

DOE-EM MSIPP FOA Q&A's #1

The Webinar was held as scheduled on September 19, 2024. Please use the below weblinks to view.

<https://www.emcbc.doe.gov/SEB/Files/Video/MSIPP%20Webinar%20DE-FOA-0003422%20Recording%201.mp4>

<https://www.emcbc.doe.gov/SEB/Files/Video/MSIPP%20Webinar%20DE-FOA-0003422%20Recording%202.mp4>

Q1. Our institution has been designated in 2024 as an eligible institution under Title III and/or Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEA) (letter attached). I wonder if we are eligible for the above referred FOA?

A1. Eligibility for receipt of a grant awarded under the subject NOFO, is limited to Minority Serving Institutions with a student population less than or equal to 5,000. However, if your institution exceeds that threshold, it could team with an MSI that is eligible if the resulting subaward value does not exceed 20% of the total award value.

Q2. I am a graduate international student doing an MBA at an MSI. I would like to find out if I qualify for this grant before I apply for it.

A2. Eligibility for receipt of a grant awarded under the subject NOFO, is limited to Minority Serving Institutions with a student population less than or equal to 5,000. However, if your institution exceeds that threshold, it could team with an MSI that is eligible if the resulting subaward value does not exceed 20% of the total award value.

Q3. The NOFO states “An entity may only submit one Concept Paper and one Full Application for each topic area of this NOFO. If an entity submits more than one Concept Paper and one Full Application to the same topic area, EM.” Are you referring to each Priority Areas (PAs)? For example, we are looking at PA4: Cutting-Edge Airborne Methane Detection Technology. Does this mean the university cannot submit another application for PA4 or no other applications for any of the PAs under in ii. Digital Technologies?

A3. The referenced paragraph allows for a concept paper and application for each of the PAs. A university may submit a concept paper and application for each PA, whether that be individually or collectively.

Q4. Is there a list of current awardees under this NOFO? If so, will the DOE share the results of prior efforts under this NOFO?

A4. No awards have been made under this NOFO. Awardees from the prior FY2023 DOE-EM MSIPP NOFO can be viewed at the below weblink:

<https://www.energy.gov/em/articles/doe-awards-247-million-financial-assistance-grants-seven-minority-serving-institutions>

Q5. Are applicants allowed to include non-MSI on the application as collaborators or sub awardees?

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A5. As detailed on page 13 of the NOFO, revised under Amendment 0001, “Non-MSI subawards, including those to an institute of higher education that is not an MSI, are not allowable.” However, collaborations/partnering with EM sites and/or National Laboratories is encouraged. Please note that page 24 of the NOFO states the following: “Costs that may be incurred by collaborating with DOE sites and laboratories through the course of the grant are not allowable costs to be reimbursed with grant funding. Funding may be provided to those entities by DOE-EM separate from the grant.” If the collaborations require funding, capture the costs separately from the MSI overall costs.

Q6. It is mentioned that the subawards to MSIs with more than 5,000 students can be a maximum of 20% of the total grant. We are planning to collaborate with two MSIs, each with a student count greater than 5,000. Can we budget 20% each for both institutions, or is the total 20% shared between the two?

A6. There is no limit on the number of MSI partnerships and the grant funding split will be up to the lead and partnering members. The total value of a subaward to an MSI with a total enrollment of more than 5,000 undergraduate students cannot exceed 20% of the total grant award value. The total value of all subawards cannot exceed 49% of the total grant award value.

Q7. Can we propose a concept paper based on a combination of two areas of interest (e.g., Digital Technologies and Robotics), or should it focus on a specific area?

A7. Yes, a applicant may submit a concept paper and application for each PA, whether that be individually or collectively.

Q8. Can we include funded collaborators from a DOE National Laboratory and include them in the overall proposal budget or do they need to be unfunded?

A8. Funded Federal collaborators should not be included in the overall proposal budget through the grant. These funds must be carved out and provided directly to the collaborating Federal organization from DOE-EM, outside of the grant. Any proposed costs must be broken out and provided separate from the overall proposal budget.

Q9. I noticed that there is a requirement of less than 5,000 enrollment. Is total enrollment or undergraduate enrollment?

A9. The requirement is for less than 5,000 students based on total enrollment. The thought is to help facilitate the engagement of smaller institutions that may not have been able to participate in the past.

Q10. Can a consortium consist of two universities with populations of less than 5,000 students each and one university with a population of more than 5,000 students?

A10. The lead grant recipient MSI with less than 5,000 students would need to be the prime awardee. Partnering with other less than 5,000 student MSIs is not restricted. An awardee may also partner with an MSI with greater than 5,000 students but the total value of a subaward cannot exceed 20% of the total grant award value. The total value of all subawards cannot exceed 49% of the total grant award value.

Q11. I am at an HBCU with 10,000 students. Does this disqualify me from applying?

A11. It disqualifies you from applying as the lead MSI (prime). You would be able to partner with an MSI with less than 5k students. However, the qualifying MSI must be the primary grant recipient.

Q12. Can we collaborate with non-MSIs with a significant number of minority students?

A12. Both the prime grant recipient and collaborators are required to be MSIs.

Q13. Do we have a US citizen requirement to be part of the proposal team, or international students, researchers and faculty are allowed?

A13. There is a preference for US citizens to be involved. DOE may request more information if international students, researchers, and faculty are included in the concept paper. However, this does not exclude them from receipt of a resultant grant.

Q14. Can an MSI with less than 5,000 students lead a collaboration with a subaward MSI with greater than 5,000?

A14. Yes, as long as all MSI partners with greater than 5,000 students included for each subaward, or subcontract be limited to 20% or less of the total grant award amount.

Q15. Did you mention that partnering with a 2-yr community college would be beneficial?

A15. Yes. The Concept Paper Technical Review Criteria (page 35 of NOFO) references “partnering with other MSI’s, including 2-year institutions”.

Q16. Can the smaller institution be a non-MSI lead and partner with an HBCU on this call?

A16. The lead would have to be an MSI meeting the less than 5,000 student threshold. The lead MSI may partner with larger MSIs for the purpose of this NOFO, but stay within the subaward limitations referenced above.

Q17. How do I find other EM sites to partner with?

A17. Log on to Energy.gov and view all DOE sites and field offices.

Q18. What % of budget can go to the small MSI and partnering HBCU?

A18. The primary grant recipient must receive a minimum of 51% of the total grant award value/funding.

Q19. Workforce development is a major focus of this NOFO?

A19. Workforce development is the primary focus of this NOFO. To enhance/develop curriculum that will further educate graduating students which are the potential future workforce of DOE at field sites across the country.

Q20. Can we only have 2 MSIs as part of consortium? Primary with 80% and Subcontract 20%?

A20. Multiple small and large subawards are allowable but the total subawards cannot exceed 49% of the total grant award value.