budget Narrative
- Current and Pending Support

¹ Applicants shall provide the budget breakdown required in Section B - Budget Categories by Year.

- Curriculum Vitae
- Past NRC Funding and Summary of Results from Past NRC Funding, if applicable. If not applicable, a statement to that effect is required.
- **Complete Narrative Responses** to Organizational Conflict of Interest Assessment [[Refer to Section IV.B.10](#) “Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCOI) Disclosures”.]
- Other required forms.
- Cost Share Letter, if applicable

B.1. Format

Font Size, Style, and Color

- **11 point, Arial, black color** (A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters.) This is a requirement for all pages included in the document, i.e., table of contents, references, etc.

Page Size and Margins

- Use standard paper size (8 ½" x 11").
- Use one-inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right).
- The NRC requires all text attachments to the SF-424 application forms to be submitted as PDF files. Adobe PDF format is preferred.

Footer

- Each page should include a page number and Principal Investigator's last name in the bottom right-hand corner.

Attachments

- NRC requires all text attachments to the SF-424 application forms to be submitted as separate individual PDF files. Adobe PDF format is preferred.

B.2. Executive Summary (one-page maximum)

Describe the proposed project's essential elements.

- Descriptive title of proposed project: **NOTE: The applicant should describe its program as the University's program and not the NRC's program.**
- Name, address, email address and telephone number of the PI(s).
- Name(s), address, email address and affiliations of other investigator/collaborative personnel who will contribute significantly to the project.
- The project's total funding request.
- Concise statement of the project's objectives and benefits.

B.3. Project Description

Applications must include and clearly identify the following elements in the Project Description section:

1. SIGNIFICANCE

[Section I.D.](#) of the NOFO, “AREAS OF INTEREST,” identifies a list of technical areas of interest to the NRC. The list is not exhaustive. To demonstrate “Significance,” the applicant must clearly identify the specific technical area(s) of interest the proposal seeks to address (specify if it is an area identified in [Section I.D](#) or a new proposed area of interest). This section should also provide a detailed explanation of the effect of the studies on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field.

2. APPROACH

When presenting the approach, the applicant must demonstrate how the conceptual approach, design, methods, and/or analyses are developed and integrated with the objectives of the project. In addition, the applicant should state the management structure and the capability for administering the program. The applicant should also identify the evaluation plan that will provide information on the effectiveness of the project.

3. INNOVATION

Demonstrate that the research is original and innovative. Provide a detailed description of the project challenges existing paradigms or common practice; addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barriers to progress in the field; and/or develops or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area.

4. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

State how the PI and other researchers are experienced and have the expertise to execute the project.

5. PARTNERSHIPS WITH MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS

State any partnerships with minority serving institutions (MSI). A detailed description of the partnership and implementation plan approved by the lead and the partnering institution(s) must be provided. Details must include the role of the MSI and how it will be integrated into the project as well as the funding that will be used to support the MSI. A letter from the MSI should be signed by both the MSI PI and institution administrator and provided as an attachment.

The project description is limited to seven (7) pages or less, including text, tables, and visual materials (e.g., charts, graphs, maps, photographs). The page limit does not include the following:

- Executive Summary;
- References;
- Current and Pending Support;
- Curriculum Vitae;
- Budget and Budget Narrative;
- Past NRC Funding and Summary of Results from Past NRC Funding, if applicable. If not applicable, a statement to that effect is required;
- Approval documentation of the MSI Partnership and implementation plan (if applicable)
- Response to Organizational Conflict of Interest Assessment [[Refer to Section IV.B.10](#) "Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCOI) Disclosures".]
- Other required forms.

B.4. References

This section is limited to two (2) pages and must include bibliographic citations only. It must not be used to provide additional information outside of the 7-page Project Description.

