

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**AIR FORCE RESEARCH LABORATORY**  
**KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE NEW MEXICO**

**Future Scholars for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)  
Workforce Development Programs**

**Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)**

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1. **Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number:** FOA-20-AFRL/RVKE-0001
2. **Federal Assistance Number (CFDA):** 12.560, DOD, NDEP, DOTC-STEM Education Outreach Implementation
3. **Announcement Type and Key Dates:**

Announcement Type	Amendment 02-Changes Highlighted in Yellow Amendment 01- Changes Highlighted in Yellow
Amendment Date	24 July 2020 10 July 2020
FOA Issue Date	19 June 2020
Initial Submission Deadline For Proposals	21 July 2020, 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time
Final Submission Deadline For Proposals	22 July 2024, 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time

This is a five year open Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) accepting proposals from the date of publication for award of grants and cooperative agreements, subject to the availability of funds. Once the FOA has reached the five year period and/or funds are no longer available, the announcement will be modified to reflect the announcement as closed. This FOA will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure awards are pertinent to the Government's needs and ceiling values.

Proposals may be submitted any time from the FOA issue date, until the final submission deadline for proposals; proposals will be evaluated as they are received. Prior to submitting a proposal, Recipients are required to submit a Letter of Intent to the Points of Contact (POCs) listed in Section VII - Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s). See Section III- Eligibility Information for Letter of Intent details. All proposals must be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov government-wide electronic portal at <https://www.grants.gov/>. No hard copy submissions will be accepted.

#### 4. **Registration Requirements:**

There are several one-time actions that must be completed in order to submit an application in response to this FOA (e.g., obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B), register with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov), and register with Grants.gov). Recipients who are not currently registered with SAM.gov and/or Grants.gov should allow sufficient time to complete registration. It is suggested that the registration process be started as soon as possible. Questions relating to the Grants.gov registration process, system requirements, or application submission must be directed to Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

## Table of Contents

<b>Section I-Funding Opportunity Description</b>	4
<b>A. Summary</b>	4
<b>B. Background</b>	4
<b>C. Program Description</b>	4
<b>D. Authorizations</b>	5
<b>Section II- Federal Award Information</b>	5
<b>A. Funding Amount and Period of Performance</b>	5
<b>B. Place of Performance</b>	6
<b>C. Minimum and Maximum Award Size</b>	6
<b>D. Type of Award Instrument</b>	6
<b>Section III- Eligibility Information</b>	7
<b>B. Cost Sharing or Matching</b>	8
<b>C. Other</b>	8
<b>Section IV- Application and Submission Information</b>	10
<b>A. Address to Request Application Package</b>	10
<b>B. Content and Form of Application Submission</b>	11
<b>C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</b>	17
<b>D. Submission Dates and Times</b>	18
<b>E. Intergovernmental Review</b>	18
<b>F. Funding Restrictions</b>	18
<b>G. Submissions From Successful Recipients</b>	18
<b>H. Other Submission Requirements</b>	19
<b>Section V - Application Review Information</b>	19
<b>A. Criteria</b>	19
<b>B. Review and Selection Process</b>	21
<b>C. Notice of Selection and Awards</b>	23
<b>Section VI- Federal Award Administration Information</b>	23
<b>A. Federal Award Notices</b>	23
<b>B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements</b>	23
<b>C. Reporting</b>	24
<b>Section VII- Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)</b>	25
<b>A. Questions</b>	25

<b>B. Letter of Intent</b>	26
<b>C. Contacts</b>	26
<b>Section VIII- Other Information</b>	26
<b>Section IX- Appendix, Attachments, and References</b>	28

## Section I-Funding Opportunity Description

### A. Summary

The Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, is seeking innovative applications for Future Scholars under Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Workforce Development Programs. AFRL intends to award multiple grants and cooperative agreements, subject to the availability of funds.

AFRL anticipates a total of \$50,000,000.00 of Federal funding for multiple awards under this FOA. Proposed efforts may range in size, complexity and periods of performance. The Government is seeking unclassified proposals that do not contain proprietary information. Proprietary information is defined as information that is not public knowledge and that is viewed as the property of the holder. The Government reserves the right to make multiple awards or no awards pursuant to this announcement.

### B. Background

In accordance with the Federal STEM Strategy, “The pace of innovation is accelerating globally, and with it the competition for scientific and technical talent. Now more than ever the innovation capacity of the United States—and its prosperity and security—depends on an effective and inclusive STEM education ecosystem.” Furthermore, the DoD STEM Mission is to “attract, inspire, and develop exceptional STEM talent across the education continuum to sustain the Department’s Technological edge.”

To meet the Federal STEM Strategy and the DoD STEM Mission, AFRL seeks methods in which it can more effectively cultivate a diverse, agile, and world-class STEM workforce. AFRL fully encourages future Workforce Development programs or projects that align with the strategic, operational, and tactical needs of our nation’s defense. By encouraging a broad range of Workforce Development programs or projects, AFRL hopes to put the STEM workforce in a position for success in an ever-changing and competitive world.

### C. Program Description

This FOA supports STEM Workforce Development programs or projects that align with the Federal STEM Strategy and the DoD STEM Mission. This announcement encourages programs or projects that improve the capacity of education systems and communities to create impactful STEM educational experiences for students and teachers, and prepare the 21st century STEM workforce. AFRL’s Workforce Development programs or projects include, but are not limited to:

- Internships (High School through Doctoral)
- Fellowship Apprentice/Residency Programs
- College or University project-based learning programs
- Formal or informal workforce development programs or projects that align with the Federal STEM Strategy and DOD STEM Mission

Before submitting an application, Recipients are highly encouraged to read the Federal STEM Education Strategy at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/STEM-Education-Strategic-Plan-2018.pdf> and the DoD STEM’s Mission at <https://dodstem.us/>.

**i. Program Goals.** AFRL's program goals are to:

1. Address geographic disparities and broaden participation for underrepresented and underserved communities.
2. Foster community engagement that support and encourage STEM learning, understanding, build STEM skills and literacy in an evidence-based and innovative manner.
3. Increase awareness of DoD and AFRL science and technology priorities such as artificial intelligence/machine learning, biotechnology, cyber security and DoD science and technologies.
4. Develop partnerships with industry and other organizations to promote sustainable STEM Workforce Development programs or projects.

**ii. Program Objectives.** AFRL's program objectives are to:

1. Provide opportunities for intellectual challenge and collaboration by promoting scientific interactions between the academic community and scientists at the AFRL's laboratories and facilities.
2. Develop and maintain a long-term recruiting pipeline supporting the AFRL's laboratories and facilities by training and educating the next generation of scientists and engineers in fundamental research of relevance to the Federal STEM Strategy, the DoD STEM Mission, and AFRL's STEM driven activities.
3. Support graduate students pursuing advanced degrees (i.e. Masters and PhDs) in areas of relevance to STEM literacy, innovation, and employment.
4. Provide program participants with exposure to researchers and the environment AFRL's laboratories and facilities and make participants aware of future career and employment opportunities at AFRL.

#### **D. Authorizations**

In accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 2192, this publication constitutes a FOA as contemplated in the Department of Defense Grants and Agreements Regulations (DoDGARS) 32 C.F.R., National Defense.

