

Financial Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity Part 1



**U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)
Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response
(CESER)
Next Generation of Academia-Based Cyber Research,
Development, and Demonstration (RD&D)
Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: DE-FOA-0003501**

Application due: February 18, 2025, 8:00PM ET

Modifications to this NOFO will be posted on eXCHANGE and Grants.gov. Grants.gov will automatically notify applicants when a NOFO modification is processed. Applicants must be registered to this NOFO in Grants.gov to receive email notifications. See Registration Requirements in Part 2 of this NOFO.

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Before You Begin

Navigating the Notice of Funding Opportunity

The [OMB Memorandum M-24-11](#) directs federal agencies to reduce the burden on applicants in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process and limit the length of the NOFO information requests. With Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 NOFOs, DOE has separated the NOFO into two parts.

The NOFO Part 1 describes the specific DOE programmatic goals and evaluation criteria, eligibility, and other components that are specific to each funding opportunity. The NOFO Part 2 includes the fixed DOE requirements that generally do not change from NOFO to NOFO, including standard information for the application phase, expectations for award negotiations, and post-award requirements. Applicants must review both the NOFO Part 1 and the NOFO Part 2 prior to applying. To facilitate navigation, you will find links throughout this document to additional information found in Part 2.

There are several required one-time actions applicants must take before applying to this NOFO. Some of these actions may take several weeks, so it is vital applicants build in enough time to complete them. Failure to complete these actions could interfere with application or negotiation deadlines or the ability to receive an award if selected. If you have previously completed the necessary registrations, make sure your registration is active and up to date. All registrations are free. Please refer to [NOFO Part 2, Get Registered](#), for additional information.

This announcement is published in conjunction with NOFO Part 2.

I. Basic Information

A. Key Facts

Issuing Agency	Department of Energy, Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)	KEY DATES Notice of Funding Opportunity Issue Date: December 19, 2024 Application Deadline: February 18, 2025 Anticipated Selection Notification Date: May 21, 2025 Anticipated Award Date: September 30, 2025 Estimated Period of Performance: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2028
Funding Opportunity Title	Next Generation of Academia-Based Cyber Research, Development, and Demonstration (RD&D)	
Announcement Type	Initial	
Funding Opportunity Number	DE-FOA-0003501	
Funding Instrument	Cooperative Agreements	
Assistance Listing Number	81.008 Cybersecurity, Energy Security, & Emergency Response (CESER)	
Funding Opportunity Description	University-Based R&D program NOFO will support efforts to efficiently develop and ultimately integrate cybersecurity tools and technologies into energy infrastructure for enhanced resilience. This open NOFO is structured to cover a 5-year period, allowing for ongoing participation and evaluation.	
Program Goals & Objective(s)	This initiative extends CESER's cybersecurity RD&D efforts to utilize academic partnerships to build strategic capabilities within the sector in advancing cybersecurity for energy delivery systems.	
Topic Areas	Topic Area 1: Partnerships to Identify and Mitigate National Security Threats	
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic Entities (Institutes of higher education; for-profit entities; non-profit entities; state and local government entities and Indian Tribes) DOE FFRDC's and non-DOE FFRDCs and Federal Research Agencies are eligible to apply as a Subrecipient only and are not eligible to apply as a Prime Recipient. 	
eXCHANGE URL and Helpdesk	https://infrastructure-exchange.energy.gov/InfrastructureExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov – include NOFO name and number in the subject line	

1. Funding Details

Approximate total available funding including all topic areas: \$10,000,000 in FY 2025

Topic Area 1: Partnerships to Identify and Mitigate National Security Threats

- Approximate total available funding: \$10,000,000 in FY 2025
- Approximate number of awards: 1
- Approximate dollar amount of individual awards: \$10,000,000
- Minimum cost share required: 20% of total project costs for Research & Development (R&D) and 50% of total project costs for Demonstration
- Approximate award project period: 3-5 years
- Anticipated length of budget periods: 3-5 years

DOE expects to make \$10M of Federal funding available under this topic. As appropriate and/or if additional funding is available, additional award(s) may be selected.

2. Period of Performance

DOE anticipates fully funding awards as a single budget period. Project continuation throughout that period will be contingent upon several elements, including satisfactory performance and DOE's Go/No-Go decision(s) at appropriate project milestone(s). For a complete list of factors and more information on the Go/No-Go review, see the [NOFO Part 2, Award Administration Information](#).

B. Executive Summary

The Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER) mission is to strengthen the security and resilience of the U.S. energy sector from cyber, physical, and climate-based risks and disruptions. A dedicated initiative aligned with the CESER mission is the University-Based R&D program to collaboratively engage in research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) activities to help reduce the risk that a cyberattack might disrupt our nation's critical energy delivery infrastructure. CESER dedicates a portion of its cybersecurity R&D efforts to this program, where awards are selected through competitive announcements. This open NOFO is designed to incorporate and use this funding vehicle for the CESER University-Based R&D program, allowing for ongoing participation and evaluation.

C. Agency Contact Information

Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

For questions relating to this specific NOFO, please send emails to nextgenerationcyberresearch@netl.doe.gov.

DISCLAIMER: Applicants are discouraged from submitting information considered proprietary unless it is deemed essential for proper evaluation of the application. If the application contains information that the applicant organization considers to be trade secrets, information that is commercial or financial, or

information that is privileged or confidential, the pages containing that information must be identified as specified in the application instructions. When such information is included in the application, it will be withheld from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law, including the Freedom of Information Act, with the understanding that the information will be used or disclosed only for evaluation of the application. The information contained in the application will be protected by DOE from unauthorized disclosure, consistent with the need for merit review of applications of financial assistance awards to assure the integrity of the competitive process and the accuracy and completeness of the information. If a federal financial assistance award is made as a result of or in connection with an application, the federal government has the right to use or disclose the information to the extent authorized by law. This restriction does not limit the federal government's right to use the information if it is obtained without restriction from another source.