B.5. Detailed Budget Narrative and Application Instructions

Submit a detailed budget narrative explaining the need for and justifying the cost of the Federal and the non-Federal expenditures as they relate to the application objectives. Budget should be labeled with each budget line item and proposed funding amount. **[\[Refer to attachment 1 - sample budget narrative\]](#). This level of detail must be followed in describing the institution/organization's budget narrative represented on the SF-424A).**

B.6. Summary of Current and Pending Support

The applicant must provide information on all current and pending support for ongoing projects and proposals. Include the proposed project and all other projects or activities using Federal assistance or that require a portion of time of the PI or other senior personnel. Describe the relationship between the proposed project and these other projects and state the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the projects.

B.7. Curriculum Vitae

Include a curriculum vitae (two (2) pages maximum in length) for each individual proposed in the grant application, including the proposed PI, Co-PI, and other senior personnel involved in carrying out the proposal. The curriculum vitae must include recent relevant publication references.

B.8. Past NRC Funding and Summary of Results from Past NRC Funding, if applicable

B.9. Citizenship Certification

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH U.S. IMMIGRATION LAWS AND REGULATIONS (RESEARCH GRANTS) – TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO AWARD

When Should the Citizenship Certification of Compliance Statement be Submitted to the NRC?

Applicant institutions are not required at the time of application to complete the Citizenship Certification of Compliance Statement. However, if your institution's application is recommended for award, the NRC will contact your institution and require, at that time, that your institution provide a complete Citizenship Certification of Compliance Statement on your institution's letterhead.

Required Language for the Citizenship Certification of Compliance Statement (to be submitted on university letterhead)

The required certification form is provided and must be submitted prior to award, and when required by the NRC. The certification must be on the institution's letterhead and be signed by dean of the university.

When required by the NRC, the applicant shall provide the certification statement regarding the citizenship status of all researchers, undergraduate students, graduate students, PIs, Co-PIs, and other participants supported under or participating in this grant. For researchers, PIs, Co-PIs, undergraduate students, graduate students, and other participants who are non-U.S. citizens, institutions are required to provide documentation that the individual is admitted to the United States for permanent residence (i.e., a current permanent residence Green Card). Individuals on temporary visas, as well as refugees and asylees, are not eligible.

An institution awarded an NRC research grant will have an ongoing obligation to notify the NRC when it proposes to add a new participant to the grant (e.g., PI, Co-PI, undergraduate students, graduate student, etc.). If the institution adds a new participant to the grant, the NRC will require a new Citizenship Certification of Compliance Statement at that time. **[Refer to attachment 2 – Certification of Compliance with U.S. Immigration Laws and Regulations (Research Grants)]**

B.10. Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCOI) Disclosures

Pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.112 and the NRC's award policy, grant applicants (as non-Federal entities) are required to disclose to the NRC (in narrative writing) any potential organizational conflicts of interest. The NRC will review the information disclosed by the applicant in order to make an organizational conflict of interest determination. Grant awardees and associated sub-awardees and/or consultants will have an ongoing obligation to disclose in writing to the NRC any potential conflicts of interest.

Detailed narrative disclosures must be provided as an attachment to the application. The disclosures must be clear and detailed. It is not sufficient to simply state that there is no organizational conflict of interest.

The NRC's Requirements for Potential Organizational Conflicts of Interest

The NRC is required to avoid or eliminate organizational conflicts of interest. The NRC achieves this objective by requiring all grant applicants to disclose information describing relationships, if any, with organizations or persons (including those regulated by the NRC) that may give rise to actual or potential conflicts of interest in the event of grant award. Grantee conflict of interest determinations cannot be made automatically or routinely and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with **the ultimate test: If the grant is awarded, might the grantee or any grant participant (regardless of whether they receive grant funds) be placed in a position that gives rise to organizational conflict?**

Required Information

If a PI, Co-PI, or any member of the research team has a professional affiliation with a commercial entity, Federal laboratory, or other organization (even if the affiliation does not involve remuneration), **such affiliation must be clearly identified on resumes and project descriptions included in the application.** Federal laboratories, commercial entities, or other organizations who are proposed for collaborative discussions during the grant research are subject to an organizational conflict of interest review by the NRC. Any other proposed organization (other than the awardee) may not manage/control the grant project or provide substantial direction for the grant. If an applicant intends to involve a Federal laboratory, commercial entity, or any other organization, then the applicant must provide information requested below:

Does the applicant's proposal include any involvement with a Federal laboratory, commercial, entity? If so, applicant must answer these questions:

1. **Role of the Federal Laboratory or Other Organization in the Grant**
 - a. Describe the proposed role(s) in sufficient detail to ensure a full understanding by the NRC.
 - b. Disclose to the NRC any interagency agreements or contracts the proposed organization has with the NRC in the same/similar technical subject area. Provide the interagency agreement (IAA) number or contract number, project description, period of performance, and dollar value of the project.
 - c. Will the proposed organization advise the applicant? If so, describe the advisory role and indicate the anticipated frequency of the advice.

Does the applicant's proposal include the exchange/use of any materials, equipment, and/or facilities with any of the types of organizations described above? If so, applicant must answer these questions:

2. Exchange/Use of Materials, Equipment, and Facilities

Note that organizations other than the awardee or partnering U.S institution of higher education are not eligible to receive Federal financial assistance under this announcement.

- a. Describe any materials, equipment, and facilities proposed for the NRC research grant.
- b. Describe any training required in order to ensure the effective use of materials, equipment and/or facilities.

C. Submitting an Application Electronically to the NRC

Applicants are encouraged to apply early to avoid problems uploading applications to [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov). If necessary, the NRC will make adjustments to the correction window or submission deadlines to protect applicants' ability to submit on-time.

Electronic submission is required through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov). If the recipient cannot submit through Grants.gov due to transmission issues, applications may be submitted via email to the NRC. The Authorized Organization Official should contact [Grants.gov/support](https://grants.gov/support) to document and help resolve the submission issues, then:

1. Document the issue with the NRC Grants Officer listed in [Section I.A. Agency Contacts](#); and
2. Include recipient's [Grants.gov/support](https://grants.gov/support) ticket number with recipient's alternate submission

Email submissions must be sent by the institution's Authorized Organization Official (not the PI) to the Agency contacts found in [Section I.A. Agency Contacts](#) in this announcement. The email subject line should include the [Grants.gov/support](https://grants.gov/support) ticket number with the recipient's name.

D. Other Submission Requirements and Information

System for Award Management

The NRC requires all prospective awardees to be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database prior to submitting an application. The institution should allow processing time of at least 48 hours, when registering with SAM. The institution may obtain registration information at: [www.Sam.gov](https://www.sam.gov).

Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)

The NRC uses ASAP for recipient reimbursement. ASAP is a recipient-initiated payment and information system, designed to provide a single point of contact for the request and delivery of Federal funds. ASAP was developed by the Financial Management Service (FMS) of the U.S. Treasury and the Federal Reserve Bank (FRB) of Richmond. For information about ASAP, visit [Department of Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payment \(ASAP\) system](#). Recipient organizations must be enrolled in [ASAP.Gov](#) and their bank account must be linked to the NRC Agency Link Code (31000001) to receive funds.

FedConnect

The NRC will no longer provide electronic copies of award/modification documents via email. Therefore, applicants are required to register with FedConnect at www.FedConnect.net. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov. Please see instructions on using FedConnect at: [FedConnect: Ready, Set, Go!](#)

E. Funding Restrictions

All NRC awards are subject to the administrative requirements in accordance with [2CFR Part 200](#) and other considerations described in [\[Refer to attachment 3 - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Standard Terms and Conditions for U.S. Non-Governmental Recipients\]](#).

F. Information on Civil Rights Compliance Requirements Imposed as a Condition of Award of NRC Federal Financial Assistance

The NRC assures nondiscrimination in NRC conducted and Federal financially assisted programs and activities. The NRC's Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) provides applicants/recipients with direction, guidance, and technical assistance. SBCR also monitors program activities, conducts compliance reviews, investigates complaints, enforces violations, and submits reports to Federal oversight agencies.