The Government (AFRL) reserves the right to select for award all, some, or none of the applications in response to this announcement. The Government provides no funding for direct reimbursement of application development costs. Technical applications and budgets (or any other material) submitted in response to this FOA will not be returned. This FOA is intended for applications that provide strategic solutions and that meet the evaluation criteria specified in this FOA.

The Government reserves the right to cancel this notice, either before or after the closing date. In the event the Government cancels this solicitation or a Recipient is not selected for an award, the Government is under no obligation to pay for any costs associated with preparing or submitting an application to this FOA.

The Government will not issue paper copies of this announcement. A formal Request for Applications, solicitation, and/or additional information regarding this announcement will not be issued.

## **Section II- Federal Award Information**

### **A. Funding Amount and Period of Performance**

The Government intends to award multiple grants and cooperative agreements, subject to the availability of funds.

As previously stated, AFRL anticipates a total of \$50,000,000.00 of Federal funding for multiple awards under this FOA, subject to the availability of funds. Proposed efforts may range in size, complexity and period of performance, but not to exceed 60 months in length. The Government reserves the right to make multiple awards or no awards pursuant to this announcement.

For Proposals with more than one budget period, performance continuation will be contingent upon several elements. Specifically, AFRL may evaluate program or project performance, schedule adherence, the extent milestone objectives are met, compliance with reporting requirements, and overall contribution to the program goals. As a result of this evaluation, AFRL may, at its discretion, authorize the following actions:

- (1) Continue to fund the program/project, contingent upon the availability of funds;
- (2) Recommend redirection of propose effort;
- (3) Place a hold on Federal funding, pending further supporting data; or
- (4) Discontinue funding because of insufficient progress, change in strategic direction, or lack of funding.

AFRL expects projects to be completed within the proposed performance period. Any requests for no-cost extensions must be fully justified and submitted no later than 60 days before the end of the period of performance. All requests shall be approved by the Grants and Agreements Officer in coordination with the designated Program Manager.

The anticipated period of performance for five year proposals is:  
**26 October 2020 through 27 October 2025.**

#### **B. Place of Performance**

Anticipated places of performance include but are not limited to AFRL's Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC), installations located at:

- Directed Energy Directorate (RD), Kirtland AFB, NM
- Space Vehicles Directorate (RV), Kirtland AFB, NM
- Munitions Directorate (RW), Eglin AFB, FL
- Air Vehicles Directorate (RB), Wright Patterson AFB, OH
- Propulsion Directorate (RZ), Wright Patterson AFB, OH
- 711 Human Performance Wing (RH), Wright Patterson AFB, OH
- Information Directorate (RI), Rome, NY

#### **C. Minimum and Maximum Award Size**

Floor (i.e., the minimum amount for an individual award made under this announcement): The minimum amount for a proposed effort will be \$25,000.00.

Ceiling (i.e., the maximum amount for an individual award made under this announcement): The maximum amount for a proposed effort will be \$5,000,000.00 per year for a five year total of \$25,000,000.00. Applications for larger amounts may be considered based on funding availability.

**NOTE:** The Government reserves the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the proposals submitted in response to this FOA.

#### **D. Type of Award Instrument**

Awards will take the form of grants and cooperative agreements, subject to the availability of funds.

Any assistance instrument awarded under this announcement will be governed by the award terms and conditions that conform to DoD's implementation of OMB guidance in 2 C.F.R. 200, Uniform

Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; 32 C.F.R., National Defense, DoD Research & Development General Terms and Conditions (July 2018) located at: <https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/manage-your-award/manage-grant-award/grants-terms-conditions>, and FAR Part 31, Contract Cost Principles.

**NOTE:** Grant and Cooperative Agreements do not include the delivery of software, prototypes, and other hardware deliverables.

### Section III- Eligibility Information

#### A. Eligible Recipients

Institutions of higher education, nonprofit institutions, nonprofit organizations, States, local governments, Indian tribes, consortia of such institutions or nonprofit institutions/organizations are eligible Recipients and may submit proposals under this FOA.

Defense laboratories, military universities, and warfare centers, as well as other Department of Defense and civilian agency, are not eligible to receive awards under this FOA and must not submit proposals in response to this FOA. Federally Funded Research & Development Centers (FFRDCs), including Department of Energy National Laboratories, are not eligible to receive awards under this FOA. However, teaming arrangements between FFRDCs and eligible principal Recipients are allowed so long as they are permitted under the sponsoring agreement between the Government and the specific FFRDC. Please note, the Recipient, if successful, shall 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 contractor.

University Affiliated Research Centers (UARC) are eligible to submit applications under this FOA unless precluded from doing so by their Department of Defense UARC contract.

To prevent the bias and unfair competitive advantage resulting from conflicting rules, Recipients must identify in their application any organizational conflict of interests which may exist. If a Recipient has an actual or potential organizational conflict of interests, the application must identify the organizational conflict of interests and the mitigation plan to address it.

**Foreign entities will not be considered for this award.** All prime recipients receiving funding under this FOA must be incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a state or territory of the United States.

**Information Regarding Non-U.S. Citizens Assigned to AFRL's Programs or Projects.** In an effort to continue improving AFRL's security posture, better manage risks to the critical mission areas, and better align contractor access requirements, AFRL will not allow individuals who are non-U.S. citizens to work within AFRL facilities or to have access to US Government IT networks, unless a waiver requested has been granted by the Grants and Agreements Officer. Individuals requiring access to USAF bases, AFRL facilities, and/or access to U.S. Government Information Technology (IT) networks in connection with the work on the proposed effort must be U.S. citizens. For the purpose of base and network access, possession of a permanent resident card ("Green Card") does not equate to U.S. citizenship. This requirement does not apply to foreign nationals approved by the U.S. Department of Defense or U.S. State Department under international personnel exchange agreements with foreign governments. It also does not apply to dual citizens who possess U.S. citizenship, to include Naturalized citizens.

In the event a Recipient is unable to hire a U.S. citizen due to a rare, highly-specialized, needed expertise, a waiver request must be submitted from the organization to the Grants and Agreements Officer. Any waivers to this requirement must be granted in writing by the Grants and Agreements Officer prior to providing access. Specific format for waiver request will be provided upon request from the Grants and Agreements Officer. The above requirements are in addition to any other contract requirements related to obtaining a Common Access Card (CAC).

For purposes of the paragraph above, if an IT network/system does not require AFRL to endorse a Recipient's application to said network/system in order to gain access, the organization operating the IT network/system is responsible for controlling access to its system. If an IT network/system requires an U.S. Government sponsor to endorse the application in order for access to the IT network/system; AFRL will only endorse the following types of applications; consistent with the requirements above:

- (1) Contractor employees who are U.S. citizens performing work under this award.
  - (2) Contractor employees who are non-U.S. citizens and who have been granted a waiver.
- Please note that, any additional access restrictions established by the IT network/system owner apply.

### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Cost sharing or matching is not required.