II. Eligibility

To be considered for substantive evaluation, an applicant's submission must meet the criteria set forth below. If the application does not meet these eligibility requirements, it will be considered ineligible and removed from further evaluation and ineligible for any award. DOE will not make eligibility determinations for potential applicants prior to the date on which applications to this NOFO must be submitted. The decision whether to apply in response to this NOFO lies solely with the applicant. The information included here is specific to eligibility requirements for this NOFO. For eligibility requirements applicable to all NOFOs, please consult the [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility](#).

A. Eligible Applicants

To be considered for substantive evaluation, an applicant's submission must meet the criteria set forth below. If the application does not meet these eligibility requirements, it will be considered ineligible and removed from further evaluation.

1. Domestic Entities

Domestic entities are eligible to apply as recipients or subrecipients. The following types of domestic entities are eligible to participate as a recipient or subrecipient of this NOFO:

- Institutions of higher education;
- For-profit organization;
- Nonprofit organization;
- State and local governmental entities; and
- Indian Tribes, as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, 25 U.S.C. § 5304¹

To qualify as a domestic entity, the entity must be organized, chartered, or incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a particular state or territory of the United States or under the laws of the United States; have majority domestic ownership and control; and have a physical place of business in the United States.

2. Foreign Entity Participation

In general, foreign entities are not eligible to apply as either a recipient or subrecipient. In limited circumstances, DOE may approve a waiver to allow a foreign entity to participate as a recipient or subrecipient.

A foreign entity may submit an application to this NOFO, but the application must be accompanied by an explicit written waiver request. Likewise, if the applicant seeks to include a foreign entity as a

¹ "Indian Tribe," for the purposes of this NOFO and as defined in in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act ([25 U.S.C. § 5304](#)), means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act ([85 Stat. 688](#)) [[43 U.S.C. § 1601, et seq.](#)], which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians. Federally Recognized Indian Tribes are also considered disadvantaged communities for the purposes of Justice40 requirements in this NOFO per https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/M-23-09_Signed_CEQ_CPO.pdf.

subrecipient, the applicant must submit a separate explicit written waiver request in the application for each proposed foreign subrecipient. Please see **NOFO Part 2, Application Content Requirements** for the requirements for submission of a foreign entity waiver request. The applicant does not have the right to appeal DOE's decision concerning a waiver request.

Prime recipients and subrecipients must be legally formed in the United States, have majority domestic ownership and control, and have a physical location for business operations in the United States.

Entities that are organized, chartered, or incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of the United States or a particular state or territory of the United States and have a physical location for business operations in the United States are eligible to apply for funding as a recipient or subrecipient.

Foreign Entity Participation

A foreign entity is eligible to apply for funding as a recipient if it designates in the application a subsidiary or affiliate incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a state or territory of the United States to be the recipient. The application must state the nature of the corporate relationship between the foreign entity and domestic subsidiary or affiliate.

Foreign entities may request a waiver of the requirement to designate a subsidiary in the United States as the recipient in the application (i.e., a foreign entity may request that it be the recipient). To do so, the applicant must submit an explicit written waiver request in the application.

NOFO Part 2, Application Content Requirements lists the information that must be included in a request to waive this requirement. The applicant does not have the right to appeal DOE's decision concerning a waiver request.

Participant Limitations

Participation of the following entities are limited as follows.

- DOE FFRDCs² are eligible to apply for funding as a subrecipient but are not eligible to apply as a recipient.
- Non-DOE FFRDCs are eligible to participate as a subrecipient but are not eligible to apply as a recipient.
- Federal agencies and instrumentalities (other than DOE) are eligible to participate as a subrecipient but are typically not eligible to apply as a recipient.
- NETL is not eligible for award under this announcement and may not be proposed as a subrecipient on another entity's application. An application that includes NETL as a recipient or subrecipient will be considered non-responsive.

Performance of Work in the United States

All work for the awards under this NOFO must be performed in the United States. To request a waiver of this requirement, the applicant must submit an explicit waiver request in the application. Absent an approved waiver, such costs will not be allowable under the award. The **NOFO Part 2, Application Content Requirements** lists the requirements for submission of a foreign work waiver request.

² FFRDCs are public-private partnerships that conduct research for the U.S. government. A listing of FFRDCs can be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/ffrdclist/>.

Ineligible Participants

The following entities are ineligible for participation in this NOFO as a recipient, subrecipient, or subcontractor.

- In accordance with 2 CFR 200.214, entities banned from doing business with the U.S. government such as entities debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participating in federal programs.
- Entities identified on Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control Treasury's Sanctions Program Specially Designated Nationals list are prohibited from doing business with the United States government and are not eligible. See [OFAC - Sanctions List Service \(treas.gov\)](https://www.treas.gov/ofac).
- Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engaged in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995, are not eligible to apply for funding.

Entity of Concern Prohibition

Entities of Concern are prohibited from participating in projects selected under this NOFO (see [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility, Other Eligibility Information, Entity of Concern Prohibition](#) section for details and definitions).

B. Limitation on Number of Applications Eligible for Review

An entity may submit multiple applications for each topic area of this NOFO as long as each application describes a unique, scientifically distinct project. If an entity submits duplicate applications, the DOE will only review the last submission. This limitation does not prohibit an applicant from collaborating on other applications (e.g., as a potential subrecipient or partner).