Applicants must ensure that individuals selected as beneficiaries of support under this grant meet the legal requirements consistent with Supreme Court decisions, including *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, 579 U.S. 365 (2016), *Gratz v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 244 (2003), *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306 (2003), and *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023).

F.1. Provide Public Notification

Recipients will display the NRC's nondiscrimination policy and procedures for filing complaints in prominent locations to inform staff, beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries; disseminate a nondiscrimination policy statement (e.g., recruitment materials, brochures and other materials, handbooks, applications and postings); and distribute notices regarding programs and activities to eligible populations, including minority and low-income populations; and to Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals. (See LEP Guidance FR Doc 04-4672.)

- Participate in mandatory NRC Compliance Reviews.
- Participate in pre- and post-award compliance reviews.

F.2. Pre-Award Compliance Review

A pre-award compliance review (typically a desk-audit) must be conducted prior to award of NRC financial assistance. Organizations must certify compliance in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88352, as amended), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112, as amended), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (P.L. 92-318, as amended), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-135), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.

Applicants and recipients are required to complete NRC Form [781 Parts A, B, and C](#). If a determination cannot be made from the submitted data, SBCR will take steps to request additional information, which could include conducting an on-site audit or inspection. If, during the pre-award review, an item of non-compliance is found, an award may be executed with language indicating that the awardee is under a 60-day SBCR periodic review.

F.3. Post-Award Audit

Post-award compliance reviews will be based on desk audits and input from advocacy groups, community organizations, and results from ongoing research to identify recipients that should be selected to undergo an on-site audit. The following criteria will be used to help identify recipients for a post-award compliance on-site audit:

- Areas of "questionable" compliance identified in a desk audit;
- Issues raised in a complaint or identified during a complaint investigation (not covered in the scope of the investigation);
- Noncompliance issues raised;
- Amount of program funding (\$100K or greater), or size and complexity of the project;
- Geographical areas the agency wishes to target because of known problems beneficiaries are experiencing;
- Problems identified to the agency by other civil rights agencies;
- Problems identified to the agency by community organizations or advocacy groups that are familiar with actual incidents to support their concerns;
- Issues frequently identified as problems faced by program beneficiaries;
- Issues targeted in the agency's strategic plan;

Post-award compliance (on-site) audits (sampling not to exceed 10%) encompass a broad review of recipients' programs and practices to determine actual compliance with regulations, and include:

- Civil rights implementation and enforcement policies and practices; Statistical evidence by racial and ethnic minorities based on the recipient's: (a) staffing patterns, (b) beneficiary program participation rates, and (c) rejection rates;
- Applications or interview materials related to program participation or selection;
- Demographic make-up of the affected community or potential participants;
- Actions to educate the public and affected communities, particularly LEP individuals;
- Any discrimination complaints lodged against the recipient;
- Auxiliary aids, reasonable accommodations, facility accessibility; and
- Any previous findings of compliance or noncompliance related to the recipient.

Post-award compliance (on-site) audits will include:

- Interviews of recipient's officials, representatives, participants or beneficiaries; and review recipients' data collection and analysis used to assess compliance.
- SBCR will issue a written report stating whether or not the institution is in compliance with Federal Civil Rights Laws and certifying eligibility to receive an award. The report includes recommendations for achieving compliance if any deficiencies are identified.
- Designate Equal Opportunity Coordinators.
- Appoint Coordinators (e.g., Title VI and IX, Disability, Age) in order to:
 - Inform those eligible to participate in programs and activities about all available services and their rights under applicable Federal civil rights regulations;
 - Collect data on who is being served by the programs and activities offered;
 - Monitor compliance and alerting recipient officials of any complaints or noncompliance issues that require action;
 - Plan, develop, and implement periodic Equal Opportunity civil rights training;
 - Maintain records and report compliance to SBCR as required by Agency regulations that are (1) OMB approved and (2) statute requires information/data collections; and
 - Ensure prompt corrective action has been taken to adequately address any deficiencies.