### **C. Other**

#### **Pre-applications Requirements: Letter of Intent**

Prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov, Recipients are required to submit via e-mail a Letter of Intent to the designated Grants and Agreements Officer and Contracting Specialist listed in Section VII - Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s). **Please note, there is no deadline for the submission of the Letter of Intent.** Letter of Intent requirements as follows:

- **Letter of Intent.** The Letter of Intent shall not exceed **two (2) pages** and at a minimum provide the following details:
  - Title of the proposed effort.
  - Description of the proposed effort, to include by not limited to:
    - Summary of how the proposed effort meets the AFRL's programs Goals and Objectives as stated in Section I - Funding Opportunity Description.
    - Rationale for the proposed effort.
    - Details of how the success of the proposed effort will be met and the Recipient's capacities to achieving success in the proposed effort.
  - Proposed period of performance (identify both the base period and any options, if applicable).
  - Total proposed budget (identify both the base period and any options, if applicable).
  - Administrative/business contact (name, address, phone, email address).
- **Letter of Intent Review and Notification:** The Letter of Intent will be reviewed in coordination with the Grants and Agreements Officer and designated Program Manager(s) listed in Section VII - Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s). This procedure is intended to (1) minimize unnecessary efforts in proposal preparation, (2) inform Recipients of availability of funds, and (3) track number of interested Recipients in the funding effort. The Letter of Intent will be reviewed within five (5) working days of receipt.

Recipients may be contacted by the Program Manager(s) to discuss the proposed effort in the Letter of Intent. After review of the Letter of Intent, interested Recipients will be informed and instructed by the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist in writing of the following:

- The Letter of Intent meets the Goals and Objectives of the FOA. At this time, the AFRL invites the interested Recipient to submit a Full Application through Grants.gov. Interested Recipients will be provided **30 business day's submission deadline** from notification date (Day/Month/Year).
- The Letter of Intent meets the Goals and Objectives of the FOA. However, due to funds availability, the Program Manager(s) ask that the interested Recipient NOT submit a Full Application through Grants.gov. Should funds become available, the interested Recipient will be contacted by the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist and invited to submit a Full Application through Grants.gov. Please note, AFRL does NOT have an anticipated time line for availability of funds.
- The Letter of Intent does NOT meet the Goals and Objectives of the FOA. However, interested Recipients may be provided the option to resubmit a new Letter of Intent that meets the Goals and Objectives as stated in Section I - Funding Opportunity Description.
- Recipients who do not receive an invitation to submit a Full Application are not entitled to a debrief.

**NOTE:** AFRL reserves the right to reject a Letters of Intent provided by an interested Recipient. In the case of rejection, the interested Recipient will be instructed in writing by the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist to NOT submit a Full Application through Grants.gov.

- **Letter of Intent Responsibility:** Recipients are responsible for ensuring the Letter of Intent is received by the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist before the initial or final submission proposal deadlines. Proposals submitted without prior submission of a Letter of Intent, will NOT be considered for the proposed effort.

**NOTE:** Submission of a Letter of Intent does not warrant for a successful proposal or Award.

**System of Award Management (SAM):** To be eligible for an award, the Recipient must be registered in the System of Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application; provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. Organizations are now required to send a notarized letter with their Employee Identification Number (EIN) in conjunction with the SAM registration process. If the organization does not have either an Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Tax Identification Number (TIN), allow at least 2 weeks to receive this information from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Recipients should allow 3 to 4 weeks to complete the entire SAM registration process. If a Recipient has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the AFRL is ready to make a Federal award, the AFRL may determine that the Recipient is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another Recipient. Additional information and step-by-step registration directions are detailed in the SAM User Guide and other General Services Administration (GSA) training materials in the Help area at <https://www.sam.gov/>.

**Profit or Fee:** Profit or fee is unallowable under this FOA.

**Project Abstract:** A project abstract is required with the application and must be publically releasable as specified by this document.

**NOTE:** White papers are NOT required or encouraged for this FOA and will not be reviewed.

#### **Section IV- Application and Submission Information**

The Government seeks only Full Applications that (1) have submitted a Letter of Intent to the Grants and Agreements Officer and Contracting Specialist, (2) have received in writing notification from the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist to proceed with a Full Application through Grants.gov, and (3) meet the eligibility requirements of Section III - Eligibility Information. Full Applications submitted under this FOA must seek to address unclassified efforts. No classified applications shall be submitted.

Full Applications must conform to the following form and content requirements, including maximum page lengths (described below) and must be submitted via Grants.gov. AFRL will not review or consider applications submitted after the applicable deadline, or incomplete submissions. AFRL will not extend deadlines for Recipients who fail to submit required information and documents due to server/connection congestion.

The application must conform to the following requirements:

- Must be submitted in Adobe PDF format unless stated otherwise;
- All pages must be formatted to fit on 8.5 x 11 inch paper with margins not less than one inch on every side, with font not smaller than 11 point;
- References must be included as footnotes or endnotes in a font size of 10 or larger. Footnotes and endnotes are counted toward the maximum page requirement;
- Page numbers must be included in the footer of every page; and
- Each submission must not exceed the specified maximum page limit, including cover page, charts, graphs, maps, and photographs when printed using the formatting requirements set forth above and single spaced. If Recipients exceed the maximum page lengths indicated below, AFRL will review only the authorized number of pages and disregard any additional pages.

AFRL urges Recipients to carefully review their application and to allow sufficient time for the submission of required information and documents. Applications that pass the initial eligibility review will undergo comprehensive technical merit review according to the criteria identified in Section V- Application Review Information of the FOA.

**NOTE:** Titles given to the Applications should be descriptive of the STEM efforts and should NOT be a copy of the title of this announcement.

#### **A. Address to Request Application Package**

Recipients shall be aware of the following:

- Applications will be reviewed only if (1) are received electronically through <https://www.grants.gov/>; and (2) the Recipient has submitted via e-mail a Letter of Intent to the Grants and Agreements Officer and Contracting Specialist, and has received in writing, after review of the Letter of Intent, notification from the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist to proceed with the proposed effort and submit a Full Application through Grants.gov.
- All relevant material and announcements and/or information to this FOA will be made available at <https://www.grants.gov/>. It is the responsibility of the Recipient to check Grants.gov for updates.

- Recipients are responsible for making sure the application is submitted, received, and validated by Grants.gov before the application deadline. If application package is submitted late, the application will be ineligible for consideration.
- The Government will not issue paper copies of this announcement. A formal Request for Proposals (RFP), solicitation, and/or additional information regarding this announcement will not be issued.

## **B. Content and Form of Application Submission**

### **i. Component Pieces of The Application**

Through Grants.gov, Recipients must complete the mandatory Grants.gov forms in accordance with the instructions provided on the forms and the additional instructions below. Files/documents that are attached to the forms must be in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) unless otherwise specified in this announcement.

### **ii. Required Forms/Documents**

All Recipients, including sub-recipients or sub-awardees, must complete the mandatory forms and any applicable optional forms (e.g., SF-LLL- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) in accordance with the instructions provided below.

#### **1. Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 (Research and Related)**

In Grants.gov, complete this form first as the forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms. Complete all of the required fields in accordance with the “pop-up” instructions on the form. This form is also mandatory for all sub-Recipients or sub-recipients as summarized in Subsection 11. below.