C. Cost Sharing

Applicants are expected to follow through on estimated cost share commitments proposed in their applications if selected for award negotiations. Please refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Eligibility](#) for more information on Cost Sharing.

1. Cost Share Requirements

Cost Share 20% and 50%

The cost share must be at least 20% of the total project costs³ for research and development projects⁴ and 50% of the total project costs for demonstration and commercial application projects.⁵

³ Total project costs are the sum of the government share, including FFRDC costs if applicable, and the recipient share of project costs.

⁴ Energy Policy Act of 2005, Pub. L. 109-58, sec. 988. Also see 2 CFR 200.306 and 2 CFR 910.130 for additional cost sharing requirements.

⁵ Energy Policy Act of 2005, Pub. L. 109-58, sec. 988. Also see 2 CFR 200.306 and 2 CFR 910.130 for additional cost sharing requirements.

D. FFRDC Eligibility Criteria

1. DOE and Non-DOE FFRDCs as a Subrecipient

As long as they have no conflict, DOE and non-DOE FFRDCs may be proposed as a subrecipient on another entity's application subject to the following guidelines:

Authorization for non-DOE FFRDCs

The federal agency sponsoring the FFRDC must authorize in writing the use of the FFRDC on the proposed project and this authorization must be submitted with the application. The use of a FFRDC must be consistent with its authority under its award.

Authorization for DOE FFRDCs

The cognizant Contracting Officer for the FFRDC must authorize in writing the use of the FFRDC on the proposed project and this authorization must be submitted with the application. The following wording is acceptable for this authorization:

Authorization is granted for the Laboratory to participate in the proposed project. The work proposed for the Laboratory is consistent with or complementary to the missions of the Laboratory and will not adversely impact execution of the DOE assigned programs at the Laboratory.

Funding, Cost Share, and Subaward with FFRDCs

The recipient and FFRDC are responsible for entering into an appropriate subaward that will govern, among other things, the funding of the FFRDC portion of the work from the recipient under its DOE award. Such an agreement must be fully executed prior to the FFRDC starting work directly allocable to the FA award. The DOE funding office will provide funding for the DOE FFRDC or non-DOE FFRDC participating as a sub awardee through the DOE financial assistance award to the recipient.

The applicant should prepare the budgets using rates appropriate for funding the FFRDCs through subawards. The applicant's cost share requirement will be based on the total cost of the project, including the applicant's, the subrecipient's, and the FFRDC's portions of the project.

C. Responsibility

The recipient will be the responsible authority regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues, including but not limited to disputes and claims arising out of any agreement between the recipient and the FFRDC.

Limit on FFRDC Effort

The scope of work to be performed by the FFRDC should not be more significant than the scope of work to be performed by the applicant.

III. Program Description

A. Program Purpose

University-Based R&D involves unbiased, technology focused activities that, when combined with industry priorities and guidance, results in real-world, impactful solutions. By leveraging the diverse expertise of academia, this academic partnership initiative aims to investigate innovative cybersecurity solutions for the energy sector fostering technological advancement. University-Based R&D is guided by Industry Advisory Boards (IAB). Project activities reflect priorities agreed upon by IAB representatives. These research partnerships integrate rigorous academic approaches with real-world expertise. These academic partnership projects are multidisciplinary, which brings in power system operations, physics, computer science, these projects often involve partnerships with electric utilities, vendors, suppliers, national labs, and universities all working closely together towards the vision of resilient energy delivery systems. The academic partnership approach involves creating a research pipeline leading to cybersecurity products, tools and technologies that would be effective and affordable with the intention of being deployed and broadly adopted across the energy sector. This synergistic effort bridges the gap between academic cutting-edge research and the commercialization of resulting tools and technologies that will strengthen energy sector cybersecurity.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

This initiative extends CESER's cybersecurity RD&D efforts to utilize academic partnerships to build strategic core capabilities within the sector in advancing cybersecurity for energy delivery systems. Industry participants, including asset owners/operators as well as solution providers, will provide guidance on the energy sector's highest priority cybersecurity needs to their university partner teams, and work in partnership to innovate critical energy infrastructure able to survive a cyber-incident while sustaining critical functions.

Detailed technical descriptions of the specific Topic Areas are provided in the sections that follow.

C. Expected Performance Goals

CESER will not prescribe a list of success metrics because applicant proposed research questions and technical solutions within these topic areas may vary. The application should define appropriate success metrics that are clearly connected to one or more specific use cases for managing energy sector risk.

D. Topic Areas

Additional areas of interest beyond those described below may be identified, in which case this NOFO document will be amended as appropriate.

Topic Area 1: Partnerships to Identify and Mitigate National Security Threats

Electricity asset owners and operators have the primary responsibility to protect their existing systems from cyberattacks. Researchers should establish partnerships among national laboratories, universities, electricity sector utilities, and state and local government entities. These partnerships will research, develop, test, and validate cutting-edge cybersecurity technology, processes, frameworks, and/or

analytics capable of mitigating real world threats to critical infrastructure. The developed cutting-edge cybersecurity technology must be demonstrated in a real-world environment to validate its performance and scalability for broad electricity sector adoption. These partnerships will provide valuable feedback and resources to support adoption of the proposed cybersecurity technology by the energy sector.

Researchers will focus on the research, development, and use of emerging technologies that are designed for the operational technology environment, capable of identifying and mitigating the prevalent and constantly evolving national security threats. Successful applications will showcase the feasibility and effectiveness of the emerging technology by integrating with existing electricity systems or high-fidelity testbeds that accurately replicate utility operations. Recipients should include research, iterations, and refinement activities in their approach. It must be demonstrated through letters of intent that all parties involved have been consulted and are fully committed to the proposed effort.