F.4 Submit Compliance Reports

Submit an annual Equal Opportunity compliance report to SBCR no later than December 31 of each calendar year. Based on compliance monitoring, recipients may be required to provide interim Executive Orders (E.O.) reports.

F.5. Provide Civil Rights Training

Provide comprehensive civil rights training for existing and new staff for those administering the grant, and periodically retrain existing staff to establish and update their knowledge of Equal Opportunity civil rights statutes and emerging issues.

F.6. Establish Complaint Process

Establish procedures for “processing and disposition” of discrimination complaints. Maintain complaint log, which includes complainants’ characteristic designation as covered under [Title VI](#), [Title IX](#) and Coordinating Regulations and Executive Orders, etc. a unique identifier for the complainant; the nature of the complaint and date filed; the investigation completion date; the date and nature of the disposition; and other pertinent information.

F.7. Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is provided by SBCR to assist stakeholders with understanding and complying with regulations. Links are provided to the U.S. Department of Justice website and the following NRC regulations:

- [10 CFR Part 4--NONDISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE COMMISSION](#)
- [10 CFR Part 5--NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE](#)
- [10 CFR Part 2--RULES OF PRACTICE FOR DOMESTIC LICENSING PROCEEDINGS AND ISSUANCE OF ORDERS](#)
- [10 CFR Part 19--NOTICES, INSTRUCTIONS AND REPORTS TO WORKERS: INSPECTION AND INVESTIGATIONS](#)

SBCR staff is available to provide direction, guidance, and technical assistance to help ensure compliance. SBCR staff can be contacted via email at EEOPROGRAMS.Resource@nrc.gov or by phone at 301-415-7380.

Section V. Award Application Review Information

A. Review Process

Applications received will be evaluated by the NRC. Applications that are received after the closing date and time, incomplete or non-responsive will not be reviewed or considered for award. Applications that are submitted under the incorrect NOFO number shall not be reviewed or considered for award.

Prior to a comprehensive technical evaluation, the NRC will perform a preliminary review to assess the responsiveness of each application. This review includes an administrative review of the application to determine whether it is complete and complies with the NOFO requirements. If an application is determined to be noncompliant or nonresponsive it will not receive a technical evaluation. Only applications meeting the preliminary review criteria will be considered for technical review.

B. Selection Criteria

Technical evaluation of applications shall be based on how well the applications meet or exceed the selection criteria. The selection criteria are identified below along with the corresponding weighted value. The NRC will award up to 10 discretionary points to grant applications that both address the agency's research priorities and include a related research study involving a cooperative or partnership arrangement with one or more MSIs.

The following criteria items must be addressed and clearly labeled. These items are used to evaluate applications using the corresponding weighted value.

Criterion 1 - Significance

The NRC will evaluate whether the study is significant, addresses an important problem, and demonstrates how knowledge or common practice will be advanced. In determining significance, the NRC will consider the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field.

(30 points)

	Excellent 24-30	Good 17-23	Acceptable (Fair) 10-16	Poor 0-9
Criterion 1 – Significance (30 points) Evaluate whether the study is significant, addresses an important problem, and demonstrates how knowledge or common practice will be advanced. In determining significance. Consider the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field. <i>**Please use whole numbers only**</i>	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly identifies a specific NRC technical area of interest as defined in the NOFO or proposes a new area of interest. clearly defines and addresses an important problem in the related field. clearly demonstrates how knowledge and common practices will be advanced to substantially benefit the research project and the government. clearly explains how the research will affect concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions in the field of study. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies a specific NRC technical area of interest as defined in the NOFO or proposes a new area of interest. defines and addresses an important problem in the related field. demonstrates how knowledge and common practices will be advanced to benefit the research project and the government. explains how the research will affect concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions in the field of study. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally identifies an NRC technical area of interest as defined in the NOFO or proposes a new area of interest. minimally defines and addresses an important problem in the related field. minimally demonstrates how knowledge and common practices will be advanced to substantially benefit the research project and the government. minimally explains how the research will affect concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions in the field of study. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not/or vaguely identifies a technical area as defined in the NOFO or a new area is not proposed. does not/or vaguely defines or addresses an important problem in the related field. does not/or vaguely explains how knowledge and common practices will be advanced to substantially benefit the research project and the government. does not/or vaguely explains how the research will affect concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions in the field of study.