#### **2. Project/Performance Site Location(s)**

In Grants.gov, indicate the primary site where the work will be performed. If a portion of the project will be performed at any other site(s), identify the site location(s) in the blocks provided. If there are more than two site locations (i.e. sub-Recipients), attach a single file titled “Additional Site Locations.pdf” with the relevant information and click on “Add Attachment,” at the bottom of the Project/Performance Site Location(s) form to attach.

#### **3. Project Abstract**

The project abstract must contain a summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained document that identifies the name of the Recipient, the Project Director(s), the project title, the objectives of the project, a description of the project, milestones listed by year (is applicable), technical approaches, anticipated outcome of the effort, if successful, and impacts on DoD capabilities.

This document must not include any proprietary or sensitive business information as the Government may make it available to the public after awards are made. The project abstract must not exceed **one (1) page** when printed using standard 8.5" by 11" paper with 1" margins (top, bottom, left and right) {single spaced} with font not smaller than 11 point. The project abstract must be marked by the Recipient as “Approved for Public Release”.

#### **4. Project Narrative or Technical Volume to include:**

The project narrative or technical volume must not exceed **20 pages**, including cover page, table of contents, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations, when printed using standard 8.5" by 11" paper with 1 inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) [select single or double

spaced]. **EVALUATORS WILL REVIEW ONLY THE NUMBER OF PAGES SPECIFIED IN THE PRECEDING SENTENCE.** The font must not be smaller than 11 point. Do not include any Internet addresses (URLs) that provide information necessary to review the application because the information contained in these sites will NOT be reviewed.

EXCLUDED from the Project Narrative or Technical Application 20 pages limit are: Budget justification workbook, resumes, and letters of support.

The Project Narrative or Technical Volume must include the following sections:

- a. Cover Page (1 Page Maximum).** The cover page must include the following information:
  - FOA Number: FOA-20-AFRL/RVKE-0001
  - Proposed Title of Application
  - Identity of prime Recipient and complete list of sub-Recipients, if applicable
  - Technical contact (name, address, phone, email address)
  - Administrative/business contact (name, address, phone, email address)
  - Proposed period of performance (identify both the base period and any options, if applicable)
  - Total proposed budget (identify both the base period and any options, if applicable)
- b. Table of Contents (2 Page Maximum).** A listing of the sections within the application, including corresponding page numbers.
- c. Project Schedule and Milestones (2 Pages Maximum).** A summary of the schedule of events and milestones.
- d. Technical Approach and Justification.** Recipient's applications must consist of a clear description of the strategy, technical approach and justification being proposed. Do not include proprietary or confidential information. This section should describe the relevance of the proposed effort to the goals and objectives of the FOA. The application should expound and discuss the technical concept to include, but not limited to, details on:
  - i. Program or Project Objectives:** This section should provide a clear, concise statement of the specific goals/objectives/aims of the proposed effort.
  - ii. Recruitment Strategy.** The recruitment of participants is crucial to the success of any proposed effort. Recipient's application must detail the organizations plan to advertise the opportunities, attract and recruit diverse and highly qualified participants, students and/or staff. This may include, but is not limited to:
    - Details on the Recipients target participants for the proposed effort (high school students, undergraduate students, etc.).
    - Recruitment plans or strategy for participants, students, faculty, etc.
    - Where applicable, the approach for recruitment of underrepresented and underserved communities.
    - Approach to develop and maintain a website to aid in program or project advertisement, online applications and related material, manage mentor/intern/resident portals, provide important dates, news, resources, etc.

- Develop criteria for selections and review process of participants, such as interviews.
- iii. Coordination Plan.** Recipient's application must detail the organization's plans to provide coordination efforts between the Recipient, proposed effort participants and the Government representatives. This may include, but is not limited to:
- Develop mentorship programs for participants.
  - Develop written review or evaluation progress reports for participants, indicating potential problems if found and recommended solutions.
  - Identify specific workforce needs or potential gaps in technical areas and recommend changes.
  - Address the development of curricula, including courses, workshops, seminars, etc., with an emphasis on how the curricula will help prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers.
  - Offer program participants career development opportunities such as resume workshops, mentorship talks, career fair, program finale (poster session/oral presentation opportunity).
  - Provide details on how on-site and/or off-site program coordination will occur.
- iv. Operational Plan.** The Recipient's application must detail the organization's daily operational plan on the proposed effort. This may include, but is not limited to:
- Where applicable, relationships and communication plan with any sub-recipients, sub-awardees, consultants, or collaborators of the proposed effort.
  - The approach to project risk management, a description of how project changes will be handled, and how communications will be maintained among project team members.
  - Describe how interactions with the AFRL's laboratories or facilities Government representatives will occur and how participants will be engaged with such representatives.
  - Describe how the proposed effort will promote Workforce Development in STEM emerging fields that will prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers.
  - Describe how the organizational structure and program design (i.e. the framework) will work as a whole and how it will enable synergistic research, education, and workforce development.
- v. Management Plan.** The Recipient applications must detail the organization's daily management and oversight plan. This may include, but is not limited to:
- Management team qualifications, roles, and responsibilities. Recipients must include resumes for the Project Director/ Principal Investigator and any other key personnel.
  - The technical and management aspects of the management plan, including systems and practices, such as financial and overall approach to and organization for managing the proposed effort.
  - Where applicable, provide details on any past experience in leading, managing, and administering similar projects.

- Collect a set of program-specific measures of performance to include capture of participation rates, application rates, and data specific related to the goals of the proposed effort.
  - When applicable, help identify housing resources and other community resources for program participants.
  - When applicable, assist program or project participants to obtain access to the various work-site locations/facilities/computer network. This may also include assisting participants with security clearance.
  - When applicable, provide program or project participants stipends based on the established or approved college or university stipend rates. Recipients that do not have established or approved stipends rates, may utilize the established position classification standards under the 2020 General Schedule (GS) Classification System and Locality Pay Tables by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Federal Position Classification and Qualifications website <https://www.opm.gov/>. This website provides Federal position classification, job grading, and qualifications information that is used to determine the pay plan, series, title, grade, and qualification requirements for most work in the Federal Government.
  - Provide details on the program or project assimilation and closeout processes or procedures.
- e. **Statement of Work (SOW).** The SOW is an outline of specific aims of the proposed effort that establishes the milestones during the performance period of the award. The SOW should contain sufficient detail to be informative as a standalone document. There is no limit to the number of specific aims, tasks, or subtasks that can be described within the SOW. Please note, the SOW will be incorporated into the award in lieu of incorporating the entire technical proposal. The SOW must not include any proprietary information.
- f. **Metrics and Evaluation.** Discuss the metrics and evaluation plans for the proposed effort. Metrics and evaluation components must include but not be limited to:
- Anticipated data collection and results.
  - Format in which proposed metrics and evaluation data will be shared with the Government.
  - Logic models and program operating guidelines (if applicable).
- g. **Merit Review Criteria Discussion.** The section should address each of the merit review criteria listed in Section V-Application Review Information. Provide sufficient information so that reviewers or evaluators will be able to evaluate the application in accordance with these merit review criteria.
- h. **Budget Justification Workbook (Not part of the 20 Page Limit).** Applications must include a cost proposal detailing direct labor (personnel), fringe benefits, travel, sub-recipients/subcontracts, consultants, equipment, materials and supplies, and other direct costs and indirect costs. The cost proposal, must provide a narrative explaining and justifying budget figures in enough detail so the Government can determine reasonableness. It must include all figures, calculations, and supporting documentation for determining cost allowance, allocation, and reasonableness. Justifications for costs must be explicitly stated. Recipients must categorize funds by year and provide separate annual budgets for projects lasting more than one year. Recipients must use the attached **Budget Justification Workbook** to complete their budgets.