E. Applications Specifically Not of Interest

The following types of applications will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered (Please also refer to the [Responsiveness Review](#) section below):

- Applications that fall outside the technical parameters specified in [Background and Context](#) above and the [Topic Areas](#) section above.
- Applications for proposed technologies that are not based on sound scientific principles (e.g., violates the laws of thermodynamics).

F. Statement of Substantial Involvement

DOE anticipates awarding cooperative agreements under this NOFO, which include a statement of DOE's "substantial involvement" in the work performed under the resulting awards. For cooperative agreements, DOE does not limit its involvement to the administrative requirements of the award. Instead, DOE has substantial involvement in the direction and redirection of the technical aspects of the project. DOE's substantial involvement in resulting awards may include the following:

- A. DOE shares responsibility with the recipient for the management, control, direction, and performance of the project.
- B. DOE may intervene in the conduct or performance of work under this award for programmatic reasons. Intervention includes the interruption or modification of the conduct or performance of project activities.
- C. DOE may redirect or discontinue funding the project based on the outcome of DOE's evaluation of the project at the Go/No-Go decision point(s).
- D. DOE participates in major project decision-making processes.
- E. Reviewing project plans, including as required: project management, testing, cybersecurity, interoperability, data management, and technology transfer/commercialization plan in a timely manner then recommending alternate approaches if the plans do not address critical programmatic objectives.
- F. Conducting periodic reviews to ensure adequate progress and that the work accomplishes the program and project objectives. Recommending alternate approaches or shifting work emphasis, if needed.

- G. Reviewing scientific/technical reports to ensure programmatic needs and the requirements of the Financial Assistance award instrument, including intellectual property rights, are satisfied and providing comments to the Recipient in a timely manner.
- H. Promoting and facilitating technology transfer activities, including disseminating program results through presentations and publications.
- I. Serving as scientific/technical liaison between recipients and other DOE programs.

G. Statutory Authority

The programmatic authorizing statute are:

- Public Law (P.L.) 95-91, DOE Organization Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7101., et seq. as amended,
- P.L. 109-58, Energy Policy Act of 2005, Title IX, Subtitle B, Sec. 925, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 16215)
- P.L. 110-140, Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, as amended, Sec. 1301 (42 U.S.C. § 17381), Sec. 1304 (42 U.S.C. § 17384), and Sec. 1304A (42 U.S.C. § 17384a)

Awards made under this announcement will fall under the purview of 2 CFR Part 200 as adopted and supplemented by 2 CFR Part 910.

IV. Application Content and Form

This section includes application information specific to this NOFO Part 1. Refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Application Content and Form](#) for standard information that applies to all DOE NOFOs such as formatting and content requirements, and funding restrictions.

A. Summary

The application process includes:

Application Submission Phase	Eligibility for Submission
Application	Must be submitted by the specified due date and time to be eligible for comprehensive merit review.

B. Application Content Requirements

Each application must be limited to a single concept. Applications must conform to the following requirements and must not exceed the stated page limits. Please refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Application Content and Form](#) for a complete list of application requirements. Detailed guidance on the content and form of NOFO-specific requirements is provided following the [Summary of Application Requirements](#) table below.

1. Covered Individual Definition, Designation, and Responsibility

Several of the Application Content Requirements listed below and in the NOFO Part 2 are required of covered individuals.

For the purposes of this NOFO, a Covered Individual means an individual who (a) contributes in a substantive, meaningful way to the development or execution of the scope of work of a project proposed for funding by DOE, and (b) is designated as a covered individual by DOE.

DOE designates as covered individuals any principal investigator (PI); project manager; and any individual regardless of title that is functionally performing as a PI or project manager. Status as a consultant, graduate (master's or PhD) student, or postdoctoral associate does not automatically disqualify a person from being designated as a "covered individual" if they meet the definition in (a) above.

The applicant is responsible for assessing the applicability of (a) above, against each person listed on the application. Further, the applicant is responsible for identifying any such individual to DOE for designation as a covered individual, if not already designated by DOE as described above.

The applicant's submission of a current and pending support disclosure and/or biosketch/resume for a particular person serves as an acknowledgement that DOE designates that person as a covered individual.

DOE may further designate covered individuals during award negotiations or the award period of performance.

2. Summary of Application Requirements

Component	File Format	Page Limit	File Name
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_424
Technical Volume	PDF	15	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_TechnicalVolume
Letters of Commitment	PDF	1 page each	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_LOCs
Statement of Project Objectives	MS Word	5	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_SOPO
Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_SF-424A
Budget Justification Workbook	MS Excel	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Budget_Justification
Subrecipient Budget Justification	MS Excel	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Subrecipient_Budget_Justification
Work Proposal for FFRDC, (see DOE O 412.1A)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_WP
Authorization for Non-DOE or DOE FFRDCs	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_FFRDCAuth
Waiver for Foreign Entity Participation	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_FEW
Performance of Work in the United States (Foreign Work Waiver)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_FWW
Resumes (Research and Development (R&D))	PDF	3 pages each	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Resumes
Current and Pending Support (for each covered individual)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_CPS
Digital Persistent Identifier (for each covered individual)	N/A	N/A	Include in Current & Pending Support
Research Security Training Requirement (for each covered individual)	N/A	N/A	Include in Current & Pending Support
Transparency of Foreign Connections	PDF	n/a	BusinessSensitive_ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_TFC
Potentially Duplicative Funding Notice	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_PDFN
Data Management Plan	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_DMP
Location(s) of Work	Excel	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_LOW

Environmental Questionnaire	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_ENV
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable (SF-LLL)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_SF-LLL
Certification Regarding Lobbying (OMB 4040-0013)	PDF	n/a	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Cert Lobbying
Summary for Public Release	PDF	1	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Summary
Summary Slide	MS Power Point	1	ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Slide

2. Technical Volume

The Technical Volume must conform to the following content and form requirements. This volume must address the technical review criteria as discussed in [Technical Review Criteria](#).