Criterion 2- Approach

The NRC will evaluate whether the conceptual approach or design, methods, and analyses are adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned, and appropriate to the objectives of the project. The NRC will also evaluate the management structure and the capability for administering the program. **(30 points)**

	Excellent 24-30	Good 17-23	Acceptable (Fair) 10-16	Poor 0-9
Criterion 2 – Approach (30 points) Evaluate whether the conceptual approach or design, methods, and analyses are adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned, and appropriate to the objectives of the project. Evaluate the management structure and the capability for administering the program. <i>**Please use whole numbers only**</i>	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly demonstrates how the conceptual approach, design, methods, and/or analyses are developed and integrated with the objectives of the project. has a clearly defined management structure and capability for administering and overseeing the research project. has a clearly defined evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the research project. has a clear and feasible timeframe for achieving goals. has a strongly aligned overall budget to support the grant's goals to benefit the research project. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates how the conceptual approach, design, methods, and/or analyses are developed and integrated with the objectives of the project. defines management structure and capability for administering and overseeing the research project. defines an evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the research project. has a feasible timeframe for achieving goals. has a budget to support the grant's goals to benefit the research project. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimally demonstrates how the conceptual approach, design, methods, and/or analyses are developed and integrated with the objectives of the project. has a minimally defined management structure and capability for administering and overseeing the research project. has a minimal evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the research project. has a timeframe for achieving goals that some areas may not be achievable. has a budget that minimally supports the grant's goals to benefit the research project. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not/or vaguely demonstrates how the conceptual approach, design, methods, and/or analyses are developed and integrated with the objectives of the project. is vague or is missing the management structure of administering and overseeing the research project. has no evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the research project. has a timeframe that is unachievable given the timeframe. has a budget that does not seem to support the grant's goals to benefit research project.

Criterion 3 - Innovation

The NRC will evaluate whether the project/research is original and innovative. In determining innovation, the NRC will consider whether the project challenges existing paradigms or common practice; addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barriers to progress in the field; and/or develops or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area. **(20 points)**

	Excellent 15-20	Good 10-14	Acceptable (Fair) 5-9	Poor 0-4
Criterion 3 – Innovation (20 points) Evaluate whether the project/research is original and innovative. In determining innovation, consider whether the project challenges existing paradigms or common practice; addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barriers to progress in the field; and/or develops or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area. **Please use whole numbers only**	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly describes research that is original and innovative. clearly details the project's challenges to an existing paradigms or common practice. clearly addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field. clearly defines the development of or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for the area. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes research that is original and innovative. provides details on the project's challenges to an existing paradigms or common practice. addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field. defines the development of or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for the area. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes research that is original and innovative. provides minimal details on the project's challenges to an existing paradigms or common practice. minimally addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field. minimally defines the development of or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for the area. 	The applicant proposes a research project that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is vague or is missing research that is original and innovative. is vague or is missing details on the project's challenges to an existing paradigms or common practice. is vague or is missing an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field. is vague or is missing the development of or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for the area.