Recipients must provide a separate budget justification workbook for all sub-recipient or sub-awards that are expected to perform work.

Save the Budget Justification Workbook(s) as a separate file and click on "Add Attachment" on the Attachments form provided in Grants.gov.

- i. Appendix 1 - Resume File (Not part of the 20 Page Limit).** Provide a resume for all personnel having a major role, to include sub-recipients, sub-awardees and/or consultants if they meet the definition of major role. A major role is any individual who contributes in a substantive, measurable way to the execution of the proposed effort. The biographical information for each resume must not exceed 2 pages when printed on 8.5" by 11" paper with 1 inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) [select single or double spaced] with font no smaller than 11 point and should include the following information, if applicable:
- Education and Training. Undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral training; provide institution, major/area, degree, and year.
  - Professional Experience. Beginning with the current position list, in chronological order, professional/academic positions with a brief description.

Provide the Resume File as an appendix to the Project Narrative or Technical Volume. Do not attach as a separate file.

- j. Appendix 2 – Letters of Support File (Not part of the 20 Page Limit).** If applicable, provide letters of support from all sub-Recipients, sub-awardees, and consultants having a role in the proposed effort. The information for each letter of support must not exceed 2 pages when printed on 8.5" by 11" paper with 1 inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) [select single or double spaced] with font no smaller than 11 point and should include the following information, if applicable:
- Relationship and role in the proposed effort.
  - Extend of support in the proposed effort.

Provide the Letters of Support File as an appendix to the Project Narrative or Technical Volume. Do not attach as a separate file.

## **5. SF-424A Detailed Budget Information – Non Construction Programs**

Complete the budget form attached to this announcement in accordance with the SF-424A Instructions provided in the document; each tab has detailed instructions. The Recipient must provide a separate budget for each year of support requested. The form will generate a cumulative budget for the total period of performance. The Recipient may request funds under any of the budget categories as long as the item and amount are necessary to perform the proposed work, meet all the criteria for allowance under the applicable Federal cost principles, and are not prohibited by the funding restrictions in this announcement.

## **6. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (If applicable)**

If applicable, provide a copy of the latest negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. An entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as an entity chooses to

negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. (See 2 CFR 200.414 for detailed information).

Save the rate agreement as a separate.pdf file and click on "Add Attachment" on the Attachments form provided in Grants.gov.

### **7. Systems of Award Management Lobbying Form/Certification Regarding Lobbying**

Recipients and sub-Recipients may not use any Federal funds to influence or attempt to influence, directly or indirectly, Congressional action on any legislative or appropriation matters. In the System for Award Management (SAM.gov), complete the Certification Regarding Lobbying information to certify that no appropriated funds have been used for lobbying activities. This information is also mandatory for all sub-recipients or sub-awardees as determined in subsection 11. below.

### **8. SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (If applicable)**

If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the grant/cooperative agreement, Recipients must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying."

This form is also required (if applicable) for all sub-recipients or sub-awardees as determined in subsection 11. below.

### **9. Assurances – Non-Construction Programs**

Assurances for Non-Constructions Programs (SF-424B R&R) Form is not required. Exceptions – This requirement does not preclude the collection of certifications, representations, or assurances that:

- are required by law or regulations,
- are specific to DoD programs, or
- are necessary in order to conduct business.

### **10. Environmental Checklist**

Recipients must complete Attachment I, AF Form 813 Request for Environmental Impact Analysis. Save the questionnaire in a single file named "Env.pdf" and attach to the Attachments Form in Grants.gov by clicking "Add Attachment."

### **11. Sub-recipient File(s)**

If sub-recipients or sub-awards are proposed, the following documents are mandatory as captured above:

- Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 (R&R)
- SF-424A Detailed Budget Information – Non-Construction Program
- Budget Justification Workbook
- Current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- In SAM.gov complete the Lobbying Form/Certification Regarding Lobbying
- SF-Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable); and
- Assurances – Non-Construction Programs form, please see note above.

## 12. Attachments Forms and Grants.gov Workspace

In Grants.gov, Recipients must create a Workspace, which allows the application components to be completed online and routed through the Recipient organization for review prior to submission. Once the Workspace has been created, participants (grant team members) can be added and the required forms can be completed and reviewed before submitting. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

### Summary of Required Forms/Documents:

All applications must include the following mandatory forms/documents:

Name of Document	Format	Attach to	Mandatory
1. Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 (R&R)	Grants.gov Form	N/A	Yes
2. Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Grants.gov Form	N/A	Yes
3. Project Abstract	PDF	Attachments Forms	Yes
4. Project Narrative File(s) (to include: Appendix 1 - Resume File, Appendix 2- Letter of Support)	PDF	Attachments Forms	Yes
5. SF-424A Detailed Budget Information – Non Construction Programs	Grants.gov Form	Attachments Form	Yes
6. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	PDF	Attachments Form	Yes
7. SAM.gov Lobbying Form/Certification Regarding Lobbying	SAM.gov	N/A	Yes
8. SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Grants.gov Form	N/A	If Applicable
9. Assurances – Non-Construction Programs	N/A	N/A	N/A
10. Environmental Checklist	PDF	Attachments Form	Yes
11. Sub-Recipient File(s)	PDF	Attachments Form	Yes
12. Budget Justification Workbook(s) (Not part of the 20 Page Limit)	xlsx	Attachments Form	Yes

**NOTE:** If the required forms summarized in the table above are not provided by the Recipient (to include mandatory sub-recipients documents), the Recipient's package may be deemed non-responsive during the initial review and may not be forwarded for merit review. See Section V below for details regarding the initial review.

### C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each Recipient (unless the Recipient is an individual or Federal awarding agency excepted from those requirements under 2 C.F.R. § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 C.F.R. § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- i. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
- ii. Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and
- iii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

AFRL may not make a Federal award to a Recipient until the Recipient has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if a Recipient has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the Recipient is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another Recipient.

#### **D. Submission Dates and Times**

Letter of Intent and Proposals may be submitted any time from the FOA issue date, until the final submission deadline for applications; proposals will be evaluated as they are received. Prior to submitting a proposal, Recipients are required to submit a Letter of Intent to the Points of Contact (POCs) listed in Section VII - Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s).

Final Submission Deadline for proposals 22 July 2024, no later than 2:00 PM EST.

Applications received after the Final Submission Deadline for proposals and specified time will be deemed late and will not be accepted for review. Recipients are encouraged to transmit applications well before the deadline. All proposals must be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov Government-wide electronic portal at <https://www.grants.gov/>.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE FINAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE WILL NOT BE REVIEWED OR CONSIDERED FOR AWARD.