Applicants must provide sufficient citations and references to the primary research literature to justify the claims and approaches made in the Technical Volume. However, DOE and reviewers are under no obligation to review cited sources.

The Technical Volume to the application may not be more than 15 pages, including the cover page, table of contents, and all citations, charts, graphs, maps, photos, or other graphics, and must include all information below. The applicant should consider the weighting of each of the technical review criteria (see [Technical Review Criteria](#)) when preparing the Technical Volume.

Cover Page:

The cover page must include all of the following:

- The project title
- Specific NOFO topic areas (if applicable)
- Technical and business POCs (e-mail addresses and telephone numbers)
- Senior/key personnel and other covered individuals
- The project team, including recipient name, entity type and names of all team member organizations
- The project location(s)
- The proposed total federal funding level, cost share and period of performance
- The proposed federal funding level and cost share for each project participant
- Statements regarding confidentiality

A sample Technical Volume Cover Page is included as an attachment to this announcement.

Table of Contents: Applicant to capture, at a minimum, all of the required sections identified in this table.

Project Objectives

This section should provide a clear, concise statement of the specific objectives/aims of the proposed project.

Merit Review Criteria Discussion

The section should be formatted to address each of the merit review criterion and sub criterion listed in “Technical Review Criteria”. Provide sufficient information so that reviewers will be able to evaluate the application in accordance with these merit review criteria. DOE/NNSA will evaluate and consider only those applications that address separately each of the merit review criterion and sub-criterion.

Commercialization Plan

To further the goals of this NOFO, each applicant must submit a commercialization plan that includes plans for technology maturation, technology licensing, and U.S. Manufacturing commitments. NOTE: If software is proposed and is not integrated into a product, the applicant should discuss its software strategy (commercialization or open source) and distribution plans. The plans must encompass both invention and copyright licensing to commercialize technology developed under this NOFO, including any background intellectual property (IP) necessary to use the IP developed under the NOFO.

Relevance and Outcomes/Impacts

This section should explain the relevance of the effort to the objectives in the program announcement and the expected outcomes and/or impacts. The justification for the proposed project should include a clear statement of the importance of the project in terms of the utility of the outcomes and the target community of beneficiaries.

Roles of Participants

For multi-organizational or multi-investigator projects, describe the roles and the work to be performed by each participant/investigator, business agreements between the applicant and participants, and how the various efforts will be integrated and managed.

Multiple Principal Investigators

The applicant, whether a single organization or team/partnership/consortium, must indicate if the project will include multiple PIs. This decision is solely the responsibility of the applicant. If multiple PIs will be designated, the application must identify the Contact PI/Project Coordinator and provide a "Coordination and Management Plan" that describes the organization structure of the project as it pertains to the designation of multiple PIs. This plan should, at a minimum, include:

- Process for making decisions on scientific/technical direction;
- Publications;
- intellectual property issues;
- communication plans;
- procedures for resolving conflicts; and
- PIs' roles and administrative, technical, and scientific responsibilities for the project.

Facilities and Other Resources

Identify the facilities (e.g., office, laboratory, computer, etc.) to be used at each performance site listed and, if appropriate, indicate their capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity, and extent of availability to the project. Describe only those resources that are directly applicable to the proposed work. Provide any information describing the other resources available to the project such as machine and electronics shops.

Equipment

List important items of equipment already available for this project and, if appropriate, note the location and pertinent capabilities of each. If you are proposing to acquire equipment, describe comparable equipment, if any, already at your organization and explain why it cannot be used.

Identification of Potential Conflicts of Interest or Bias in Selection of Reviewers (Not Included in Page Limitation)

Provide the following information in this section:

- **Collaborators and Co-editors:** List in alphabetical order all persons, including their current organizational affiliation, who are, or who have been, collaborators or co-authors with you on a research project, book or book article, report, abstract, or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of this application. Also, list any individuals who are currently, or have been, co-editors with you on a special issue of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings during the 24 months preceding the submission of this application. If there are no collaborators or co-editors to report, state "None."
- **Graduate and Postdoctoral Advisors and Advisees:** List the names and current organizational affiliations of your graduate advisor(s) and principal postdoctoral sponsor(s) during the last 5 years. Also, list the names and current organizational affiliations of your graduate students and postdoctoral associates.

Milestone Log and Project Timeline (Not included in page limitation)

Provide milestones for each phase of the project. Each milestone should be linked to a specific Task or Subtask and include a title, planned completion date, and a description of the method/process/measure used to verify completion. Milestones should be quantitative and show progress toward budget period and/or project goals. Conversely, periodic, mandatory progress reports are not considered to be Milestones.

Provide a timeline of the project (similar to a Gantt chart) broken down by each task and subtask, as described in the SOPO. The timeline should include for each task, a start date, and end date. The timeline should show interdependencies between tasks and include the milestones that are identified in the Milestone Log.

Bibliography (Not included in page limitation)

If applicable: Provide a bibliography for any references cited in the Technical Volume section. This section must include only bibliographic citations.

C. Funding Restrictions

Program-specific funding restrictions applicable to awards funded under this NOFO are identified below. Standard funding restrictions are described in the **NOFO Part 2, Funding Restrictions** section.