Criterion 4 – Principal Investigators

The NRC will evaluate whether the PI(s), and other involved researchers are experienced and have the expertise, past experience, and available resources to execute the project.
(10 points)

	Excellent 9-10	Good 6- 8	Acceptable (Fair) 3-5	Poor 0-2
<p>Criterion 4 – Principal Investigators (10 points)</p> <p>Evaluate whether the PI(s), and other involved individuals' researchers are experienced and have the expertise, past experience, and available resources to execute the project.</p> <p>State how the PI and other researchers are experienced and have the expertise to execute the project.</p> <p><i>^^Please use whole numbers only^^</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a research team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has provided all CVs for the PIs and researchers that demonstrate the team has exceptional qualities and strengths. clearly demonstrates the required expertise and past experience (as evident in their CVs) to complete the proposed research. clearly has the available resources and describes commitments and the ability to support the research project. 	<p>The applicant proposes a research team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has provided all CVs for the PIs and researchers that demonstrate the team has good qualities and strengths. demonstrates the required expertise and past experience (as evident in their CVs) to complete the proposed research. has the available resources and describes commitments and the ability to support the research project. 	<p>The applicant proposes a research team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has provided all CVs for the PIs and researchers that demonstrate the team has acceptable qualities and strengths. minimally demonstrates the required expertise and past experience (as evident in their CVs) is acceptable to complete the proposed research. has the available resources and minimally describes commitments and the ability to support the research project. 	<p>The applicant proposes a research team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is missing CVs for all or some of the research team. lacks the expertise and past experience to complete the proposed research. lacks resources. lacks detailed commitments and the ability to support the research project.

Criterion 5 – Partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions

The NRC will evaluate whether the proposed project/research study includes a cooperative or partnership arrangement with one or more MSIs. **Once a partnership is determined**, then the NRC will consider the details of the partnership, the implementation plan and the role of the MSI and its integration into the project. The submitting/prime institution (regardless of its own MSI designation) must partner with one or more MSIs to receive points. The applicant **must partner** with an MSI institution to receive points for this criteria. **The applicant does not receive points if the applicant is the MSI institution. (10 points)**

	Excellent 9-10	Good 6-8	Acceptable (Fair) 3-5	Poor 0-2
Criterion 5 – Partnerships with Minority Service Institutions (10 points) Evaluate whether the proposed project/research study includes a cooperative or partnership arrangement with one or more MSI. Consider the details of the partnership, the implementation plan and the role of the MSI and its integration into the project. The applicant <u>must partner</u> with an MSI institution to receive points under this criteria. <i>**Please use whole numbers only**</i>	The applicant proposes a program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly defines a strong partnership with one or more Minority Serving Institution (MSIs) and has attached the required partnership letter signed by both the MSI PI and the institution administrator of the applicant's institution. clearly defines the role of the MSI and lead institution and provides a detailed description of the partnership and implementation plan clearly defines the funding to support the partnership. 	The applicant proposes a program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defines a strong partnership with one or more Minority Serving Institution (MSIs) and has attached the required partnership letter signed by both the MSI PI and the institution administrator of the applicant's institution defines the role of the MSI and lead institution and provides a detailed description of the partnership and implementation plan defines the funding to support the partnership. 	The applicant proposes a program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimally defines a partnership with one or more Minority Serving Institution (MSIs) and has attached the required partnership letter signed by both the MSI PI and the institution administrator of the applicant's institution minimally defines the role of the MSI and lead institution and provides a detailed description of the partnership and implementation plan. minimally defines the funding to support the partnership. 	The applicant proposes a program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not/or vaguely defines a partnership with one or more Minority Serving Institution (MSIs) and is missing the required partnership letter signed by both the MSI PI and the institution administrator of the applicant's institution does not/or vaguely defines the role of the MSI and lead institution and provides a detailed description of the partnership and implementation plan. does not/or vaguely defines the funding to support the partnership.

C. Review and Selection Process

C.1. Review Process

The NRC conducts an initial administrative review to determine that the proposal is complete and complies with the announcement's requirements. Ineligible applications or non-responsive applications will **not** be reviewed. The recipient may withdraw its application at any time.