#### **E. Intergovernmental Review**

This effort is not subject to Executive Order 12372 - Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

#### **F. Funding Restrictions**

**Availability of Funds.** Funding for all awards and future budget periods are contingent upon the availability of funds appropriation for the purpose of this effort and the availability of future-year budget authority.

**Cost Principles.** Costs must be allowable, allocable and reasonable in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles referenced in 2 CFR part 200 and FAR Part 31.

**Pre-Award Costs.** Pre-award costs are incurred at the Recipient's risk. The Government is under no obligation to reimburse such costs if for any reason the Recipient does not receive an award or if the award is made for a lesser amount than the Recipient expected.

**Performance of Work in the United States.** All work performed under this FOA must be performed in the United States. If the prime recipient fails to comply with the Performance of Work in the United States requirement, AFRL may deny reimbursement for the work conducted outside the United States and such costs may not be recognized as allowable.

**Foreign Travel.** Foreign travel costs are not allowable under this FOA unless approval has been granted by the Grants and Agreements Officer.

#### **G. Submissions From Successful Recipients**

If selected for negotiation of an award, the Government reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to:

- Indirect cost information
- Other budget information or financial breakdown information
- Project Narrative details or technical proposal information

## H. Other Submission Requirements

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED THROUGH GRANTS.GOV TO BE CONSIDERED FOR AWARD. Submit electronic applications through the "Apply for Grants" function at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>. Problems completing the registration process or submitting application, call Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or send an email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

## Section V - Application Review Information

Awards under this FOA will be made to Recipients on the basis of the evaluation criteria listed below and the availability of funds to support the proposed effort. The Government reserves the right to request and require additional supporting information and documentation after it makes the selection determination. The Government reserves the right to remove Recipients from award consideration if the parties fail to reach agreement on award terms, conditions, or cost/price within a reasonable time; or if the Recipients fail to provide requested or required additional information in a timely manner. The primary basis for selecting applications for award will be technical merits, and the availability of funds to support the proposed effort.

### A. Criteria

#### 1. Initial Review Criteria

Prior to a comprehensive merit evaluation, the Government will perform an initial review to determine the following factors:

- If, the Recipient has received in writing, after review of the Letter of Intent, notification from the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist to proceed with the proposed effort and submit a Full Application through Grants.gov. Please note, applications received without prior submitting a Letter of Intent will not be reviewed.
- The Recipient's eligibility for an award in accordance with Section III of the FOA.
- Submission of the mandatory forms/documents required in accordance with Section IV of the FOA and/or Grants.gov.
- Funds availability.

Applications that fail to pass the initial review criteria may not be forwarded for merit review and may be eliminated from further consideration.

#### 2. Merit Review Criteria

All applications passing the initial review will be evaluated against the merit review criteria shown below. All criterions listed below are of equal importance. The merit review criteria involves consideration of the following:

- Criterion 1: Technical Merit and Impact
- Criterion 2: Program and Implementation Approach
- Criterion 3: Organizational Team and Resources

**Criterion 1: Technical Merit and Impact**

This criterion involves consideration of the following:

- Extent to which the proposed effort supports the Goals and Objectives of Section I-Funding Opportunity Description.
- Extent to which the proposed effort will positively impact the Federal STEM Strategy and DOD STEM Mission.
- Extent to which the task descriptions are clear, detailed, timely, and reasonable, resulting in a high likelihood that the proposed effort will succeed.
- Strength of the plan for recruitment of participants to include students, faculty or recruitment of underrepresented and underserved communities.
- Degree to which the plan for development and dissemination of the framework and/or curricula (e.g. program design and organizational support, list of courses, description of training, and degree requirements) will help prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers in STEM related fields.
- Extent to which proposed partnerships ensure student opportunities for hands-on learning opportunities.

**Criterion 2: Program and Implementation Approach**

This criterion involves consideration of the following:

- Extent to which the Recipient plans to track and report the baseline, metrics, milestones, lessons learned or best practices and overall impact of the proposed effort.
- Degree to which the Recipient's recruitment strategy and coordination plan insures adequate and appropriate interactions between project or program participants and Government representatives.
- Degree to which the proposed effort addresses workforce for DOD related STEM Strategy DoD mission.
- Degree to which the proposed effort is likely to lead to increased employment in the DoD and/or at AFRL.

**Criterion 3: Organizational Team and Resources**

This criterion involves consideration of the following:

- The effectiveness of the Recipient to oversee the proposed effort and to provide the Government with on-going evaluations of the proposed effort.
- Strength of the operational and management plan as reference to in Section IV- Application and Submission Information, to include but not be limited to, outlining the roles of the project partners (if applicable), and plans to facilitate communication.
- Reasonable development of short and long-term recruitment strategy to ensure long-term growth of program.

**3. Standards for Application Evaluation**

The primary purpose of a merit review is to provide an independent assessment of the technical or scientific merit of an eligible and responsive application. Merit reviews are performed by person(s) who have knowledge and expertise in the technical or scientific fields identified in the FOA. The rating system is structure to assist the reviewers in providing information to the selection official(s) by allowing for the ranking or sorting of applications by an evaluation standard.

**Rating Scale:**

The scoring of each criterion shall be based on the strengths and weaknesses of the Application.

- A strength is an aspect of an Application that, when compared to the stated evaluation criterion, appears to positively affect the probability of successful mission accomplishment of the potential award.
- A weakness is an aspect of an Application that, when compared to the stated evaluation criterion, appears to negatively affect the probability of successful mission accomplishment of the potential award.

To assist in assigning an appropriate score, the following ratings will be used as a guideline:

<b><u>Rating</u></b>	<b><u>Descriptive Statement</u></b>
<b>Outstanding</b>	Recipient fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrating that it will meet the Government's requirements, and demonstrates no weaknesses.
<b>Good</b>	Recipient fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrating a likelihood of meeting the Government's requirements, and demonstrates only a small number of weaknesses.
<b>Poor</b>	Recipient does not address all aspects of the criterion nor is evidence presented indicating the likelihood of successfully meeting the Government's requirements. A number of weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strengths presented.

**NOTE:** Only proposals rated Outstanding or Good may be considered for Award, subject to the availability of funds.

## **B. Review and Selection Process**

### **1. Merit Review**

#### **Overview**

As indicated above, the evaluation process consists of multiple phases. Prior to a comprehensive merit evaluation as discussed in Section V(A)(2), the Government will perform an Initial Review to determine the following factors:

- If, the Recipient has received in writing, after review of the Letter of Intent, notification from the Grants and Agreements Officer or Contracting Specialist to proceed with the proposed effort and submit a Full Application through Grants.gov. Please note, applications received without prior submitting a Letter of Intent will not be reviewed.
- The Recipient's eligibility for an award in accordance with Section III of the FOA.
- Submission of the mandatory forms/documents required in accordance with Section IV of the FOA.

As stated previously, at the end of the Initial Review, a thorough merit evaluation will take place in accordance with Section V(A)(2) of this FOA.. The merit evaluation of eligible submissions are conducted by reviewers that are experts in the subject matter of the FOA.