Applicable Funding Restrictions		
Title	Location	Additional Information
Allowable Costs	NOFO Part 2	Applicable to awards made under this NOFO
Pre-Award Costs	NOFO Part 2	Applicable to awards made under this NOFO

Performance of Work in the United States (Foreign Work Waiver Requirement)	NOFO Part 2	Applicable to awards made under this NOFO
Foreign Travel	NOFO Part 2	Foreign Travel is not allowed for awards made under this NOFO
Lobbying	NOFO Part 2	Applicable to awards made under this NOFO
Equipment and Supplies	NOFO Part 2	Purchasing American-made equipment and supplies is applicable to this award.
Build America Buy America Requirements for Infrastructure Projects	NOFO Part 1	Applicable to awards made under this NOFO

1. Build America Requirement for Infrastructure Projects

Awards funded through this NOFO that are for, or contain, construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of public infrastructure in the United States undertaken by applicable recipient types, require that:

- All iron, steel, and manufactured products used in the infrastructure project are produced in the United States; and
- All construction materials used in the infrastructure project are manufactured in the United States.

Please refer to the [NOFO Part 2, Buy America Requirements for Infrastructure Projects; Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials](#) and [2 CFR Part 184](#) to determine whether the Buy America Requirement applies and if they should consider the application of the Buy America Requirement in the proposed project's budget and/or schedule. (Note that the Buy America Requirement does not apply to prime recipients that are For-Profit Entities.)

V. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

There are several one-time actions applicants must take before applying to this NOFO. Some of these may take several weeks, so it is vital applicants build in enough time to complete them. Failure to complete these actions could interfere with application or negotiation deadlines or the ability to receive an award if selected. These requirements are outlined in detail in the [NOFO Part 2, Get Registered](#).

A. Required Registrations

1. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. To register, go to SAM.gov Entity Registration and click Get Started. From the same page, you can also click on the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.

Each applicant must:

1. Be registered in SAM.gov before submitting an application;
2. Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier in the application; and
3. Continue to maintain an active registration in SAM.gov with current information at all times during which you have an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

DOE may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DOE is ready to make a federal award, the DOE will determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

2. eXCHANGE

Register and create an account in the eXCHANGE site identified in the [Key Facts](#) section of the NOFO Part 1. This account can be used to apply to open NOFOs in eXCHANGE. To view and submit applications to open opportunities under a specific DOE office(s), you must access the applicable instance of the system. You may need to be registered in more than one instance to submit applications for opportunities managed by different DOE offices.

Each organization or business unit, whether acting as a team or a single entity, should use only one account as the contact point for each submission. Applicants must also designate backup points of contact. **This step is required to apply to this NOFO.**

B. Application Package

1. eXCHANGE

The application package requirements are outlined in the [Application Content and Form](#) section above. Several templates for application requirements are included in eXCHANGE. To access these materials, select the appropriate NOFO on the Funding Opportunity page of eXCHANGE.

Note: The maximum file size that can be uploaded to the eXCHANGE website is 50MB. Files larger than 50MB cannot be uploaded and hence cannot be submitted for review. If a file is larger than 50MB but is still within the maximum page limit specified in the NOFO, it must be broken into parts and denoted to that effect. For example:

- TechnicalVolume_Part_1
- TechnicalVolume_Part_2

DOE will not accept late submissions that resulted from technical difficulties due to uploading files that exceed 50MB.

In addition to eXCHANGE, the application forms and instructions are available at <https://infrastructure-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx>.

Electronic Authorization of Applications and Award Documents

Submission of an application and supplemental information under this NOFO through electronic systems used by the DOE, including eXCHANGE, constitutes the authorized representative's approval and electronic signature.

C. Submission Date and Times

All required submissions must be submitted to the eXCHANGE site identified in the [Key Facts](#) section of NOFO Part 1 no later than 5 p.m. ET on the dates provided on [Key Facts](#) section.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit all required application documents at least 48 hours in advance of the submission deadline. Under normal conditions (i.e., at least 48 hours before the submission deadline), applicants should allow at least one hour to submit application documents. Once the application documents are submitted in the eXCHANGE site identified in the NOFO Part 1, applicants may revise or update that submission until the expiration of the applicable deadline. If changes are made to any of these documents, the applicant must resubmit them before the applicable deadline. DOE will not extend the submission deadline for applicants that fail to submit required information by the applicable deadline due to server/connection congestion.

D. Intergovernmental Review

This NOFO is not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

VI. Application Review Information

A. Standards for Application Evaluation

Applications that are determined to be eligible will be evaluated in accordance with this NOFO and the guidance provided in the “DOE Merit Review Guide for Financial Assistance,” effective October 1, 2020, which is available at: <https://energy.gov/management/downloads/merit-review-guide-financial-assistance-and-unsolicited-proposals-current>.

B. Responsiveness Review

The following concept papers and applications will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered:

- Project concepts or approaches not based on established scientific principles.
- Project concepts or approaches identified specifically as NOT of interest (see the [Applications Specifically Not of Interest](#) section above).

C. Review Criteria

1. Compliance Criteria

All applicant submissions for applications must:

- Comply with the applicable content and form requirements listed in Application Content Requirements and Submission Requirements and Deadlines of the NOFO Part 1 and 2;
- Include all required documents;
- Be uploaded successfully in eXCHANGE site indicated in the [Key Facts](#) section above including clicking the “Submit” button; and
- Comply with the submission deadline stated in [Key Facts](#).