The NRC protects the information contained in an application from unauthorized disclosure, consistent with the need for objective review of the application and the requirements of the [Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act](#). However, if a grant is awarded, the Federal government has the right to use or disclose the information to the extent authorized by law.

Applications are peer-reviewed and rated using the evaluation criteria and point values provided in [Section V.B.](#) Both Federal and non-Federal experts may be used in this process. Peer reviewers' identities remain confidential. All peer reviewers must sign a conflict-of-interest form prior to acceptance as a reviewer. The applications and associated materials made available to reviewers including the discussions that take place during review meetings are strictly confidential. Individual peer reviewers' scores are averaged and rated prior to being presented to the selecting official.

C.2. Selection Process

Applications will be **recommended** for award in accordance with the selection criteria. The highest ranked applications will receive priority consideration within the limits of available funding. Some **applications may not receive an award because of the program priorities and available funding.** The selecting official makes the final award recommendations. The selecting official generally recommends funding in rank order, unless a particular recipient/selectee:

- Submits an application that supports geographic diversity
- Submits an application that ensures diversity in technical disciplines,
- Demonstrated prior award performance deficiencies,
- Received multiple prior NRC grant awards, or
- Is a recipient of a current award with a high level of unexpended grant funds.

The decision not to award a grant, or to award a grant at a particular funding level, is discretionary.

Section VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Formal notification in the form of a Grant will be provided to the applicant organization via FedConnect. (See [Section IV.D. Other Submission Requirements and Information](#)). The award signed by the Grants Officer is the authorizing document, and the Grants Officer is the only person authorized to obligate funds and permit changes to approved projects on behalf of the NRC.

Selection of an application for award is not an authorization to begin technical research. Any costs incurred before receipt of the Grant are at the recipient's risk. ([See Section IV.E. Funding Restrictions](#)).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

"The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Standard Terms and Conditions for U.S. Non-governmental Recipients" contain the administrative and national policy requirements for all NRC awards and is located at the end of this NOFO. [\[Refer to attachment 3 - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Standard Terms and Conditions for U.S. Non-Governmental Recipients\].](#)

C. Limitation of Liability

The NRC is not responsible for any applicable costs if agency priorities cause it to cancel this program prior to awarding any grants. Publishing this announcement does not obligate the NRC to award grants under this announcement.

D. Reporting

FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Federal Financial Report ([SF-425](#)) requirements

[\[Refer to attachment 3 - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Standard Terms and Conditions for U.S. Non-Governmental Recipients\]](#) under Subsection 2., "Mandatory General Requirements"

RESEARCH PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORTS

Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR)

[\[Refer to attachment 3 - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Standard Terms and Conditions for U.S. Non-Governmental Recipients\]](#) under Subsection 2., "Mandatory General Requirements"

FINAL REPORTS

Final reporting requirements

[\[Refer to attachment 3 - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Standard Terms and Conditions for U.S. Non-Governmental Recipients\]](#) under Subsection 2., "Mandatory General Requirements"

E. Required Federal Citations

Program Authority: Section 31a and 141b of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

F. Authority and Regulations

This program is described in the Assistance Listings at [Sam.gov](#) and is not subject to the intergovernmental review requirements of Executive Order 12372, amended by E.O. 12416 and supplemented by E.O. 13132. Financial assistance awards are made under the authorization [42 U.S.C. § 2051](#). All awards are subject to the cost principles and other considerations described in [2 CFR Part 200](#), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

G. Non-Delinquency on Federal Debt

The Federal Debt Collection Procedure Act, 28 U.S.C. 3201(e), provides that an organization or individual that is indebted to the United States, and has a judgment lien filed against it, is ineligible to receive a Federal grant. The NRC cannot award a grant unless the authorized official of the applicant organization certifies, by means of their signature on the application, that the organization is not delinquent in repaying any Federal debt. If the applicant discloses delinquency on a debt owed to the Federal Government, the NRC may not award the grant until the debt is satisfied or satisfactory arrangements are made with the agency to which the debt is owed.