**Pre-Selection Clarifications**

The Government may determine that pre-selection clarifications are necessary from one or more Recipients. These pre-selection clarifications will solely be for the purposes of clarifying the application, and will be limited to information already provided in the application documentation. The pre-selection clarifications may occur before, during or after the merit review evaluation process. Information provided by a Recipient that is not necessary to address the pre-selection clarification question will not be reviewed or considered. Typically, a pre-selection clarification will be carried out through either written responses to the Government's written clarification questions or video or conference calls with the Government's representatives.

The information provided by Recipients to the Government through pre-selection clarifications is incorporated in their applications and contributes to the merit review evaluation and the Government's selection decisions. If the Government representative contacts a Recipient for pre-selection clarification purposes, it does not signify that the Recipient has been selected for negotiation of award or that the Recipient is receiving an award. The Government will not reimburse Recipients for expenses relating to the pre-selection clarifications, nor will these costs be eligible for reimbursement as pre-award costs.

**Options (if applicable)**

The Government will evaluate options for award purposes by adding the total cost for all options to the total cost for the basic requirement. Evaluation of options will not obligate the Government to exercise the options during award performance. The Government may elect to divide any resulting award into option periods or may elect to combine proposed option periods at the discretion of the Government.

**Successful Recipients**

Receipt of a notification for award negotiations does not authorize the Recipient to commence performance of the proposed effort. If an application is selected for award negotiations, it is not a commitment by the Government to issue an award. Recipients do not receive an award until award negotiations are complete and the Grants and Agreements Officer executes the funding agreement.

The award negotiation process may take approximately 60 days. Recipients must designate a primary and a secondary point-of-contact with whom the Government will communicate to conduct award negotiations. The Recipient must be responsive during award negotiations (i.e., provide requested documentation) and meet the negotiation deadlines. If the Recipient fails to do so or if award negotiations are otherwise unsuccessful, the Government may cancel the award negotiations and rescind the Selection. The Government reserves the right to terminate award negotiations at any time for any reason.

**2. Selection**

The Government reserves the right to select all, part, or none of the proposals received in response to this FOA.

**3. Discussion and Awards**

The Government may enter into discussions with a selected Recipient for any reason deemed necessary, including but not limited to: (1) the budget is not appropriate or reasonable for the requirement; (2) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (3) the Government needs additional information to determine that the recipient is capable of complying with the requirements in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, FAR Part 31 and/or (4) special terms and conditions are required. Failure to satisfactorily resolve issues identified by the Government will preclude award to the Recipient.

## **C. Notice of Selection and Awards**

### **1. Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters**

AFRL, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, the Government is required to review and consider any information about the Recipient that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

The Recipient, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

The Government will consider any comments by the Recipient, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the Recipient's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by Recipients as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.205.

### **2. DoD Required Elements**

In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205, AFRL may conduct a risk assessment of all potential recipients. In addition to the elements listed in 2 C.F.R. § 200.205, DoD components may include other criteria to determine various types of risk, such as protocols for the protection of intellectual property, controlled information, key personnel, and information about critical technologies relevant to national security, human subjects and Personally Identifiable Information (PII), as listed in the notice of funding opportunity.

## **Section VI- Federal Award Administration Information**

### **A. Federal Award Notices**

Recipients whose applications are recommended for award may be contacted by a Grant and Agreements Officer and/or Contracting Specialist to discuss additional information required for award. This may include representations and certifications, revised budgets or budget explanations, certificate of current cost or pricing data, subcontracting plan for small businesses, and/or other information as applicable to the proposed award.

The notification e-mail must NOT be regarded as an authorization to commit or expend funds. The Government is not obligated to provide any funding until a Government Contracting Officer or Grants Officer, as applicable, signs the award document. The award document signed by the Contracting Officer or Grants Officer is the official and authorizing award instrument.

The Government shall promptly notify in writing each Recipient whose application has not been selected for award or whose application cannot be funded because of the unavailability of funds. Recipients who do not receive an award are not entitled to a debrief.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

#### **Registration Requirements**

There are several one-time actions before submitting an application in response to this FOA, and it is vital that Recipients address these items as soon as possible. Some may take several weeks, and failure to complete them could interfere with a Recipient's ability to apply to this FOA, or to meet the negotiation deadlines and receive an award if the application is selected. These requirements are as follows:

- System for Award Management. Register with the SAM at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>
- DUNS Number. Obtain a DUNS number (including the plus 4 extension, if applicable) at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>
- Grants.gov. Register in Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) to receive automatic updates when Amendments to this FOA are posted

### **Award Administrative Requirements**

The administrative requirements for DoD grants and cooperative agreements are contained in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, 32 C.F.R. Part 22, and FAR Part 31.

### **The National Environmental Policy Act**

Federal agencies making grant or cooperative agreement awards and recipients of such awards must comply with various environmental requirements. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4370(a), requires that agencies consider the environmental impact of “major Federal actions” prior to any final agency decision. With respect to those awards which constitute “major Federal actions,” as defined in 40 C.F.R. 1508.18, Federal agencies may be required to comply with NEPA and prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS), even if the agency does no more than provide grant funds to the recipient. Questions regarding NEPA compliance should be referred to the Program Manager(s).

### **C. Reporting**

If the Federal share of any Federal award may include more than \$500,000 over the period of performance, the post award reporting requirements, Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters (2 U.S.C. 200 Appendix XII), are applicable as follows:

#### **Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance**

If the total value of the currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of this award term and condition. This is a statutory requirement under section 872 of Public Law 110-417, as amended (41 U.S.C. § 2313). As required by section 3010 of Public Law 111-212, all information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available.

### **Deliverables**

At a minimum, Recipient shall acknowledge that the following deliverables are required under this effort:  
Reports

- a. **Quarterly Financial Progress Reports** – A template will be provided to each starting at Award. This report will include information on current expenses and invoices for the time period.
- b. **Quarterly Technical Progress Report**– A template will be provided to each starting at Award. This report will include information on programmatic developments to include major successes or major problems that warrant AFRL’s attention. Quarterly Reports are required within 15 calendar days after the end of reported quarter period: 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, and 12/31 and must include a point of contact for the Government to obtain additional information if necessary.
- c. **Annual Reports** – A template will be provided to each starting at Award. A complete annual Performance Progress Report is mandated by AFRL. This report will be due a year from the date

of the Award. This report will include information about the organization and program specifics (overview, metrics, budget information, accomplishments, etc.).

- d. **Annual Financial Assistance Certs and Repts Report**– A template will be provided to each starting at Award. This report will be due a year from the date of the Award.
- e. **Audit Reports**- If an Institution of Higher Education, non-profit organization, or state/local government is a Prime Recipient or sub-recipient and has expended \$750,000 or more of Federal funds during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year, then a single or program-specific audit is required. For additional information, please refer to 2 C.F.R. § 200.501 and Subpart F- Audit Requirements. If a for-profit entity is a Prime Recipient or sub-recipient and has expended \$750,000 or more of Federal funds during the entity's fiscal year, an annual compliance audit performed by an independent auditor is required. For additional information, please refer to 2 C.F.R. § 1103 and Subpart F-Audit Requirements. Recipients and sub-recipients (if applicable) should propose sufficient costs in the proposed budget to cover the costs associated with the audit.
- f. **Final Report**- Detail the full programmatic accomplishments summarized from prior reports and a forecast for ongoing program sustainability and contribution to DoD and AFRL STEM education and workforce needs as the funding ends. Include, as feasible, examples of educational materials produced, success stories, accomplishments, links to digital materials, and other resultant material from the award.