DOE will not review or consider submissions submitted through means other than the eXCHANGE site indicated in [Key Facts](#), submissions submitted after the applicable deadline, or incomplete submissions.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit all required application documents at least 48 hours in advance of the submission deadline. Under normal conditions (i.e., at least 48 hours before the submission deadline), applicants should allow at least one hour to submit application documents. Once the application documents are submitted in the eXCHANGE site identified in the [Key Facts](#) section, applicants may revise or update that submission until the expiration of the applicable deadline. If changes are made to any of these documents, the applicant must resubmit them before the applicable deadline. DOE will not extend the submission deadline for applicants that fail to submit required information by the applicable deadline due to server/connection congestion.

2. Technical Review Criteria

Applications

Applications will be evaluated against the technical review criteria shown below.

The following evaluation criteria will be utilized by the Technical Evaluation Committee and Federal Merit Review Panel members in conducting their evaluations of applications subjected to comprehensive merit review.

Review Criterion Overview	
Criterion	Weight
Criterion 1 - Technical Merit and Innovation	30%
Criterion 2 - Significance and Impact	30%
Criterion 3 - Project Execution Approach	10%
Criterion 4 - Team and Resources	30%

CRITERION 1: TECHNICAL MERIT AND INNOVATION (30%)

This criterion will evaluate the technical merit and feasibility of the proposed concept/project as detailed in the application. This criterion will also evaluate the degree of innovation of the proposed solution in comparison to contemporary technology. Examples of the types of considerations that will factor into this criterion include:

1. Degree to which the proposed technical concept/project addresses the key objectives outlined in the Announcement.
2. Extent to which the proposed technical concept/project is innovative and advances the state of existing and emerging approaches or technologies.
3. Validity/viability of the proposed technical concept/project.
4. Degree to which the proposed technical concept/project addresses end use of the approach or technology, including plans for implementation and mitigating interoperability concerns.

CRITERION 2: SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT (30%)

This criterion will evaluate potential impact of the project's outcomes on operational efficiency, safety, resiliency, and/or reliability of energy delivery systems. Examples of the types of considerations that will factor into this criterion include:

1. Extent to which the proposed technical concept/project meets or exceeds the goals specified in the Announcement.
2. Cost-effectiveness and/or performance improvement of the proposed technical concept/project over existing and emerging approaches and technologies.
3. The potential for broad adoption and sustainable use of the proposed technical concept/project.
4. Degree to which the applicant fosters collaboration and disseminates results and lessons learned to relevant entities in the energy sector.

CRITERION 3: PROJECT EXECUTION APPROACH (10%)

This criterion will evaluate the degree to which the Statement of Project Objectives (SOP) provides a sufficiently detailed, concise, and understandable description of the tasks, subtasks, and deliverables by which the overall project scope will be performed, and the project objectives will be achieved. This criterion will also evaluate the provided Milestone Log and Project Timeline.

CRITERION 4: TEAM AND RESOURCES (30%)

This criterion will evaluate the likelihood that the project team, facilities, and other resources are appropriate and sufficient to achieve the project's proposed goals and objectives. Examples of the types of considerations that will factor into this criterion include:

1. Adequacy and appropriateness of the qualifications, expertise, and experience of key personnel and team members.
2. Availability of key personnel and commitment of the project team as demonstrated by letters of commitment that clearly identify each participant's role, contribution, and/or amount of proposed cost share.
3. Plans for fostering partnerships with identified stakeholders.
4. Degree of demonstrated experience and past collaboration of the project team in completing comparable efforts that yielded successful technology research & development and demonstration (as applicable).
5. Extent of engagement of partner organizations that represent underserved communities as a core element of their mission, such as minority-serving institutions (MSIs).
6. Availability, appropriateness, adequacy, and condition of the R&D and demonstration facilities and equipment.

D. Other Selection Factors

In addition to the above criteria, the Selection Official may consider the following program policy factors in determining which applications to select for award negotiations:

1. The degree to which the proposed project exhibits technological diversity when compared to the existing DOE project portfolio and other projects selected from the subject NOFO;
2. The degree to which the proposed project, including proposed cost share, optimizes the use of available DOE funding to achieve programmatic objectives;
3. The level of industry involvement and demonstrated ability to accelerate demonstration and commercialization and overcome key market barriers;
4. The degree to which the proposed project will accelerate transformational technological advances in areas that industry by itself is not likely to undertake because of technical and financial uncertainty;
5. The degree to which the proposed project, or group of projects, represent a desired geographic distribution (considering past awards and current applications);
6. The degree to which the proposed project incorporates applicant or team members from Minority Serving Institutions; and partnerships with businesses majority owned or controlled by underrepresented persons or groups of underrepresented persons or Indian Tribes;
7. The degree to which the proposed project, when compared to the existing DOE project portfolio and other projects to be selected from the subject NOFO, contributes to the total portfolio meeting the goals.
8. The degree to which the proposed project contributes to the diversity of organizations and organization types and sizes selected from the subject NOFO when compared to the existing DOE project portfolio.
9. The degree to which the proposed project avoids duplication/overlap with other publicly or privately funded work.
10. The degree to which the proposed project supports complementary efforts or projects, which, when taken together, will best achieve the research goals and objectives.

VII. Selection and Award Notices

Please see the [NOFO Part 2, Selection and Award Notices](#) for information on notifications for Applications, Award Negotiations, and Post-Selection Information Requests.

VIII. Award Administration Information

A. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

DOE requires all award recipients to follow and accept requirements governed by laws and policies – both federal government-wide and DOE or program specific. These post-award requirements include all National and Administrative Policy Requirements; financial assistance general Certifications and Representations; Fraud, Waste and Abuse requirements; Safety, Security, and Regulatory requirements; and Environmental Review in Accordance with National Environmental Policy Act requirements.