### Other Reports

Subject to the proposal, other reports may include but are not limited to:

- Scientific and Technical Reports
- Kick-off meeting reports and associated data
- Presentations materials, reports and associated data
- Conferences reports and associated data

**NOTE:** Copies of publications and presentations shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award.

## Section VII- Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

### A. Questions

**There is no deadline for questions regarding this FOA.** All questions or requests for clarifications are due in writing via email to the Contracting Specialists listed below. Questions may be posted on Grants.gov to benefit all interested Recipients. Please do NOT include any proprietary information in the questions. Recipients are encouraged to periodically check Grants.gov during the response period for additional postings. Email questions or request for clarifications for this FOA must use the following subject title: FOA-20-AFRL/RVKE-0001\_Questions.

Questions may be submitted any time from the FOA issue date, until the final submission deadline for applications and will be answered as they are received.

The Government will try to respond to a question within five calendar days, unless a similar question and answer have already been posted on Grants.gov. Questions and comments concerning this FOA shall be submitted not later than five calendar days prior to the final submission deadline for applications due date 22 July 2024. Questions submitted after that date may not allow the Government sufficient time to respond.

Questions relating to the registration process, system requirements, how an application form works, or the submittal process must be directed to Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). Questions relating to the SAM registration process must be directed to Federal Service Desk Contact Information at 1-866-606-8220 or [www.fsd.gov](http://www.fsd.gov). AFRL representatives cannot answer Grants.gov or SAM registration questions.

### B. Letter of Intent

Prospective Recipients shall submit their Letter of Intent electronically via email to the Grants and Agreements Officer and Contracting Specialists listed below. See Section III- Eligibility Information for additional information. Please note, Full Applications received without prior submitting a Letter of Intent will not be reviewed.

When submitting the Letter of Intent to the Grants and Agreements Officer and Contracting Specialists, prospective Recipients shall also CC: the Program Manager(s) listed below. Email Letter(s) of Intent for this FOA must use the following subject title: FOA-20-AFRL/RVKE-0001\_Letter of Intent\_Name of Recipient's Entity (Example: FOA-20-AFRL/RVKE-0001\_Letter of Intent\_XYZ School).

Prospective Recipients are responsible for making sure the Letter of Intent is received.

### C. Contacts

Points of Contact (POCs)

	Grants & Agreements Officer	Contracting Specialist	Contracting Specialist
<b>Name</b>	Jennifer B. Jaramillo	Sara Telano	Lauren J. Davis
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	Program Manager	Program Manager	
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<b>Office</b>	AFRL/RDMX	AFRL/RDMX	

## Section VIII- Other Information

### A. Modifications

Amendments to this announcement will be posted on Grants.gov. However, Recipients will only receive an email when an amendment is posted on this site if the Recipient is registered for email notifications for this FOA in Grants.gov. The Government recommends registration as soon after the release of the FOA as possible to ensure notice of any amendments or other FOAs.

### B. Ombudsman

An ombudsman has been appointed to hear and facilitate the resolution of concerns from recipients, potential recipients, and others for this requirement. When requested, the ombudsman will maintain strict confidentiality as to the source of the concern. The existence of the ombudsman does not affect the authority of the Program Manager(s), Grants and Agreements Officer, or any other responsible Approving Official. Further, the ombudsman does not participate in the evaluation of proposals, the award process, or the adjudication of protests or formal disputes. The ombudsman may refer the party to another official who can resolve the concern.

Before consulting with an ombudsman, interested parties must first address their concerns, issues, disagreements, and/or recommendations to the Grants and Agreements Officer for resolution. Consulting an ombudsman does not alter or postpone the timelines for any other processes (e.g., agency level protests, GAO protests, requests for debriefings, employee-employer actions, contests of OMB Circular A-76 competition performance decisions). If resolution cannot be made by the Grants and Agreements Officer, concerned parties may contact the AFRL ombudsmen:

Primary: AFRL Director of Contracting  
Secondary: AFRL Deputy Director of Contracting  
Phone: 937-904-9700  
Email: [AFRL.PK.OfficeAccount@us.af.mil](mailto:AFRL.PK.OfficeAccount@us.af.mil)

The ombudsman has no authority to render a decision that binds the agency. Do not contact the ombudsman to request copies of the announcement, verify offer due date, or clarify technical requirements. Such inquiries shall be directed to the Grants and Agreements Officer.

### **C. Assistance Instrument Payment Process**

The Wide Area WorkFlow (WAWF) application has been designated as the Department of Defense standard for electronic invoicing and payment. To facilitate this effort for Universities and Nonprofit Organizations with awards administered by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) Regional Offices, the WAWF website is available to assist at <https://wawf.eb.mil/>. All parties doing business with ONR are strongly encouraged to register to participate in the WAWF program. By submitting invoices and receiving reports online—through electronic data interchange (EDI) or file transfer protocol (FTP)—invoices and reports are routed, reviewed and processed electronically, resulting in more efficient payment. For additional information on registration and the electronic payment process visit <https://wawf.eb.mil/>

Electronic submission of payment requests requires the Awardee to register in WAWF and have the appropriate CAGE code activated. Please note, that each Awardee must be registered in SAM and have an Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBPOC) set up to approve new registrations within their Institution. Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBPOC) is responsible for activating the CAGE code in WAWF by calling 1-866-618-5988. Once the Awardee's CAGE Code is activated, the EBPOC will self-register in WAWF ([https://wawf.eb.mil](https://wawf.eb.mil/)) and follow the instructions for a group administrator. The ONR Regional Offices will assist in this process.

### **D. Retention of Submissions**

The Government expects to retain copies of all **Letter of Intent**s and Full Applications and other submissions. No submissions will be returned. By applying to for funding, Recipients consent to AFRL retention of their submissions.

### **F. Property**

Any Awards resulting from this announcement may contain articles for governing management and disposition of property as contained OMB guidance in 2 C.F.R. 200 and/or DoD Research & Development General Terms and Conditions (July 2018).

## Section IX- Appendix, Attachments, and References

### Attachments

- Attachment I, AF Form 813 Request for Environmental Impact Analysis
- Attachment II, Budget Justification Workbook
- Attachment III, DoD Research & Development General Terms and Conditions (July 2018)

### References

- Federal STEM Education Strategy's reference: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/STEM-Education-Strategic-Plan-2018.pdf>
- DoD STEM's Mission <https://dodstem.us/>
- Code of Federal Regulations: <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/ECFR?page=browse>
- Federal Acquisition Regulations: <https://www.acquisition.gov/>
- DoD Research & Development General Terms and Conditions (July 2018) located at: <https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/manage-your-award/manage-grant-award/grants-terms-conditions>