Post-Award requirements and administration applicable to awards funded under this NOFO are identified below. Detailed descriptions of standard funding restrictions are provided in the [NOFO Part 2, Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) section. Detailed descriptions of program specific funding restrictions are provided below the table.

Applicable Post-Award Requirements and Administration	
Title	Location
Award Administrative Requirements	NOFO Part 2
Subaward and Executive Reporting	NOFO Part 2
National Policy Requirements	NOFO Part 2
Applicant Representations and Certifications	NOFO Part 2
Statement of Federal Stewardship	NOFO Part 2
Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) Financing Statements	NOFO Part 2
Interim Conflict of Interest Policy for Financial Assistance	NOFO Part 2
Whistleblower Protections	NOFO Part 2
Fraud, Waste, and Abuse	NOFO Part 2
Participants and Collaborating Organizations	NOFO Part 2
Current and Pending Support	NOFO Part 2
Prohibition Related to Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs	NOFO Part 2
Foreign Collaboration Considerations	NOFO Part 2
U.S. Manufacturing Commitments	NOFO Part 2
Subject Invention Utilization Reporting	NOFO Part 2
Intellectual Property Provisions	NOFO Part 2
Go/No-Go Review	NOFO Part 2
Conference Spending	NOFO Part 2
Invoice Review and Approval	NOFO Part 2
Cost-Share Payment	NOFO Part 2
Implementation of Executive Order 13798, Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty	NOFO Part 2

Affirmative Action and Pay Transparency Requirements	NOFO Part 2
Construction Signage	NOFO Part 2
Human Subjects Research	NOFO Part 2
Real Property and Equipment	NOFO Part 1
Rights in Technical Data	NOFO Part 1

1. Real Property and Equipment

Real property and equipment purchased with project funds (federal share and recipient cost share) are subject to the requirements at 2 CFR 200.310, 200.311, 200.313, and 200.316 (non-federal entities, except for-profit entities) and 2 CFR 910.360 (for-profit entities).

For resulting awards under this NOFO, the recipients may (1) take disposition action on the real property and equipment; or (2) continue to use the real property and equipment after the conclusion of the award period of performance with Grants Officer approval. The recipient's written request for Continued Use must identify the property and include: a summary of how the property will be used (must align with the authorized project purposes); a proposed use period, (e.g., perpetuity, until fully depreciated, or a calendar date when the recipient expects to submit disposition instructions); acknowledgement that the recipient shall not sell or encumber the property or permit any encumbrance without prior written DOE approval; current fair market value of the property; and an estimated useful life or depreciation schedule for equipment.

When the property is no longer needed for authorized project purposes, the recipient must request disposition instructions from DOE. For-profit entity disposition requirements are set forth in 2 CFR 910.360. Property disposition requirements for other non-federal entities are set forth in 2 CFR 200.310 – 200.316. In addition, pursuant to the FY23 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Pub. L. No. 117-328), Division D, Title III, Section 309, at the end of the award period the Secretary or a designee of the Secretary, at their discretion, may vest unconditional title or other property interests acquired under this project regardless of the fair market value of the property.

2. Rights in Technical Data

Data rights differ based on whether data is first produced under an award or instead was developed at private expense outside the award.

“Limited Rights Data”: The U.S. government will not normally require delivery of confidential or trade-secret-type technical data developed solely at private expense prior to issuance of an award, except as necessary to monitor technical progress and evaluate the potential of proposed technologies to reach specific technical and cost metrics.

Government Rights in Technical Data Produced Under Awards: The U.S. government normally retains unlimited rights in technical data produced under government financial assistance awards, including the right to distribute to the public. However, pursuant to special statutory authority, certain categories of data generated under DOE awards under this NOFO may be protected from public disclosure for up to five years after the data is generated (“Protected Data”). For awards permitting Protected Data, the protected data must be marked as set forth in the award's intellectual property terms and conditions and a listing of unlimited rights data (i.e., non-protected data) must be inserted into the data clause in

the award. In addition, invention disclosures may be protected from public disclosure for a reasonable time in order to allow for filing a patent application.

3. Cost Share Payment

DOE requires recipients to contribute the cost share amount incrementally over the life of the award. Specifically, the recipient's cost share for each **billing period** must always reflect the overall cost share ratio negotiated by the parties (i.e., the total amount of cost sharing on each invoice when considered cumulatively with previous invoices must reflect, at a minimum, the cost sharing percentage negotiated).

B. Questions and Support

1. Questions

Upon the issuance of a NOFO, DOE personnel are prohibited from communicating (in writing or otherwise) with applicants regarding the NOFO except through the established question and answer process described below. Questions regarding this NOFO must be submitted to nextgenerationcyberresearch@netl.doe.gov no later than three (3) business days prior to the application due date and time. Please note, feedback on individual concepts will not be provided through Q&A.

All questions and answers related to this NOFO will be posted on the eXCHANGE site listed in the [Key Facts](#) section above. **You must first select the NOFO Number to view the questions and answers specific to this NOFO.** DOE will attempt to respond to a question within three (3) business days unless a similar question and answer has already been posted on the website.

Questions related to the registration process and use of the eXCHANGE site listed in the [Key Facts](#), should be submitted to <https://infrastructure-exchange.energy.gov/>.

2. Support

[Grants.gov](#)

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. You can call 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. Hold on to your ticket number.

[SAM.gov](#)

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

IX. Other Information

Please see the **NOFO Part 2, Other Information** for additional information and requirements that apply to all DOE NOFOs.